

managing decisions

across all levels of your organisation

when you as an executive don't directly control, or supervise, the frontline employees and managers whose decision making can make or break your business

This course looks at how senior managers and leaders can create an organisational culture, value system, processes and procedures, that give clear direction to subordinates who make critical decisions on their behalf on a daily basis. These include judgments and actions relating to **quality control, safety, customer service, purchasing, and technical operations**, that only come to the attention of executives if they deviate significantly from the norm, whether for better or for worse. Decision making of this nature has the ability to throw a business into severe **crisis** or even make it fail, a situation that often takes senior managers completely by surprise. On investigation, however, it usually turns out that staff were only following the intent of their superiors as they understood it.

Consider these examples –

The decision by senior engineers at **Volkswagen** to cheat the emission tests for diesel engines as the company strove to achieve its central strategic objective, to become the market leader in the USA.

Estimated cost \$80bn, and hundreds of lives

The interpretation by crew members on board the **Deepwater Horizon** oil rig that the well pressure test they had conducted meant the Macondo Well was safe from any danger of a blow out and other defence mechanisms could be dispensed with. This followed an overhaul of the **BP** safety management system with the aim of 'streamlining decision making', initiated by CEO Tony Hayward.

Estimated cost \$40bn, 11 lives, massive environmental destruction

The operational decision by managers at **Malaysian Airlines** to continue routing **MH17** over Southeast Ukraine, in order to save on fuel costs. This came in spite of an FAA directive banning all US commercial flights from this airspace, an action matched by each of the tier one airlines. At the time MA was in deep financial trouble.

Loss of 283 lives and a Boeing 777, MA forced to restructure

This course draws on the management disciplines of Leadership, Organisational Behaviour, and HRM to demonstrate effective strategies for managing organisational decision making. It is also based on extensive research into 'High Reliability Organisations', who do this well, and into best practice across safety management, incident and emergency management, aviation 'Crew Resource Management', and systems theory.

The course is made up of in-depth case studies, both positive and negative in their lessons. Participants will be presented with realistic scenarios to work through. The teaching method is predominately one of 'experience-based learning'.

Course coordinator is **Dirk Maclean** PhD MBA, author of the forthcoming book, 'Shoot, Don't Shoot' 'Minimising the Risk of Catastrophic Error through High Consequence Decision Making'. Dirk has wide experience in the military and emergency services, has trained Incident Management Teams on mine, oil and gas sites, and has acted as a crisis consultant to the dairy industry among others. He lectures in numerous MBA programs, mostly in OB, HRM, and Leadership units.