

# TEN FACTS about human failures

## **FACT 1:** Human failures are universal and inevitable

*“Right. That was easy. Can we get back to work then?”*

## **FACT 2:** People cannot easily avoid those actions they did not intend to commit

*“So, more training isn’t always the complete answer then?”*

## **FACT 3:** Errors are consequences rather than causes

*“So, when I find out who messed up, I could try to find out why it happened, rather than just sacking them?”*

## **FACT 4:** Many errors fall into recurrent patterns

*“Then why don’t we predict what could happen, rather than just watching it happen?”*

## **FACT 5:** The same or similar events have often occurred before

*“Does this mean that we can learn from other people’s expensive mistakes?”*

## **FACT 6:** The best people can make the worst mistakes

*“Experience isn’t everything then?”*

## **FACT 7:** Similar failures occur in all industries

*“So, our people aren’t any different from say, train drivers, doctors or pilots?”*

## **FACT 8:** Safety-significant failures can occur at all levels of the system

*“You’re saying that some managers are human too, and they can get things wrong?”*

## **FACT 9:** There are certain situations and conditions that lead people into the same failure (regardless of who is performing the task)

*“This means that, if I was in their shoes, I would have made the same mistake?”*

## **FACT 10:** You cannot change the human condition, but you can change the conditions in which humans work

*“That’s it! Why don’t we change those things that make failures more likely?”*