CREATING SUSTAINABLE HIGH-RELIABILITY OPERATIONS (HRO): A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

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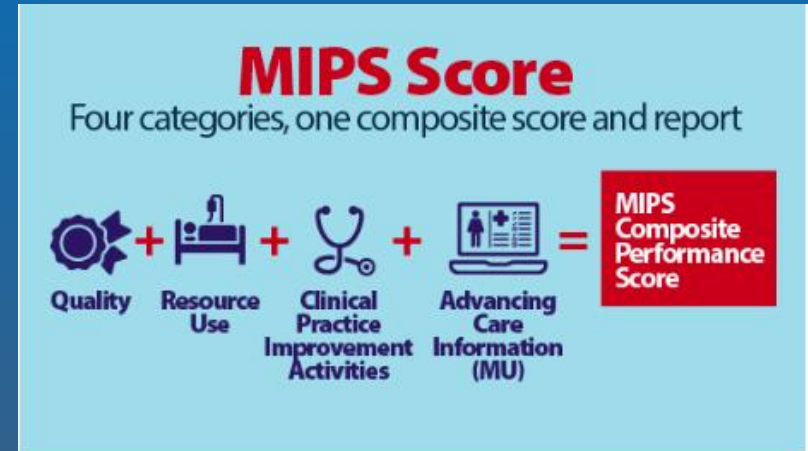HFMA South Texas Leadership Forum
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Today's Discussion

- Relevance of high-reliability (HR) in the current healthcare environment;

