

GUIDE · OPTIONAL

Shop talk guide

A shop talk is a short, voluntary conversation with a few people at the end of a shift about how the work really went. Observations show what happens. Shop talks add why, in the crews' own words.

■ What it's for

- Hearing how crews close the gap between work as imagined and work as done: the variations, shortcuts and workarounds that keep turnarounds going.
- Explaining what the observations show. If "late bags" keeps turning up, a shop talk can tell you why.
- Picking up what an observer can't see: the rostering, the radio calls, the equipment that was broken yesterday.
- Building trust. Crews see that someone wants to hear from them, not check on them.

Shop talks don't replace observations, and they aren't coded or counted. They feed the Learning Teams.

■ Who, where and when

- **Who runs it:** an observer or programme team member, never the crew's own supervisor. Pairing with a workforce representative works well.
- **Who takes part:** whoever wants to, usually three to eight people. Mixed roles help: loaders, drivers, dispatch, ramp leads.
- **Where:** the crew room or somewhere off the ramp and away from managers' offices.
- **When:** at the end of a shift, for 15 to 20 minutes. Paid time. Bring food if you can.
- **How often:** one or two at each station during a cycle is plenty.

■ Ground rules to say at the start

- This is about the work, not about anyone here or anyone else.
- No names, flight numbers or registrations in the notes, and nothing said here is used for discipline.
- You can leave at any time, or just listen.
- We'll tell you what happens with what you say.

■ Questions that work

Start with what went well. People talk more freely about success, and the hard parts come out on their own.

1. Think of a turnaround today that went well. What made it go well?
2. What made the job harder than it needed to be today?
3. Where did you have to do it differently from the procedure to get it done? What would happen if you didn't?

4. What do you do that a new starter wouldn't know to do?
5. When something went wrong, what caught it?
6. If you could fix one thing about this job, what would it be?

Follow up with "tell me more about that", "how often?" and "what would help?". Don't defend the procedure or explain why things are the way they are. Listen.

■ Notes

- Write themes, not quotes attached to people. Short phrases in the crews' words are fine without names.
- Note the station and date only, for the programme team. Never who was there.
- After the cycle, read the themes alongside the results. Bring the ones that match the Expand and Shrink lists to the Learning Teams.
- Destroy the handwritten notes once the themes are typed up.

■ Closing the loop

Tell the crews what came of it, even when the answer is "not yet". The "What we changed" message in the **comms kit** is a good place for it.

See also the **Learning Team guide** (Self-service level).