



# Five keys to managing teams effectively — Part I

It's sometimes difficult to keep well-trained personnel around. Keeping management on their game is an effective way to promote an enticing workplace. Based on years of experience in refining and chemical plants, focusing on these standard five keys to managing teams can leave a lasting impact on the workforce.

1. **Communication** — Managers need to be the epitome of communication. The first thing to think about when managing an area is the most important data needing to be communicated. The most important communication for that unit is from the unit operators and maintenance technicians who keep the unit running safely every moment of every day. The communication the operators have with each other and the maintenance technician working on the unit is the key to keeping that unit running. This includes not only logbooks, permits and handovers but also standards for the verbal communication given around the unit. As a manager, it is important to define the communication avenues and protocols.

2. **Leadership** — Although not a

given in today's world, leadership is an extremely important quality in every situation. No matter who is working together, communicating, instructing, assigning, traveling together, etc., there is a leader and leadership qualities. Sometimes the leader is named outright; sometimes he is not. All of the issues including safety, quality of work and paying attention to detail are driven by the leader. Although managers and supervisors are the leaders in many situations, the leadership qualities that are really important are the qualities in the senior people at your facility. Leadership training should not only be a part of the management and supervision, it should also be a part of the philosophy of the senior people in every discipline at your facility.

3. **Situational awareness** — This is an unsung hero among soft skills. The way to reach proper situational awareness is to come at a task from a high level. Looking from above, what from the surrounding area is going to have any interaction with that unit? What actions are being taken during the time of that event in all of the

surrounding areas that touch that unit? Coming closer toward the area that is going to be worked on, what surrounding things will have any effect in a 360-degree spherical area? For example, is the welding of a nearby pipe going through another area and heating up near other equipment? Starting from a high level and then moving closer to the actual work can create a better awareness of the situation.

4. **Teamwork** — This is defined as the effective and efficient combined action of a group. Although the definition and the word can be somewhat vague, the reality is it's easy to see when everyone involved in a project or a particular event is participating and altogether helping for a greater outcome. As a leader of a team, it's important to examine the roles out loud and give direction to each member of the team for his responsibilities. The way this is done can profoundly affect the look and feel of the team, as well as the outcomes of its actions. The leader should recognize each team member's attributes and talents, and give the team a positive breakdown of what that member brings to the team. Then

align those attributes to the work that needs to be accomplished. This gets all members excited about their roles and brings their talents to the team.

5. **Decision making** — There is always an important decision to be made throughout the life of a project or action being taken. Being prepared for a decision includes a few items. Ensure the correct team members are involved to help in data collection. Ensure the effects of the decision on all of the surrounding areas, before and after, are understood and noted. Also, be open to recommendations that give opportunities to think outside the box and make the correct decision with all variables in play. Promoting effective teamwork, communication and mastering situational awareness can make any leader an effective decision maker.

Applying these five keys to effective management will promote a more communicative, enticing and safer work environment.

**For more information, contact Vern Wingfield at (713) 284-1814 or email [vwingfield@gpstrategies.com](mailto:vwingfield@gpstrategies.com).** ●

**BHI energy**

## Gold Standard Service

**The Gold Standard**

- Safety First
- First-Time Quality
- Schedule & Cost Certainty
- Innovation
- Ease of Doing Business
- Continuous Improvement

**Specialty Welding & Machining**

- Automatic/Semi-Automatic Weld Overlay
- Orbital Welding
- Boiler Tube Butt Welding
- Vessel & Piping Modifications
- Coke Drum Repairs
- Specialty Welding

**Professional & Technical Support**

- Engineering (all disciplines)
- Construction & Project Management
- Project Controls
- Technicians & Machinists
- Safety Specialists
- Estimators & Schedulers
- Administrative & Business Support

**BHI energy | WeldTech** → **BHI energy | Specialty Services**

Different name, same services you've come to expect.  
[www.bhienergy.com](http://www.bhienergy.com)

**Want more workforce options in your PIPELINE?**

From **gap analysis** and **knowledge capture** to skills training, GP Strategies™ delivers the results your plant needs to reverse workforce shortages and keep your **productivity flowing**.

To learn more about our solutions for oil and gas, read "Five keys to managing teams effectively – Part I" in this publication or visit us at <http://oilgas.gpstrategies.com>.

**GP STRATEGIES™**  
Knowledge. Performance. Impact.

© 2015 GP Strategies Corporation. All rights reserved. GP Strategies and GP Strategies with logo design are trademarks of GP Strategies Corporation. All other trademarks are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#) [YouTube](#)