- Traits needed to achieve sustained performance as a high-reliability (HR) organizations;

- Three things that organizations should focus on to re-invigorate their journey toward more sustainable high-reliability (HR) operations
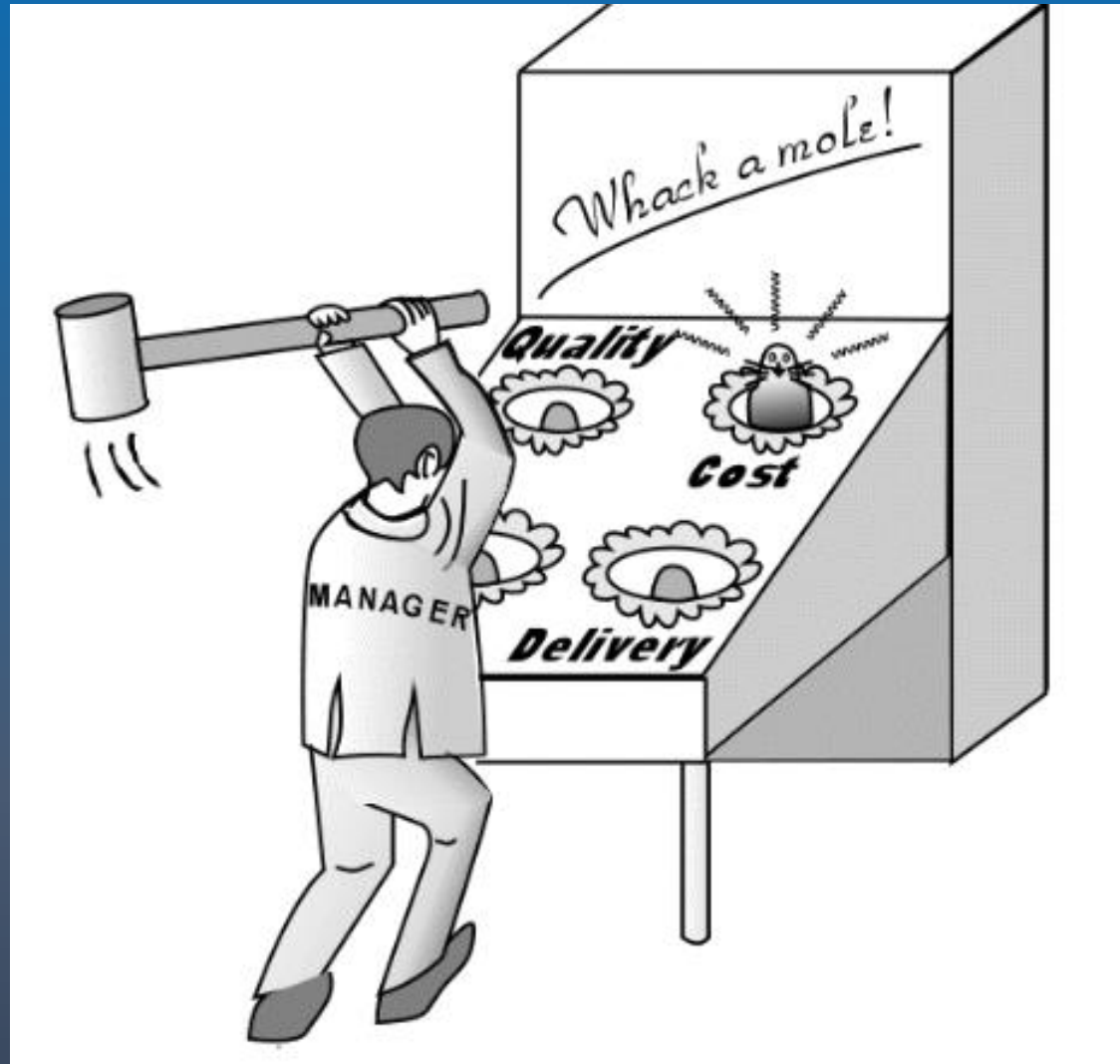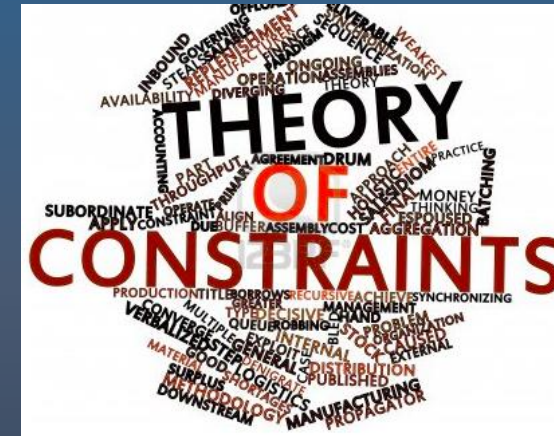
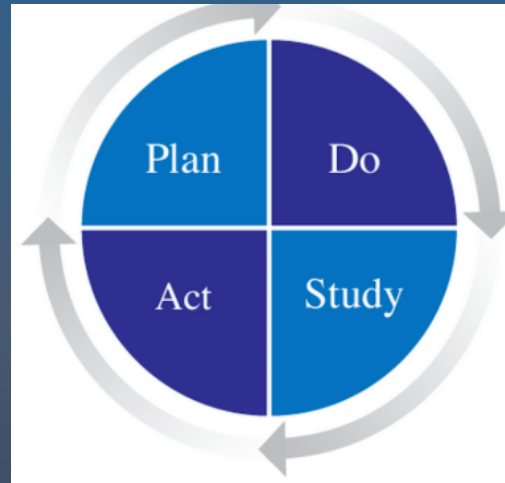# Healthcare environmental pressures today

