

Developing Communications Skills in Unit Trainers

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Introduction

- Chris Dannenmaier
 - Principal Consultant & CEO Plant Leadership Systems
 - B.S. Chemical Engineering
 - B.A. English, plus core Secondary Education courses
 - 25 years experience in process plant operation
 - Process Engineer
 - Superintendent
 - Plant Manager
 - Director of Manufacturing
 - 7 years consulting experience
 - Expertise in human performance

Objectives

- Learn the critical communications skills for successful unit trainers
- Offer practical tips for developing unit trainer communications skills
- Foster dialogue and thought on how to better support those skills

The Role of Unit Trainer

- A ***Unit Trainer*** is any person responsible for conducting unit specific training in a refinery or process plant
- Typically responsible for delivering required technical training in assigned unit
- Often responsible for maintaining training materials in unit
- Sometimes responsible for testing trainees in knowledge/skill mastery

Key Success Factors in Unit Technical Training

- Well-constructed curriculum
- Effective delivery of training
- Rigorous verification of skill mastery

Critical Skills for Unit Trainer

- Sound technical mastery of unit
- Positive interest in helping others learn
- Dependability
- Ability to “put it over”

THIS MEANS COMMUNICATIONS SKILL!

Communications Skills for Unit Trainers

- One on One Communications
- Small Group Presentations
- Communications Facilitator

One on One Communications

- Organize thoughts/material
- Express ideas clearly
- Use feedback to ensure understanding
- Use active listening
- Use questioning techniques

Small Group Training

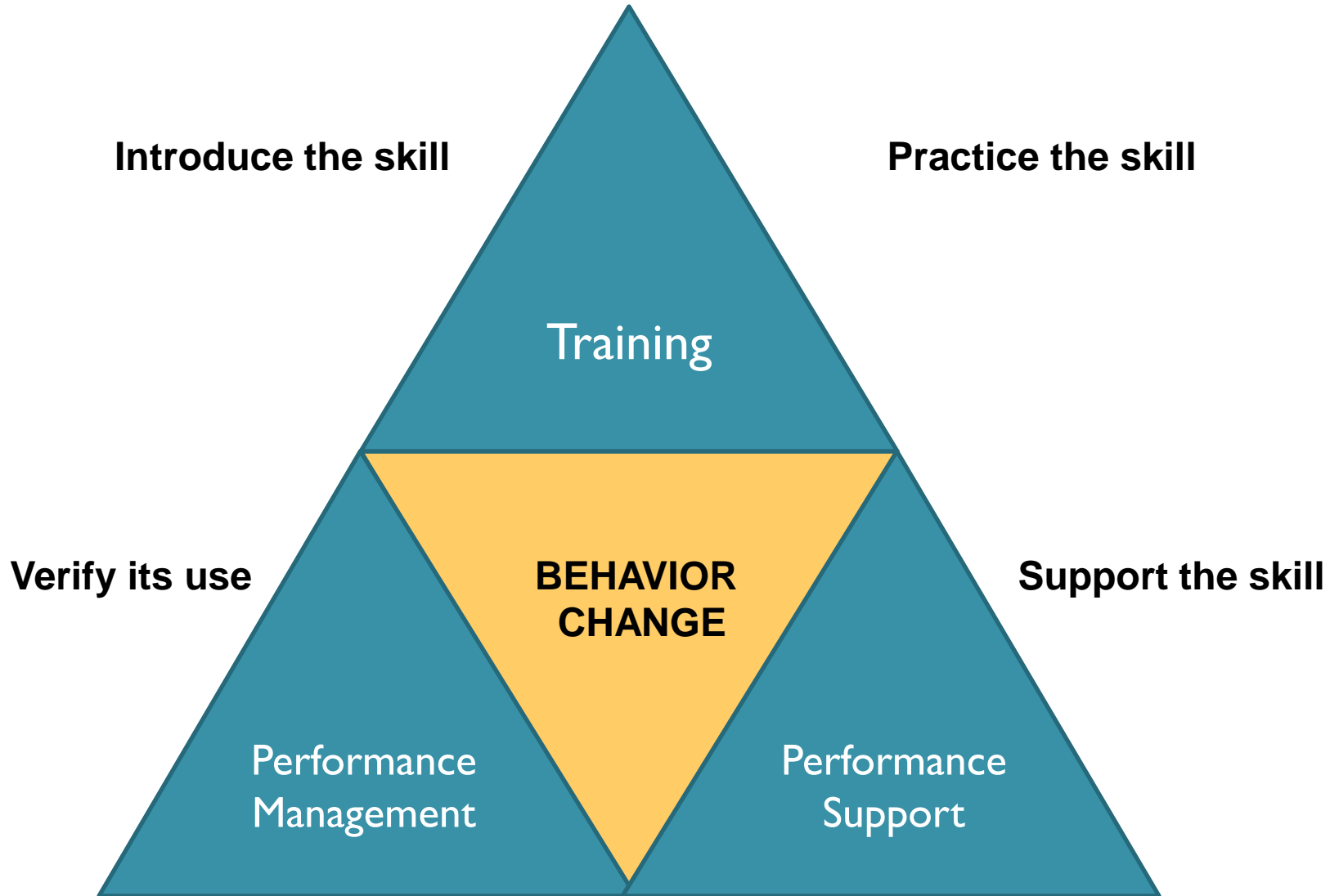
One on One Skills, plus:

- Stand up in front of a group and speak
- Basic group facilitation

Communications Facilitation

- Unit Trainers responsible for ownership of communications process with trainees
- Must be effective observers of communications process
- Understand barriers to communication
- Need basic approaches to handling issues

Elements of Skill Development



How to Develop Skills

- Train the Trainer
- Use of Job Aids
- Self-evaluation
- Learner feedback
- Structured observation
- Ongoing dialogue/coaching
- Coaching/training other unit trainers

Getting Management Support

- Best argument is “getting value out of training effort”
- Development of skills can be done with minimal disruption to ongoing operations
- Communications one of top contributing factors to incidents per ASM Consortium

Questions & Thoughts

- How are you supporting your Unit Trainers?
- What is working?
- What could be better?



Thanks for your attendance and participation!

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