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# ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

OMAINTEC 2023, RIYADH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(In the name of Allah the most Gracious, the most Merciful)

## Objectives

### The Objective of RCA basic training:

- ❑ Learn Root Causes Analysis Methodologies.
- ❑ Be aware of RCA Management System
- ❑ Enhance RCA knowledge and Skills.
- ❑ Promote the Value of RCA.





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### RCA Consultant



**Abdulaziz Al-Ghamdi**

- ❑ Founder and President of Reliability Expert Center
- ❑ Bachelor Degree in Business Administration
- ❑ 42 Years of Working Experience with Aramco, SABIC & REC.
- ❑ Pioneer of Systematic RCA in Saudi Arabia
- ❑ Implemented Reliability Projects in major companies
- ❑ Trained more than 6,000 professionals.
- ❑ Expert in RCA, Reliability, Operation, and Management



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# RCA and Reliability Engineer



**Omar Al-Ghamdi**

- ❑ General Manager of Reliability Expert Center
- ❑ Bachelor Degree in Mech. Eng. with first honor, PMU
- ❑ Certified MLT-1 from ICML
- ❑ Facilitated many RCA in Saudi Arabia
- ❑ Implemented Reliability Projects in major companies
- ❑ Expert in RCA and Reliability methodologies



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# REC Products & Services

### Reliability

Reliability software, and solution for industries to **manage assets** and **optimize** the **maintenance** and **reduce cost**

### Lubrication

Lubrication consultancy, training and certification service to enable **reliability** through **lubrication**

### Process Safety

Innovative consultancy & training to improve plant **Safety**, **PHA/HAZOP**, **PSSR**, **HAZAN**.

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### Root Cause Analysis

RCA consultancy, training and software solution to prevent problems from **re-occurrences** and **improve** overall plant **performance**

### Sustainability

Innovative software, consultancy, training & certification solutions to Improve plant **Safety**, **PHA/HAZOP**, **Product Stewardship**, **Corporate Sustainability** and **Productivity**

### Inspection & Asset Integrity

Managing inspection activities in industry. We focus on optimum **implementation**, **guidance** and **long-term effectiveness**, including RAM & LCC analyses

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# RCA & Reliability Overview

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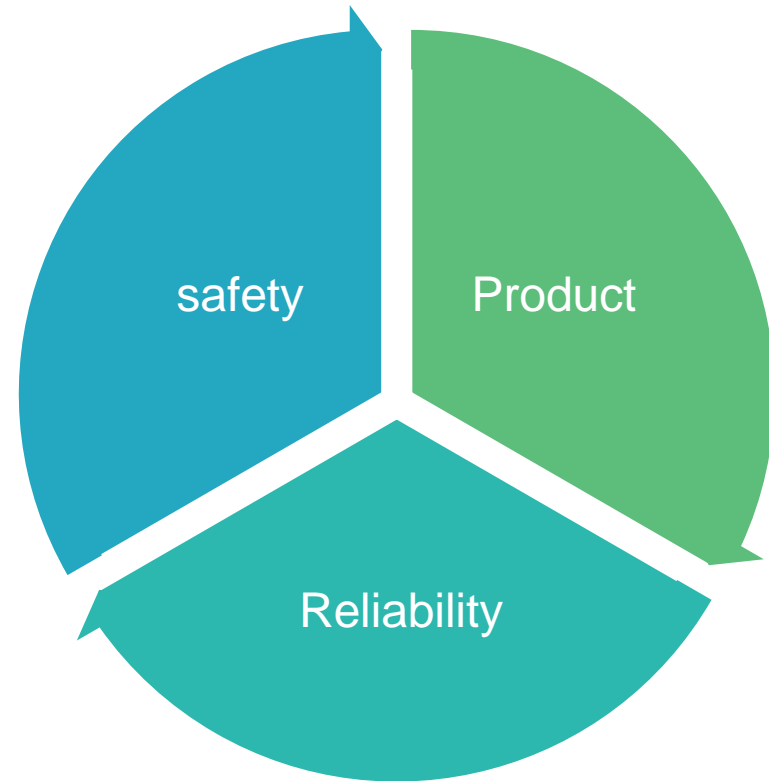


