

## How leaders can learn from normal work – and use what they learn to improve performance

Many leaders conduct site visits where they talk directly to workers. These conversations can be an opportunity to learn what happens during a normal working day, and to use that information to ensure workers have what they need to succeed.

Why talk to workers about normal work?	How to do it	What to capture from the conversation	What to do with the information you get
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things go right much more often than they go wrong</li> <li>• We miss huge learning and improvement opportunities by only focusing on incidents</li> <li>• Normal work provides a rich environment to learn from</li> <li>• By understanding normal work, we can better identify <b>what helps and hinders performance</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>When talking to workers remember to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be the learner not the expert</li> <li>• Be curious and open to new perspectives</li> <li>• Avoid <i>why</i> questions – they tend to make people defensive</li> <li>• Ask open questions that draw out a story.</li> </ul> <p>Listen for comments about how their work is helped or hindered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Work conditions/environment</li> <li>• Strategy/procedures/processes</li> <li>• Training/capability.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Good practice:</b> → New ways of working that people have come up with that are safe and productive.</p> <p><b>Dependencies:</b> → What do people need or rely on to be able to do their jobs safely and productively.</p> <p><b>Sensitivities:</b> → Unexpected things or surprises that people need to adapt to.</p> <p><b>Frustrations:</b> → People need things they can't get – so they are forced to adapt and use 'work-arounds'.</p>	<p>→ Keep, spread and enhance.</p> <p>→ Invest to ensure required resources are available.</p> <p>→ Push up the line for improved planning so people don't have to deal with it on the day.</p> <p>→ Fix, or disrupt the practice.</p>

This table is informed by a presentation given by Daniel Hummerdal from Art of Work in October 2016. To watch a summary of this presentation visit: [www.zeroharm.org.nz/workers](http://www.zeroharm.org.nz/workers)