Inclusive Environment

The first time you arrive at a site or offshore platform, the feeling can be daunting. Not knowing what to bring or what to expect is challenging. Often, the offshore is a hierarchical environment and traditionally, leadership is demonstrated by command and control. However, to foster an inclusive environment, people need to feel safe to be themselves. To foster an inclusive environment this will require incremental changes and a desire by everyone to make this happen. As much as making it a law, our moral obligation should drive how we are mindful of our differences.

The moment we identify that someone is offshore for the first time, the OIM and the immediate team leader should consider providing a buddy for the new member of the crew. Other ideas of inclusion to be considered include the following:

- Each company should have a guide that details what to take offshore for first time visitors or crew members.
- The welcome briefs should always have a statement of inclusion.
- The offshore leadership organogram should be publicly displayed.
- Encourage having tea breaks and meals with immediate team members.
- The duty safety rep should spend time with the newly arrived individual.
- Be flexible about dietary requirements and, if individuals are happy sharing this information, let the new individual know if there are other members on board with similar dietary requirements.
- Let the camp boss know someone new is on board to give them an opportunity to discuss their living arrangements (e.g. sanitary bins and pads for females, people who are non-smokers, dietary requirements – be it allergies or religious needs, etc).
- Provide an opportunity for a new member of the team to make suggestions of what could have made their time on site even better.
- Reward good and helpful behaviours - The OIM and team leaders should openly celebrate good behaviour.
- No public display of pornographic material should be allowed or tolerated.

It's important to recognise that over time, the site environment becomes a second home for most people, and being comfortable in your environment is key to peak and safe performance. The key to making anyone feel included is RESPECT, a core value for many organisations. During toolbox talks or shift briefs, always ask the quiet voice for their thoughts and opinions; consider holding back on "banter" with new members until you know your audience, it doesn't have to take a long time but gauging your audience first is better for your long-term relationship rather than ignorance to someone else's situation.

Above are just a few ideas of how to create an improved culture, the key is openness and acceptance.

It is only by being inclusive do we foster an environment of safety and excellence.