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## Top Priorities

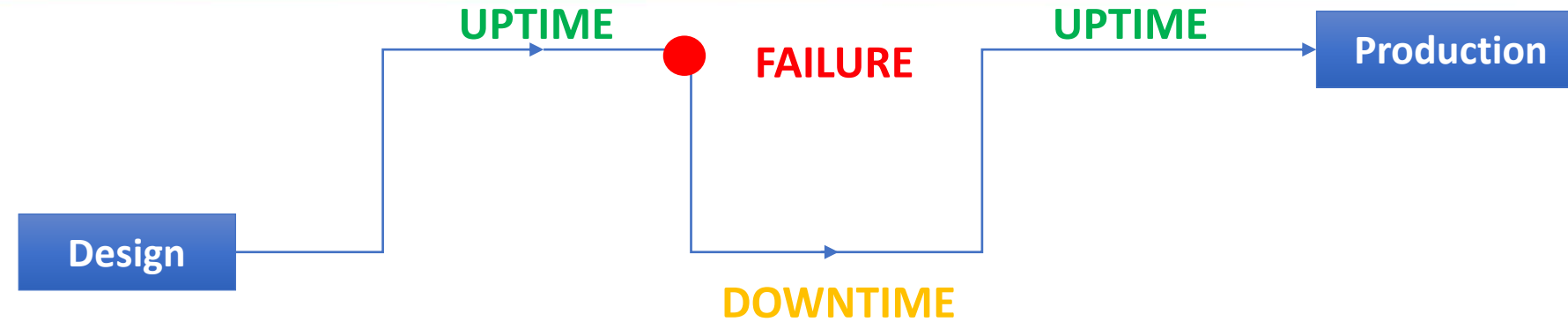






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## Plant Reliability



**RAM**

Reliability, Availability & Maintainability Analysis

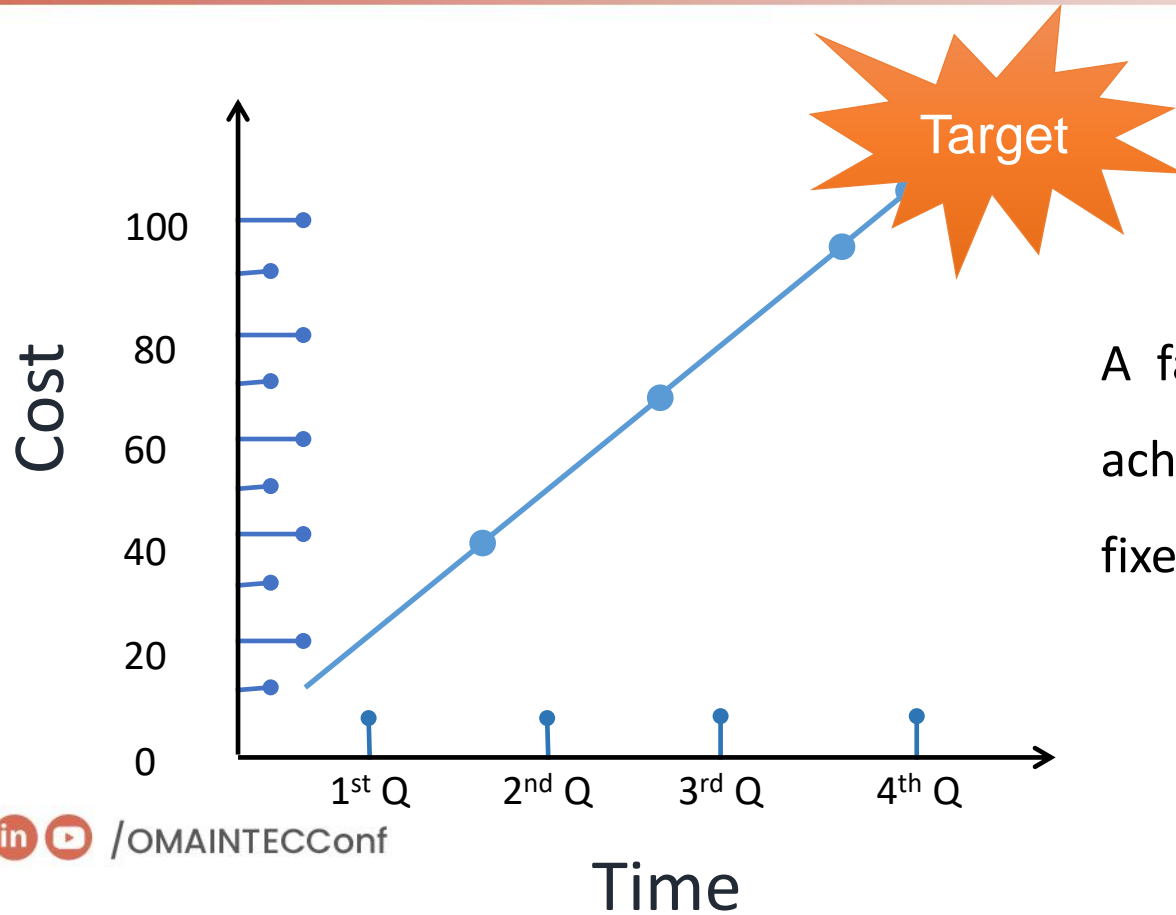
**APM / RCA / RCM / RBI / SIS**

Asset Performance Management  
Root Cause Analysis  
Reliability Centered Maintenance  
Risk Based Inspection  
Safety Instrument Systems

**Obsolescence**

Equipment Obsolescence study

## Failure Definition



A failure occurs every time we do not achieve the results we anticipated, in a fixed time, at the costs we budgeted.





