



Training Solutions, Delivered!

LEADING INDICATORS:
It's The Little Things
(Concise)

**Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet
& Quiz**

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING

Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

- a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.
- b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.
- c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.
- d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes *before* the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

- a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.
- b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.
- c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.
- d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

4157 LEADING INDICATORS: *It's The Little Things (Concise)* FACT SHEET

LENGTH: 12 MINUTES

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:

Jeff "Odie" Espenship is a United States Air Force A-10 Warthog fighter pilot and also an international airline pilot. As a flight leader, he knows what it takes to operate safely in a high-risk and sometimes dangerous work environment. In this dynamic presentation, Odie discusses his experiences involving *shortcuts*, *snap decisions* and *complacency* as a pilot and how they relate to common workplace situations. Because these leading indicators tend to snowball and contribute to accidents, he stresses that employees must always be aware of the "little things" and take action when they tempt us or our co-workers to perform unsafe acts.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

While pointing out common safety errors often made by fighter pilots and regular employees alike, Odie emphasizes the lessons all workers can learn from these mistakes:

- It's the "little things" like inattention to detail, lack of focus and assuming that usually snowball and result in accidents.
- Getting away with a shortcut normalizes deviant behavior and discourages people from speaking up.
- If a leading indicator contributes to a close call, you should share that information with your co-workers to help prevent it from happening again.
- While we can become complacent with experience as our jobs become routine, safety and operational excellence are never routine or automatic.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT 'GET US'

- "I look out in this crowd and I see a bunch of fighter pilots," says Odie, "I see each of you as the fighter pilots of your companies; you're the ones out there every single day, tip of the spear, getting the job done, you wingmen, you flight leaders."
- As fighter pilots of their companies, employees are the ones who have the most to lose if something goes wrong, he adds. "You are the ones that end up with those scrapes, strains, those bruises, burns, contusions, those lost-time accidents."
- "You know as a fighter pilot, you know what gets us?" Odie asks. "It's not the big items, is it? Those big old 'kill me' items as I call them, we'll watch out for the 'kill me' items; I mean we've been trained."
- "It's the little things; it's the tiny things," he continues. "That's what snowballs on us and tags us. It's the little things like inattention to detail, lack of focus, being interrupted, being distracted, poor job safety briefing, miscommunicating, assuming."
- Maybe we've taken a shortcut or made an impulsive, spontaneous or snap decision, says Odie. "Maybe we've gotten a little complacent. Those little things, that's what snowballs on us."

LEADING INDICATORS OF ACCIDENTS

- "Those accidents that happen to use, your company calls them accident rates; and, we refer to these accident rates as lagging or trailing indicators because this is what happens: it's behind us and we have to investigate what happens, but that's looking in the rearview mirror to look at those lagging and trailing indicators," notes Odie.
- We need to be looking in front us as well; do we not?" he asks. "Those things that lead up to accidents, that's out in front of us. And so, those things that we find that lead up to accidents, we call those leading indicators."

TAKING SHORTCUTS

- It doesn't matter what industry we're in or whether we're at home or work, we all take shortcuts and have different reasons for taking them, according to Odie.

- “Maybe we’re in a hurry to get the job done; maybe we’ve put pressure on ourselves to do it” Odie says, “but the bottom line—you’re the only one that knows why you take that shortcut out there.”

ODIE & HIS BROTHER TAKE A SHORTCUT

- Odie gives an example of a shortcut that he and his brother took that had a “tremendous impact” on him, his mother, his father, his brother and his brother’s family.
- On the weekends, Odie and his brother would go to air shows to perform. Odie would fly the plane while his brother ran the logistics.
- There’s a starting procedure that you are supposed to do every time the airplane engine is started, according to Odie. “You’re supposed to grab the propeller blade and you’re supposed to pull it through, by hand, very slowly, very methodically on this airplane, nine times.”
- This precaution is performed to check for a hydraulic leak or lock. “You’ve got to make sure no fluid has gotten in the bottom of the cylinder heads and the only way to check that is to pull it through by hand. Because if you push that big starter button and that engine starts and there’s fluid down there, like unburned fluid or oil or something, you can damage the engine,” says Odie.
- One Sunday, after finishing an air show in the northeast, Odie and his brother were in a hurry to take off as a thunderstorm approached. While Odie was in the cockpit doing his pre-flight checks, his brother started to pull the propeller blade like he had always done.
- Odie says he looked down at his brother and yelled, “Don’t worry about it. Man, don’t worry about it. We’ve done that hundreds of times. Get in the back, man, we’ve got to go; we’re in a hurry.”

