

“CRITICAL INCIDENT”

This is a way to identify the forces and factors which affect the way one can find, make and take a role for the benefit of the system.

Finding the role

During the "Critical Incident" -process the Facilitator interviews the Presenter and together the two explore the parts and the purpose, the Primary Task, the parts in which the Critical Incident Case Study happened. A group of analysts are listening.

Making the role

After the interview the aim is to get to the realities by developing and testing hypothesis given by the Analysts about the Presenter's experience of the external and internal forces and factors which affect the way the Presenter makes the role.

What is really going on in the system? Pressures, feelings, conflicts?

Analysts shall focus on one aspect of the situation to develop a hypothesis.

What is the evidence?

Why is it happening?

Developing a hypothesis and testing for reality is a work done by Analysts together with the Facilitator.

The steps:

- 1) Listen to the information from the Presenter and try to find **what is really going on**.
- 2) When you think that something is emerging, state which system/subsystem you are focusing on, and form a hypothesis to express what it is: "**My working hypothesis is..**
- 3) **Give the evidence** which you consider backs up the hypothesis to make it convincing.
- 4) Say **why** you think this is happening.
- 5) Try to find a question to test the hypothesis - through the Facilitator - which can provide fresh evidence which tests the hypothesis.
- 6)
 - a) What additional information would provide further evidence for your idea about what is going on or show it is not the case?
 - b) Open ended questions. No yes- or no-questions!
 - c) If the hypothesis is confirmed, whatever happens it can encourage learning and you can move on further to other hypothesis.
 - d) Does the Presenter's response confirm, disconfirm or modify the hypothesis?

Taking the role

The Facilitator asks the Presenter about what possible actions she/he can take about the Case Study Critical Incident which will benefit the system, taking account of the pressures and factors identified.

If the Presenter wants to give an answer the Analysts will be invited to reflect on the proposed action and give feedback to the Presenter.

What is a likely response to the proposed action?
What are the risks?

Review

At the end, the group reflect on their experience in their various roles (Presenter, Facilitator, Analyst) and debrief.

What insights and implications are emerging about what it might mean to work in role in order to serve the purpose of the system?

Brief for the role as Clarifier in the “Critical Incident”- session

Aim: To enable the Presenter to enlarge on the critical situation so as to provide enough material for the analysis to begin.

Phase 1 Information Phase

- The Clarifier manages the session and acts as a gatekeeper between the Presenter and the Analysers. Chairs are set up so that the Presenter faces the Clarifier and the Analysers sit a bit away so that the Presenter is not distracted.
- The Clarifier starts: ” *Can I invite You to tell me more about the critical situation..* ” Let the Presenter unfold the story without interruption to begin with – to take authority for what she/he wants to say. Clarifier may then come in with questions to elicit more information.
- The Clarifier listens carefully, concentrates on facts, and registers her/his feelings during the interchange which may be the clue to the emotions involved in the situation. Consider why the situation is critical to the Presenter.
- Do not worry if you get confused.
- Taking a systemic view means that the Clarifier will: raise questions about the context of the situation and its history, look for other factors which may be influencing the situation and the Presenter, identify boundaries and possible stakeholders...
- Never sum up – keep moving on. Never put your own hypothesis. Keep an open mind.
- The Clarifier always refers to the Presenter as ”*Presenter*” not by her or his personal name. This allows objectivity.
- When a crucial relationship or happening is spoken of, the Clarifier asks the Presenter ” *how did you feel then?* ” to get a felt experience.
- If time allows, invite a limited number of clarifying questions for the Presenter from the analysers.
- At the end of the phase, ask the Presenter to turn the chair to sit with her/his back to the Analysers. This protects against personal pressure on the Presenter, and allows the Presenter to reflect in freedom on the hypothesis being offered.

Phase 2 Analysis Phase

Aim: To help the Analysers work at their task of developing and testing hypothesis.

- Explain the method and steps in forming and testing hypothesis. Bear in mind that the **focus is on the role of the Presenter in the situation.**
- Encourage the Analysers to follow the steps, but don't worry where they start. If they want to ask a question, ask: *"What idea are you working on which this question will test?"*
- Put the Analyser's question in the Analysers own words to the Presenter. The Analysers work through the Clarifier all the time.
- The Analysers may need help in formulating their hypothesis and questions to test and get more evidence.
- After putting a question to the Presenter, go back to the Analyser and say: "What does that do to your hypothesis?"

Phase 3 Action Phase

Aim: For the Presenter to take ownership of the and choose action

- The Presenter is offered the opportunity to comment on the experience and to present what she/he might be planning to do next.

Phase 4 Review Phase

Aim: To review the session.

- The Analysers might be asked to give their reactions on what the Presenter says.
- Look at experience and learning.
- De-role as Presenter, Clarifier and Analyser.