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## RCA Definition

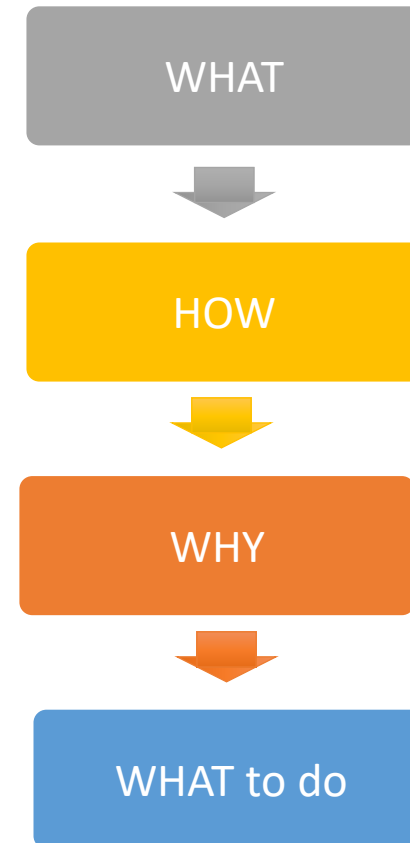
Root Cause Analysis “RCA” is a problem-solving methodology. It is a systematic process for identifying the fundamental causes of the failures and developing corrective actions to prevent them from reoccurring.



## RCA Main Process Flow

**RCA** is a systematic process designed to help investigators to:

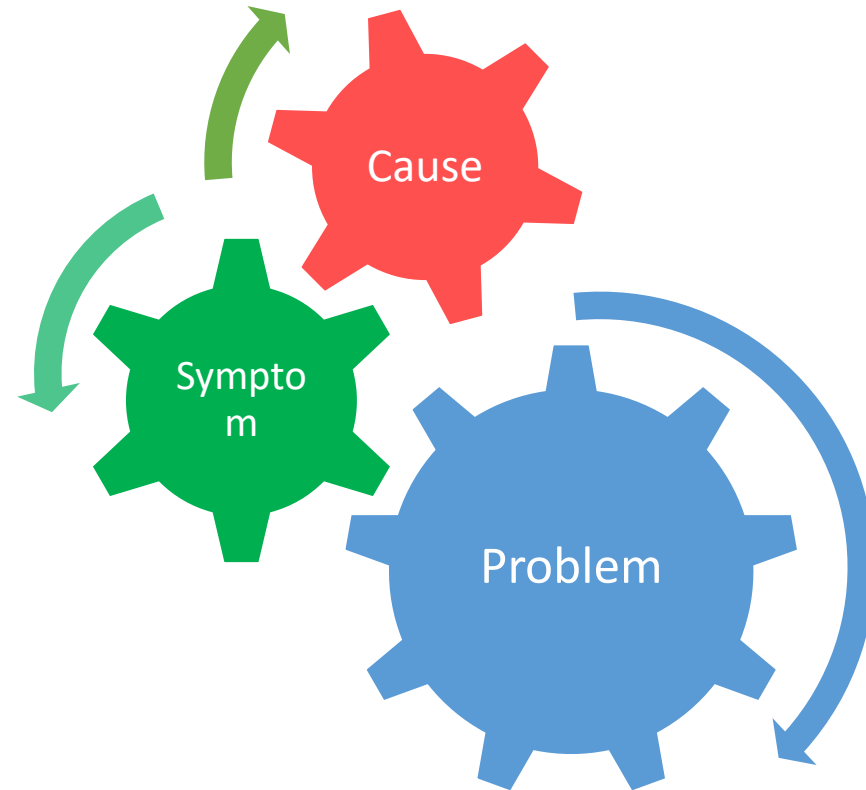
- ❑ Describe WHAT happened.
- ❑ Determine HOW it happened.
- ❑ Understand WHY it happened.
- ❑ Act on the recommendation on WHAT to do about it.



## Problem, Symptom & Cause

### Definitions:

- ❑ Problem is the difference between the actual situation and the desired situation. (Condition to be improved)
- ❑ Symptom is a sign or an indication for an abnormal condition.
- ❑ Cause is an action or condition that creates an effect or changed the situation.



## Problem Exercise



If you only fix the symptoms,  
the problem will almost  
certainly happen again...  
which will lead you to fix it,  
again, and again, and again.





