



South Cumbria &
North Lancashire Branch

Joint meeting 15th November 2018



South Cumbria Occupational
Health & Safety Group

Topic: *Leading yourself and others through imposed workplace change*

Speaker: Andy Harmer, Head of Leadership Development, VA Consultants, Kendal

Venue: The Netherwood Hotel, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 6ET

James Woolgrove, Chairman, *SCOHS*, welcomed members to the meeting.

Andy adopted an interactive approach to his subject; he ensured that no-one was allowed to fall asleep in the back row because members spent most of their time standing up and discussing leadership skills in different small groups of attendees and then reporting back to the full group.

During the session Andy focused on the importance of developing positive interactions between individuals in the workplace when there was organisational change. He demonstrated that clear communication between the employees, managers and employers was of paramount importance. He said that it was important that managers who had to implement organisational change had a good understanding of the personalities of the employees who would be most affected by the proposed changes and then use that knowledge to work out how to introduce the changes in a way that would encourage those affected by the reorganisation to 'buy into' the new management model.

Andy also emphasised that before introducing organisational change it was important that those implementing the changes needed leadership skills that enabled them to communicate the reasons why change was necessary and to show that the changes had the achievable goals and objectives.

He then explained that leaders (managers) in the workplace need to understand that employees' reaction to workplace change would go through the following stages: shock, denial, awareness, acceptance, experimentation, search and integration so that the skill of a good manager was to nurture a workplace culture where the negative reactions were minimised and to focus on positive outcomes such as opportunities to develop new skills.

James thanked Andy for helping members to reassess their approach to leadership skills in the workplace and presented him with a small token of the group's appreciation. James then encouraged members to network with one another over tea and coffee.

There was a committee meeting after the main meeting.

Related *HSE* information:

Leadership and worker involvement tool kit:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/assets/downloads/good-health-safety-leadership.pdf>

Leading health and safety at work: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/leadership/>

Leading and managing for health and safety: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/managing/leading.htm>