SHORTCUT CONTRIBUTES TO ODIE’S BROTHER’S DEATH

- Six months later, Odie’s brother and a friend were going to ferry an airplane down to Florida for an air show. Odie was planning to fly a commercial flight to the show the next day.
- Two hours after his brother and friend took off, Odie received a phone call from someone explaining how the plane had been involved in an accident and there were two fatalities. “One phone call—my world went from fantastic to awful, just like that,” Odie says.
- The investigators went to the person who fueled up the airplane before it departed for Florida and asked him if he had seen them perform the check. He responded, “No, I don’t remember them pulling that propeller blade through, but I do remember them being in a big hurry for me to finish fueling this airplane because they were running late for some air show down in Florida.”

HOW SHORTCUTS AFFECT OURSELVES AND OTHERS AROUND US

- As he was standing over the wreckage of the crash, Odie says he had to reflect inward on his work behavior. “And I have to say to myself, ‘did I do something, did I show my brother something that influenced his behavior six months down the road?’”
- “When we make a decision, and it is a decision, to take a shortcut, we are in effect showing ourselves and showing others around us how to break the rules and still live,” says Odie. The list of shortcuts that we take at home or at work is long and distinguished, he adds.
- It could be like skipping a procedure or skipping a step in a procedure, Odie says. “Lockout/tagout comes to mind. It could be like using the wrong tool for the job when the right tool is just like right over there, but you don’t feel like going and getting it. It could be using a chair instead of a step ladder, insufficient PPE for the job.”
- “You don’t know long you have before it catches up to you or catches up to someone else. In my case it was about six months,” he concludes.

COMPLACENCY: THE SILENT KILLER

- “I call complacency the silent killer,” says Odie. “You know, the longer we do our jobs, the more experience we get, we get more familiar, get on the back side of that bell curve.”
- “We start to rely maybe on the automation that we have. We figure that computer is never going to break; we start settling into a routine,” he adds.
- While we want our jobs to go routinely, safety and operational excellence is never routine or automatic, according to Odie. “Complacency, you know, it sneaks up on us. It is very insidious, but it happens to the best of us.”

CONCLUSION

- “As I look out on this crowd, I see a bunch of Thunderbird pilots; I see a bunch of warriors,” says Odie. “You folks are out there, every single day, working hard, salt of the earth, getting the job done. And just like a Thunderbird pilot, we know it’s the little things that get us. It’s not the big items; it’s the little things.”
- “And you know, you don’t have one of those rocket-powered, aces-2 ejection seats like that Thunderbird pilot to get yourself out of trouble,” he continues. “It’s the little things. It’s the snap decisions; it’s the complacency. It’s those little things that snowball into something big.”
- He tells the audience members that if they see something, say something. “And the list is long and distinguished of those little things. And you can think back on your world of all those little things that lead up to accidents.”
- When it comes to the shortcuts we take, the snap decisions that get us in trouble and complacency, the silent killer, Odie says there’s only one person who has the final say. “It’s not your boss, it’s not the plant manager, it’s not your safety team, it’s not your family; it really boils down to you. You’re the one.”
- “If you see someone headed down an errant and unsafe path, it’s up to you to speak up. I know it’s hard to do, but it’s imperative that you do it because that’s how we prevent future accidents from happening,” Odie concludes.

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ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ

1. b

2. a

3. d

4. b

5. a

6. a

**LEADING INDICATORS:
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REVIEW QUIZ**

The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.

Name _____ Date _____

1. Accident rates can also be called _____ because they happened in the past; they are like "looking in the rear-view mirror."
 - a. Leading indicators
 - b. Trailing indicators
 - c. Misleading indicators

2. The little things that lead up to accidents are in front of us are called _____.
 - a. Leading indicators
 - b. Trailing indicators
 - c. Misleading indicators

3. Which of the following is an example of taking a short cut?
 - a. Skipping steps during lockout/tagout
 - b. Using the wrong tool for the job because the correct tool is further away
 - c. Using a chair instead of a step ladder
 - d. All of the above

4. What does Odie call the silent killer?
 - a. Shortcuts
 - b. Complacency
 - c. Snap Decisions

5. Who has the final say when it comes to taking short cuts, making snap decisions or being complacent?
 - a. You
 - b. Your boss
 - c. Your plant manager
 - d. OSHA

6. If you see someone doing something unsafe, it is imperative that you speak up.
 - a. True
 - b. False