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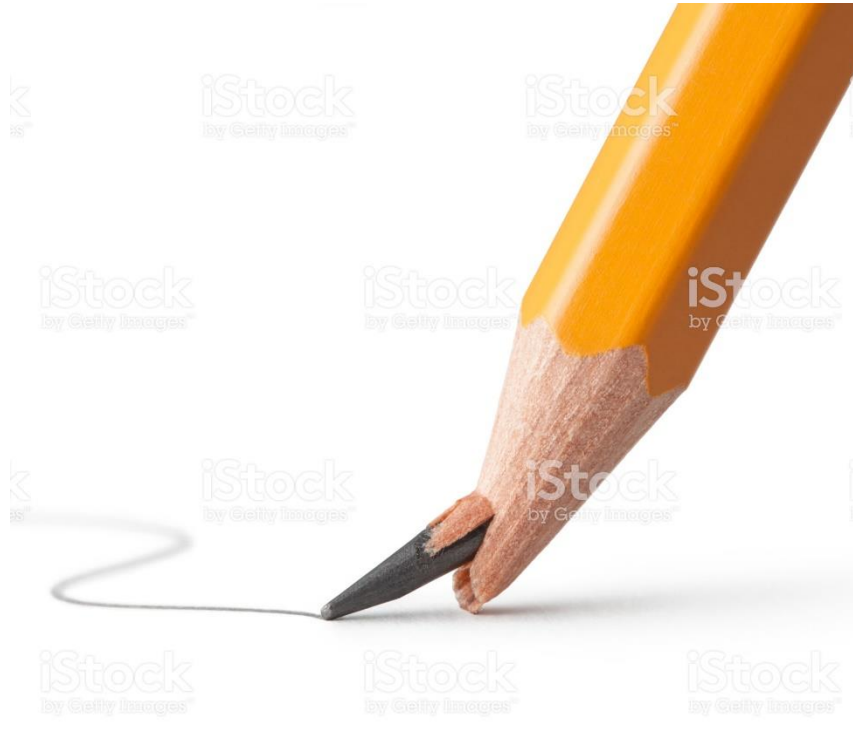
# When RCA is Used

### HSE Incidents

- Fatality or Injury
- Fire or Explosion
- Release/spillage
- Near miss

### Reliability Event

- Shutdown
- Production loss
- Equipment Failure
- Bad Actor







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## Simple RCA





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# RCA Management System

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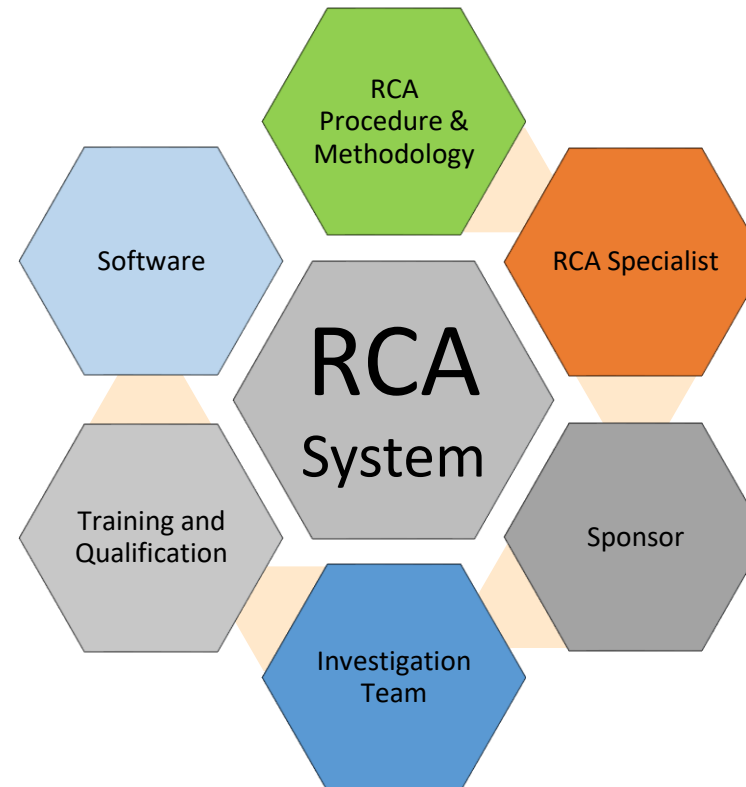


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## RCA Management System

RCA Management System normally contains:

- ❑ RCA Procedure & Methodology
- ❑ RCA Specialist
- ❑ RCA Sponsor
- ❑ Investigation Team Leader & Members
- ❑ Training & Qualification
- ❑ IR & RCA Software