- Regulatory
- Legislative
- Improve population health
- Improve delivery systems of care

Current approach to improving quality, care delivery & controlling costs in healthcare

What high-reliability is NOT….

What High Reliability IS…

Systematic approach to operations improvement that blends process awareness, employee empowerment, and appropriate improvement methods and tools.

➤ Highly complex environments;

➤ Failures are catastrophic;

➤ Many touch points and decision makers;

➤ Workflow interdependency;

➤ Tasks are time limited

High-reliability *outside* healthcare

Example of high-reliability _in_ healthcare

- Blood Donor Centers

- Blood Whole Processing Centers

- Laboratory Blood Banks

Why we should adopt a systematic approach

❖ Diagnostic errors are leading type of paid malpractice claim & account

for up to 17% of adverse events (IOM, 2015 report)

❖ Wrong side surgeries, wrong procedure, wrong patient surgery

❖ 30-day Readmission penalties

❖ CAUTI/CLABSI, Hospital Acquired Infections (HAI's)

❖ "In-hospital falls" persist

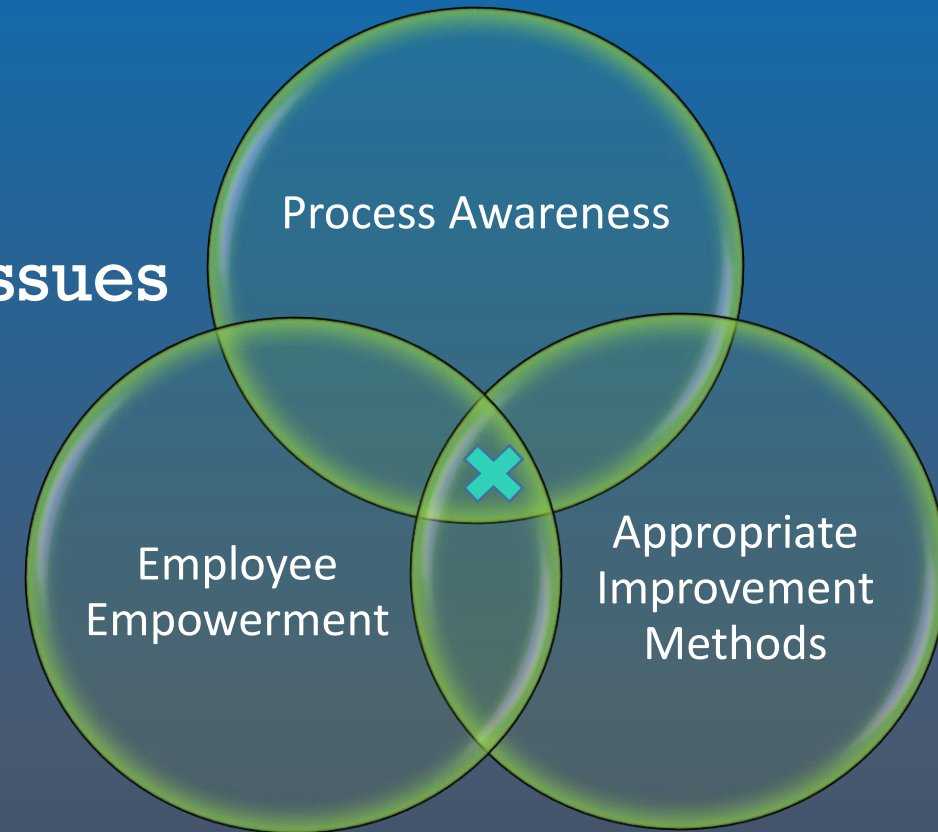❖ Other never events (medication error, pressure ulcers, etc.)

Value of a systems approach to HR

- Help lower costs while:

  o Improving care delivery,

  o Improving quality,

  o Patient centric care,

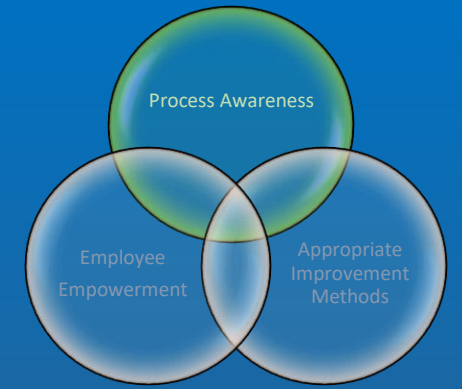 o Increasing focus on results of care (outcomes)

High-reliability organization (HRO) traits

- Preoccupation with failure

- Reluctance to simplify interpretations of issues

- Deference to expertise

- Maintaining sensitivity to operations

- Maintaining a commitment to resilience

Process Awareness

Employee Empowerment

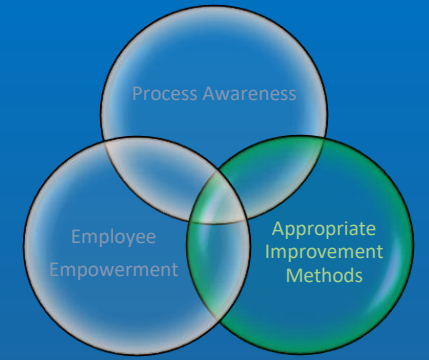Appropriate Improvement Methods

Trait 1: Preoccupation with failure

- Prevent incidents before they occur (proactive vs reactive)

- Use near miss events as learning opportunities

Operational relevance

❖ Proactive review of weaknesses allows mitigation

❖ Near misses serve as powerful case studies to train staff
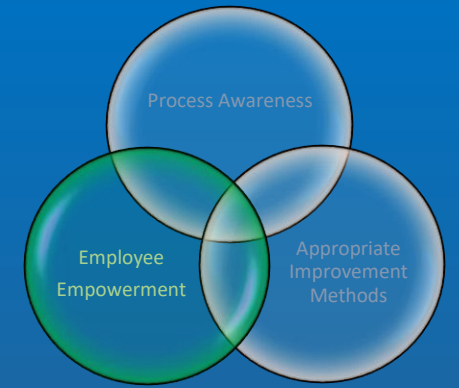
Trait 2: Reluctance to simplify interpretations

- Methodical review and not accept "simplistic solutions or fixes"

- Oversimplification leads to "band aid fixes"

Operational relevance

❖ Data driven exploratory methods to determine root causes

❖ Execute improvement activity with awareness of system impact
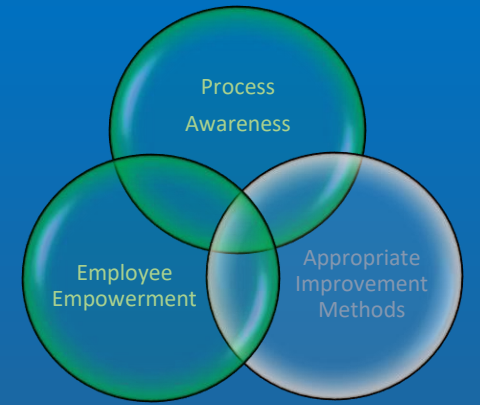
Trait 3: Deference to expertise

