Quality First

Lessons Learned Contribute to Quality

Quality topics have been developed as part of the WTP Project's efforts to ensure high standards for quality are met. Employees are encouraged to read the topic aloud at meetings, and then lead a discussion, using the questions provided to engage others. The purpose is to enable all WTP employees to recognize areas of their work where quality can be ensured and improved.

Experience is the Best Teacher

The WTP Lessons Learned program is an opportunity for employees to improve their quality performance by learning from the experience of their peers. Lessons learned are described as good work practices or innovative approaches that are captured and shared to promote a repeat application, or adverse work practices of experience that are captured and shared to avoid recurrence.

Participating in the Lessons Learned program is not only a good practice to share knowledge gained on the project, but it is a contract requirement as part of the Integrated Safety Management System.

How to Ensure and Improve Quality

Employees can improve the quality of their work by learning from the positive and negative experiences shared through the Lessons Learned program. Employees should take time to look through the system before planning or executing their work, and then apply what they learn to their own work activities.

One of the best resources available to WTP employees is the Hanford operating experience database known as OPEXShare. All WTP employees are encouraged to register on the OPEXShare system. This site also is available from the Safety & Quality tab on the WTP homepage menu. Since 2008, this system has been gathering operating experience and lessons learned information from Hanford contractors, the U.S. Department of Energy and other government entities. The site provides opportunities for employees to learn from a wide variety of information and tools and provide feedback in an effort to prevent negative and sometimes costly events.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you shared or benefited from a lessons learned?

2. When can you use lessons learned to improve the quality of work performed by you or your group?

3. How can you ensure that lessons learned you retrieve from the OPEXShare site are used in planning new tasks?

4. How can you incorporate lessons learned into self-assessment planning?