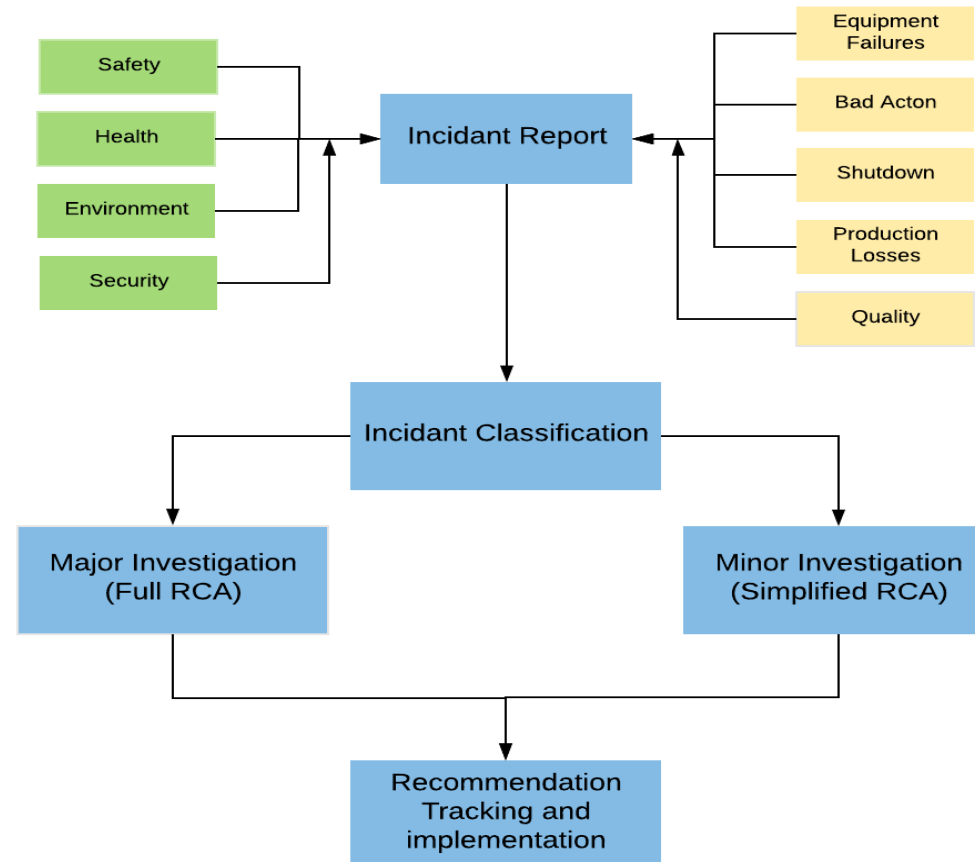
# Incident Reporting

## EHS Incident Reporting

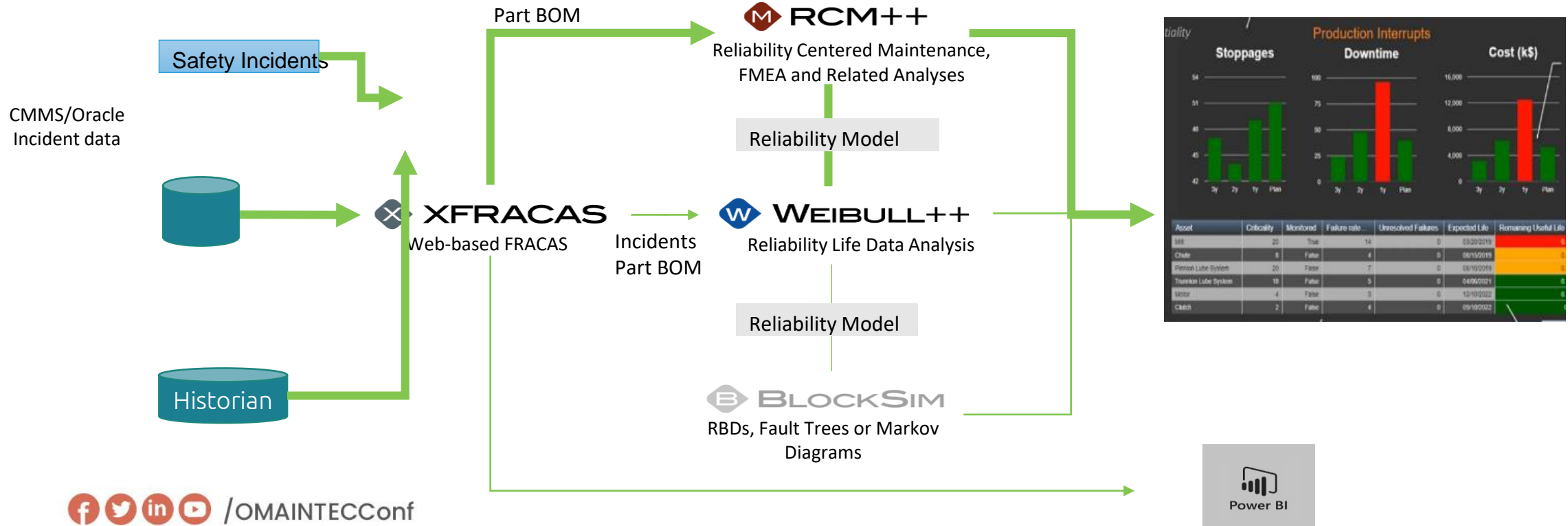
- Refer to EHS procedure.

