

TALKING PAPER  
ON  
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Data showing the number of injuries over a 5-year period (FY11 – FY15)

- Per AFSAS, training identified as a causing or contributing human factor in 146 Occupational & Industrial mishaps with injuries
  - One of the most important elements of mishap prevention
  - Cost to the Air Force:
    - Four fatalities
    - Two Permanent Partial Disability
    - 707 Lost work days
    - \$2,424,006
  
- Communicating effectively is crucial to preventing employee injuries and illness
  - Watch out for barriers to communication, such as:
    - Too much information all at once can be hard for employees to absorb
    - Unclear or ambiguous messages
    - Unclear expectations may produce unexpected results
    - Incomplete communication – listen to responses to ensure message is understood
  
- Provide clear messages to effectively communicate by:
  - Organize your thoughts
  - Be clear about expectations
  - Keep communication simple – one message at a time
  - Be precise and concise to avoid misinterpretation and confusion
  - Demonstrate when appropriate
  - Repeat messages as necessary
  
- Why good communication matters
  - Failure to effectively communicate can create consequences such as:
    - Accidents that result in occupational injuries, and illness
    - Risk-taking by employees
    - Inability to comply with regulations
    - Damage to materials, equipment, or your facility
    - Risks to community and environment
    - Reduced productivity and delays
      - Think Mission Impairment!
  
- Tips for effective safety communication:
  - **Be interactive:** ensure communication flows both ways
  - **Be informative:** tell employees what they need to know to do the job right
  - **Stay positive:** focus on the exchange of ideas to understand what's communicated
  - **Productive:** Ensure understanding, ask questions