Workgroup: How to Select Your Next Console Operator

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Agenda

- What is it that makes the Console Operator job unique?
- What are some of the latest scientific findings about this job?
- How should you select your next Console Operator?
- LIVE Workgroup Discussion
Short Video - Refinery Console Operator
What Are Some Things That You Observed About This Job?

What Is It That Makes This Job Unique?
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

- High Information Processing Demands
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

- Visual Displays
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

◆ Interface Separates the Person From the Process
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

◆ Long Training Times
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

- Grave Consequences of Error
  - EXPLOSIONS
  - SPILLS
  - PROPERTY DAMAGE
What Makes the Console Operator Job Unique

◆ Stressful

There are only two times I feel stress: Day and Night.
Our Scientific Findings

- Based on Over 40 yrs of Research and Hands-On Operations Experience

- Job Analysis Studies at Dozens of Companies

- Refining, Chemical, Pipeline, Oil & Gas, Utilities
Our Findings: Key Console Operator Abilities

- **Selective Attention** - focusing during busy and slow periods
- **Problem Sensitivity** - determining when something is likely to go wrong
- **Time Sharing** - shifting between several things that need attention
- **Deductive Reasoning** - figuring out the cause of a problem
- **Resistance to Premature Judgment** - avoiding "over-operating" the system
- **Response Orientation** - quickly choosing among several actions
- **Visualization** – forming a mental image of the system; “seeing the big picture”
- **Speed of Closure** - making sense out of large amounts of information quickly
Our Findings: Not Everyone is Suited for This Job

Goal: How to identify Level 2 & above

Level 3: System Optimizer 10%

Level 2: System Users 40 - 50%

Level 1: System Responders 50 - 60%
What is COBRA?

**Console Operator Basic Requirements Assessment**

The refinery simulator is a simplified yet full-functioning refinery that uses a simplified distillation process to separate liquid mixtures into two separate end-products. The operator is able to control the distillation process through the manipulation of header, fan and valve settings throughout the refinery.
What is COBRA?

- A simulation-based tool/test that measures aptitude and trainability of individuals

- Measures abilities **required** of console operators:
  - concentrate over long periods of time; concentrate in the face of distractions; multi-task; quickly detect anomalies; remain calm and focused in emergencies; and be proficient at reasoning and problem solving

- Provides objective, computer-scored assessment

**COBRA** = *Console Operator Basic Requirements Assessment*
Why COBRA as a pre-screen?

- Functions as a trainability test
- Provides a safe environment for an individual to experience a console operator role
- Allows candidate to discover if they think this work is a good fit for them

**COBRA** = Console Operator Basic Requirements Assessment
How Does COBRA Work?

- Anyone can take it, no experience is necessary to do well on the test
- The tool teaches you everything you need to know during the session
- 3 phases during COBRA session:
  - Phase 1 - Computer Based Training (~2 hours)
  - Phase 2 - 8 Practice Scenarios (1 hour)
  - Phase 3 - 4 Test Scenarios (1 hour)
Sample COBRA Scoring Report

- Comments on this particular report:
  - Scores range from 45 to 95
  - Five of the nine (55%) who were tested failed (score < 70)
Our Findings: COBRA Fills In Many Gaps in the Hiring Process

Traditional hiring methods measure some “Key” abilities:

<table>
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<th>Key Abilities</th>
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<th>Paper &amp; Pencil Tests</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>COBRA</th>
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<td>1. Selective Attention</td>
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<td>2. Problem Sensitivity</td>
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<td>4. Deductive Reasoning</td>
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<td>5. Oral Expression</td>
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<td>6. Oral Comprehension</td>
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<td>7. Resistance to Premature Judgment</td>
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<td>8. Speech Recognition</td>
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Our Findings: Big Payoffs to a Good Selection System

- Highly competent operators
- Less training time
- Less attrition
- Fewer incidents
- More efficient operation

COBRA will ensure you get high quality trainees into your workforce
Summary

- The Console Operator job is unique

- Our scientific findings indicate that not everyone is suited for this type of work

- You should use COBRA to assess key Console Operator abilities and identify who is trainable for the job
LIVE Workgroup Discussion

- Your questions?
- What sorts of skills and education are you looking for currently?
- What barriers do you encounter in recruiting the best people?
- What are typical problems your new workers have in learning the job?
Thank You!

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Jolene K. Kramer

- Worked at Chevron in the SF Bay Area for 15 years
- Co-founded Job Performance Systems in 1997 to promote Safety and Operational Excellence by helping clients implement state-of-the-art Operator Selection and Training
- The COBRA assessment program is used at over 150 locations worldwide