## Reliability Incident Reporting

- Reliability Incident is reported in XFRACAS software.
- Refer to Reliability Procedure.
- Incident Report shall be initiated within 6 hours.



# RCA & Reliability Software





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## Reliability Classification Matrix

OPERATIONS/PRODUCTION & FINANCIAL	CLASS	RCA TYPE
Event resulted in > 5 days of production OR Financial loss of > SAR 10M	<b>CLASS A</b>	MAJOR Investigation (RCA)
Event resulted in between 3 to 5 days of production loss OR Financial loss of SAR 5M – 10M	<b>CLASS B</b>	MAJOR Investigation (RCA)
Event resulted in between 1 to 3 days of production loss OR Financial loss of SAR 1M – 5M.	<b>CLASS C</b>	Major Investigation (RCA)
Event resulted in between 8 to 24 hours of production OR Financial loss of SAR 100,000 – 1M	CLASS D	MINOR Investigation (5 WHY)
Event resulted in less than 8 hours of production loss OR Financial loss of < SAR 100,000.	CLASS E	MINOR Investigation (5 WHY)



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# Investigation Type

There are three type of investigations:

### Major Investigation (RCA)

Major investigation is conducted for Class A, B and C incidents.

### Minor Investigation (5 WHY)

Minor Investigation (5 WHY) is conducted for Class D and E

### Bad Actor

Bad Actors are repeating incidents. These are often the cause the most losses to an organization in terms of down time, equipment failure and maintenance expenses. [Actor Matrix](#)

CLASS	SPONSOR	TEAM LEADER	TEAM MEMBERS		FACILITATOR
			MIN	MAX	
A	President	Director	5	7	Full Time
B	Director	Manager	4	6	Full Time
C	Manager	Superintendent	3	4	Part Time
D	Superintendent	Senior Engineer or Supervisor	2	3	N/A
E	Superintendent	Senior Engineer or Supervisor	1	3	N/A

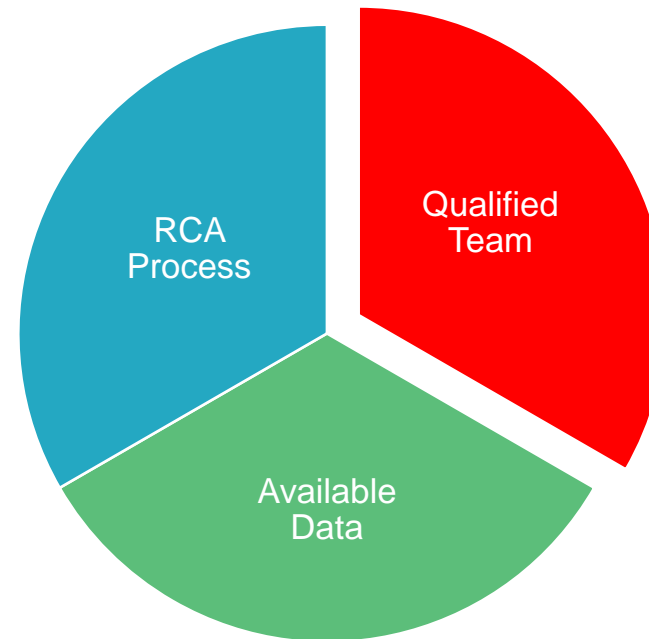


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# Investigation Quality

### To Develop Quality Investigation:

- ❑ Qualified Investigation Team
- ❑ Available Data
- ❑ RCA Process





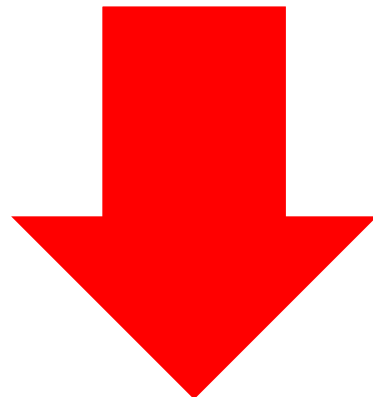


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## RCA Benefits



- Improve Profitability.
- Increase Plant Safety and Reliability
- Enhance Problem Solving
- Enhance Management System
- Enhance Quality

