Just Culture and High Reliability Organization Attributes

Components of a Just Culture

1. Defines the border between unacceptable behavior and performance error
2. People at all levels understand the hazards and risks of their operations
3. Errors are understood and analyzed, willful misconduct is punished
4. Staff and management communicate openly and often regarding safety
5. There is a deep organizational commitment to analyzing mistakes
6. Implements a non-punitive reporting and quality improvement system
7. Embraces the concepts of a “Learning Organization”

Components of a High Reliability Organization:

1. There is a focus on mindfulness (Situational Awareness)
   a. Operators know that the unexpected can occur any time
   b. Everyone feels accountable for reliability and safety
   c. The team spends time analyzing how their performance and decisions could affect themselves, their team, and the customer
   d. The team and individuals spend time being curious about how their actions and words are perceived by peers, customers, and management
   e. There is an agreement about what we don’t want to go wrong

2. They analyze whether they are susceptible to mindlessness mistakes
   a. Team members often face “exceptional” and dangerous events
   b. Members can have a difficult time getting all the information they need before they have to make a critical decision
   c. Members are expected to perform in a certain way without significant deviation
   d. The team or individuals perform under time pressure
   e. Are there incentives to hiding mistakes?
   f. Do team members feel like they can speak up to test assumptions?
   g. Are mistakes held against you, or does a “story” develop?

3. Team members have the ability to doubt, inquire, and update
   a. Members don’t deny problems when they appear
   b. Members can respectfully voice concern or doubt and it is not dismissed
   c. If something unexpected occurs, it is analyzed
   d. When something unexpected occurs, the organization works to analyze the event and test its original assumptions
   e. The findings of debriefs and error analyses are shared within the organization
   f. The organization does not react to mistakes by creating more policy
4. The organization spends time analyzing failure and is reluctant to simplify explanations for mistakes
   a. Members regard close calls and failures as indicators of risk areas
   b. The organization updates their training and procedures (not rules) after experiencing a failure or near miss to incorporate the new understanding or enrich its members’ experience
   c. Members are inclined to report mistakes even if no one noticed
   d. Managers seek out and encourage the non-punitive reporting of errors
   e. Members feel like they can talk to superiors about mistakes and errors
   f. All input is important, and respectfully questioning decisions is encouraged
   g. Mistake analysis is prolonged in order to better understand the causal factors behind the error
   h. Leaders listen carefully; Rarely is a view dismissed
   i. Team members are not ostracized for properly surfacing information that is critical of the team or organization
   j. The team appreciates skeptics and diversity
   k. Team members demonstrate respect and a knowledge of each others’ jobs, responsibilities, and positions

5. The organization is sensitive to operations
   a. If something unusual occurs, there is someone with authority and expertise who can immediately help
   b. Supervisors are ready to pitch in whenever needed
   c. Team members interact with clear communication and the organization supports regular training in critical communication skills
   d. Team members are alert for feedback
   e. Managers understand that Operators must, at times, “trade accuracy for speed”, and engage in training and education to minimize adverse effects

6. The organization has a commitment to resilience
   a. Resources are continuously and generously devoted to training, with specific emphasis on high-risk, low-frequency operations
   b. Training is high fidelity whenever possible
   c. Training emphasizes maintaining situational awareness while dealing with distraction
   d. Team members are encouraged to use their knowledge and fellow team members to solve unusual problems in unique ways (and the share the results, good or bad)
   e. Teams and individuals are encouraged to learn from mistakes
   f. The organization places a value on trending performance, near misses, accidents, and incidents to build a rich resource for ongoing training