- Defer to those with real time knowledge (irrespective of title or position)

- De-emphasis on hierarchy when responding to or preventing problems

Operational relevance

❖ Staff closest to the issues are best equipped to fix them

❖ Promotes critical thinking at all various levels
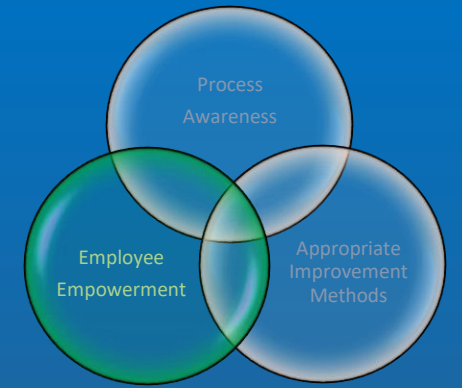
Trait 4: Maintain sensitivity to operations

- Situational awareness of changes in policies and procedures

- Quickly identify and update system issues to prevent errors

Operational relevance

❖ Stay connected to the environment that supports care

❖ Monitor activities that impact staff ability to function
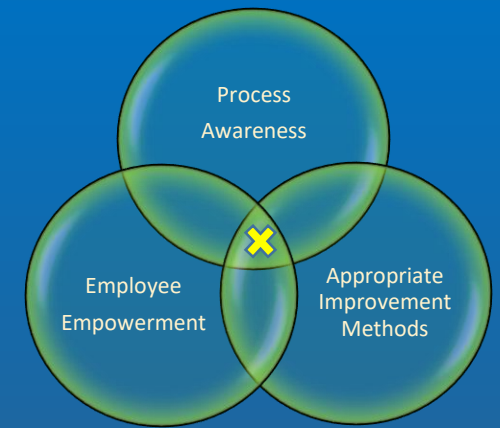
Trait 5: Commitment to resilience

- Maintain a culture of innovation and nimbleness

- Fight complacency in daily work

Operational relevance

❖ Ensure high-risk areas have redundancies and contingencies

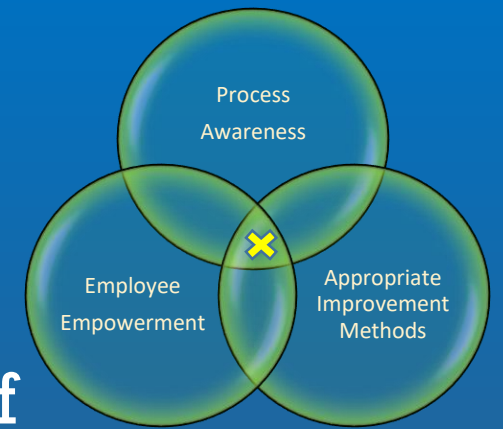❖ Hold drills, training, and review cases to maintain awareness

Re-invigoration Assumptions

- High-reliability is part of organizational strategy

- Various disciplines understand how HR applies to their role

- Governance structure in place to manage transformation

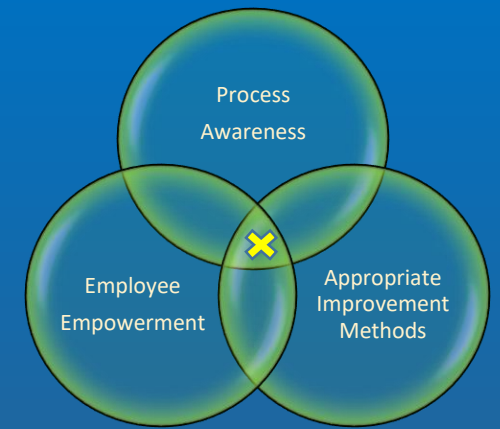- Prioritized strategic portfolio of high-risk business processes

HR Re-invigoration Focus Areas

1. Process Awareness: build and maintain a culture of operational vigilance;
   ❖ *Preoccupation with Failure & Sensitivity to operations*

2. Empowered Employees – frontline problem solving
   ❖ *Deference to expertise, Sensitivity to operations, Commitment to Resilience*

3. Appropriate Improvement Methods – using tools properly
   ❖ *Reluctance to simplify*

Conclusions

High reliability concepts used as a system:

❖ Establishes a consistent culture of improvement

❖ Ensures proper use to tools to stabilize quality outcomes

❖ Empowers employees to sustain operational excellence

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