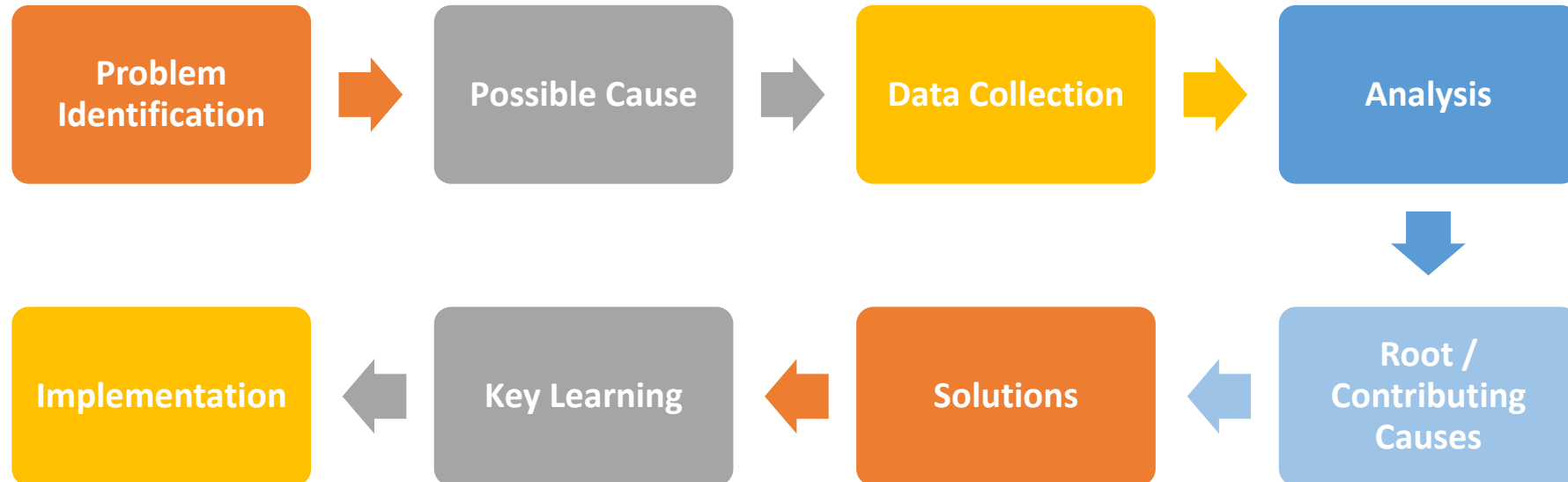


- Eliminate Safety Incidents
- Eliminate repeated Failures
- Reduce Environmental Risk
- Reduce Maintenance Cost



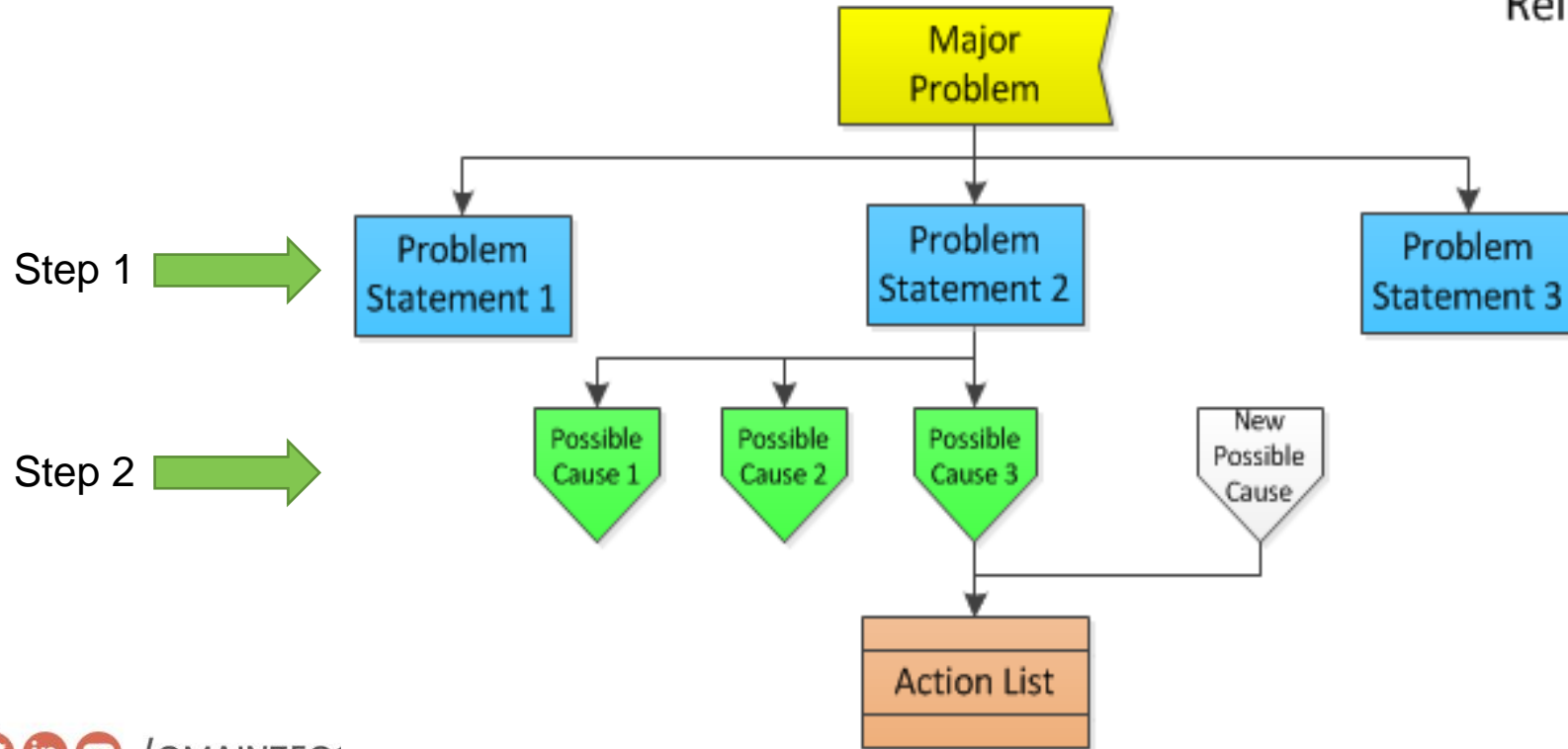
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## RCA Process Summary

