

# DO's & DON'Ts of ROC Talk

(Suggestions only – develop your own sincere style)

## 1. Some suggestions for conversational openers/ice-breakers

- A. *Is this ...[job]... done anywhere else on the site?*
- B. *How **often** is this ...[job]... done?*
- C. *What is the really **challenging** part of this ...[job]...?*
- D. *What has the greatest effect on the **quality** of this operation ?*
- E. *How do people know when that ...[job]... is **completed/finished** satisfactorily?*
- F. *How **many** of ...[widgets] ... are produced/processed/answered .... per .....day/year?*
- G. *Does it take long to get **proficient/competent/experienced/comfortable** at...[job]....?*
- H. *Is it possible to build any **variety** into the process?*
- I. *What are the greatest **distractions**?*
- J. *What kind of things can need “**watching- out for**” during ...[job]...?*
- K. *Do people have **favourite ways** of doing ...[job]...?*

## 2. General Advice re ROC Talk - R&O Conversations - during “walk-arounds” / GEMBA Walks

- A. Introduce yourself casually but straight – away; without rigid formalities and show an immediate interest in an individual’s name and position in the organisation.
- B. Be alert for cues (body language etc.) of any unease at interacting with a leader and respond quickly.
- C. I’m here to learn from the people here who do this kind of work
- D. Listen carefully for the tone of all answers and adjust your responses/prompts accordingly.
- E. In fact, always try to listen more than talk. Active listening
- F. Often OK to use humour if you feel the reaction is appropriate.  
*For example, What do you do around here?  
AND I don’t expect the answer - “as little as possible”.*

**Always open with words that are not going to be taken as “know-all”, or confrontational or critical. They need a sincere quest for knowledge sharing.**

For example,

- That seems to be an interesting job – What is going on here ? What makes it interesting?

**Inquire first about what he/she regards as the positive aspects of specific tasks NOT negative aspects of their job as a whole.**

Let them – not you - introduce negative aspects and engage fully with them to get a clear explicit summary of their concerns with guarantees of:

- I will look into that and definitely get back to you (particularly if the line manager is not present);
- If I can, I would like to join the team in doing the comparative risk assessments of the options / alternatives that have been suggested; and/or
- I will be very interested in getting the results of the comparative risk assessments by your team of the options / alternatives that have been or will be suggested.

When appropriate, ask what are good aspects of the task?

For example,

- What gives people the most satisfaction doing this task?

Also ask what are the risk & enabling factors for safety, quality, or productivity?

- What worries /concerns people about whether this task is topped from being done in the best way possible or not?
- Tell me – NOT show me\* -
- What are the worst things that can affect safety, quality, productivity?

**\* CAUTION - Because of their inherent risks, actual demonstrations / re-constructions / simulations of what could or did go wrong in situations of interest or concern, need to be very carefully risk assessed and planned.**

3. **Suggestions for what to do if you observe someone who is apparently doing something YOU may perceive as wrong and maybe taking a risk that is not ALARP**
- A. If local supervisor/line manager is not accompanying you, take care not to say anything that appears to undermine his/her authority.
  - B. Remember to be careful of making rash judgments of apparent risk-taking unless it is very clear that a job is being done in a way that the risks to safety, quality, productivity are not ALARP.
  - C. Again, avoid commencing with words that are going to be taken as 'know-all' / confrontational / critical.
    - *Do people around here do that job in different Ways? Tools? Positions? Speeds?*
    - *How risky is this job when it is done different ways by people?*
    - *What work method/sequence have the people around here sorted out and agreed is the **best way** of doing this job?*
    - *Were there many different choices for working out the **best way**?*
    - *Who has a part to play in the development of, and any changes to the rule/procedure?*
    - *What limits people from doing this job in that best way?*
  - D. De-personalise and avoid any accusatory-type language in any of your questions / comments by NOT using the word "you" say "*people around here*"
  - E. If appropriate, ask:
    - *Do any rules/procedures ever need to be varied or changed sometimes?*
    - *What risk circumstances that were not expected when the rule/procedure was written, agreed and learned can require users to vary the rule or procedure normally needed?*
    - *If risk-justified, what is the approved process for varying a rule or procedure?*
  - F. Avoid jumping to unfounded conclusions by using negative, emotive, judgmental words like "*violation / breach / reckless / negligent / failed*".
  - G. Obtain agreement and clarify the nature of any promised or necessary follow-up to the conversation/interaction.
  - H. If possible, indicate only the nature and timing of any follow-up that you know you can deliver.
  - I. Express sincere thanks for 2-way risk conversation and how much you learned.

**4. Recognising and Endorsing Apparently “Good Work”**

- J. Always balance looking for problems with recognition of successful work being done.
- K. Involve the doers in deciding how a job will be judged as having been done well. For example,
  - *How do you know when the job has been done well?*
- L. Involve the doers in choosing an appropriate form of recognition to enhance sense of autonomy and sense of reward.
  - *What would be the best way of recognition of successful achievement?*
- M. Avoid excessive inappropriate choices to reduce uncertainty.
- N. Verbal praise & recognition are best provided at both group & individual levels
- O. Involve the site supervisor or line manager in the recognition process to improve team relatedness.