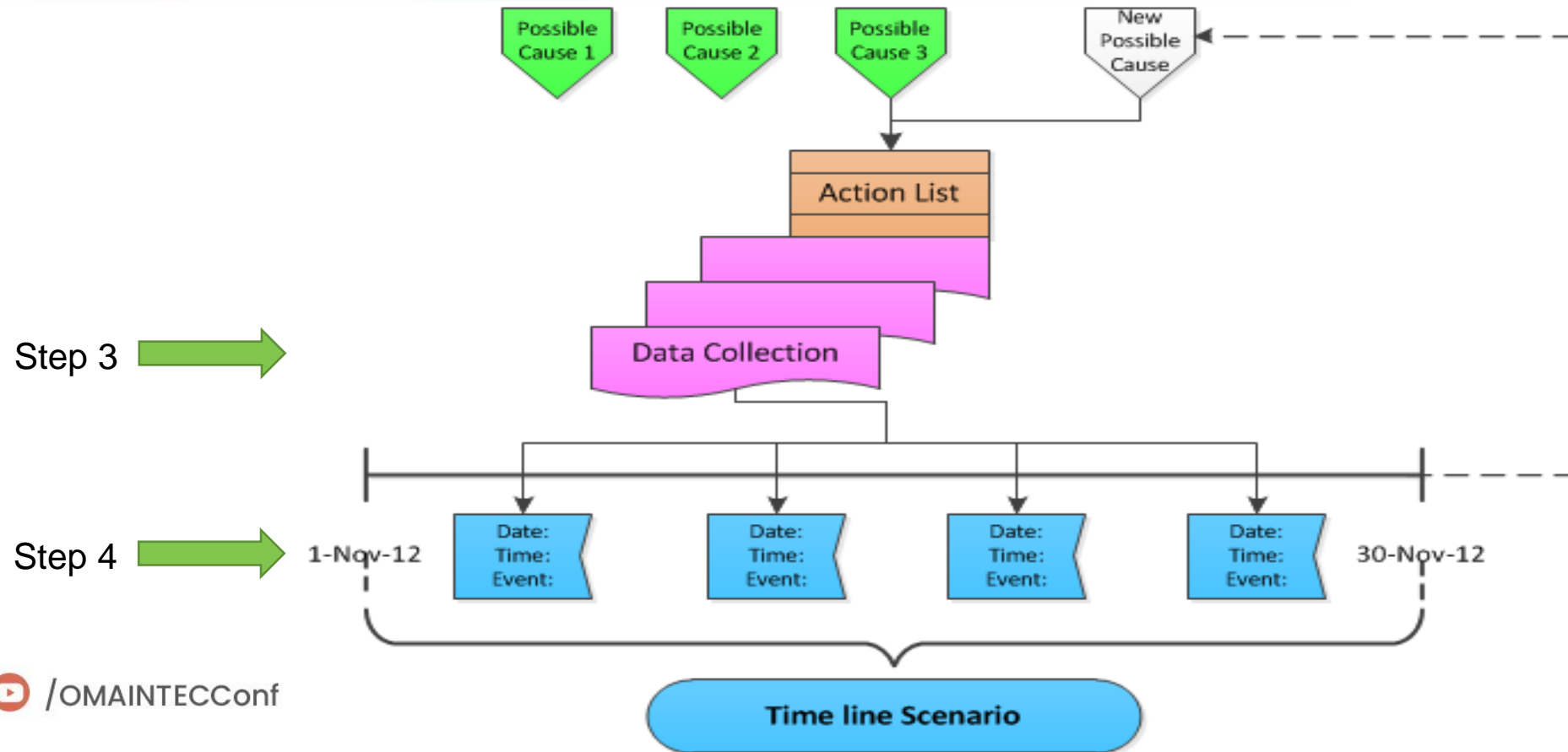


# RCA Process Flow

Reliability Expert Center  
RCA Process Flow



# RCA Process Flow



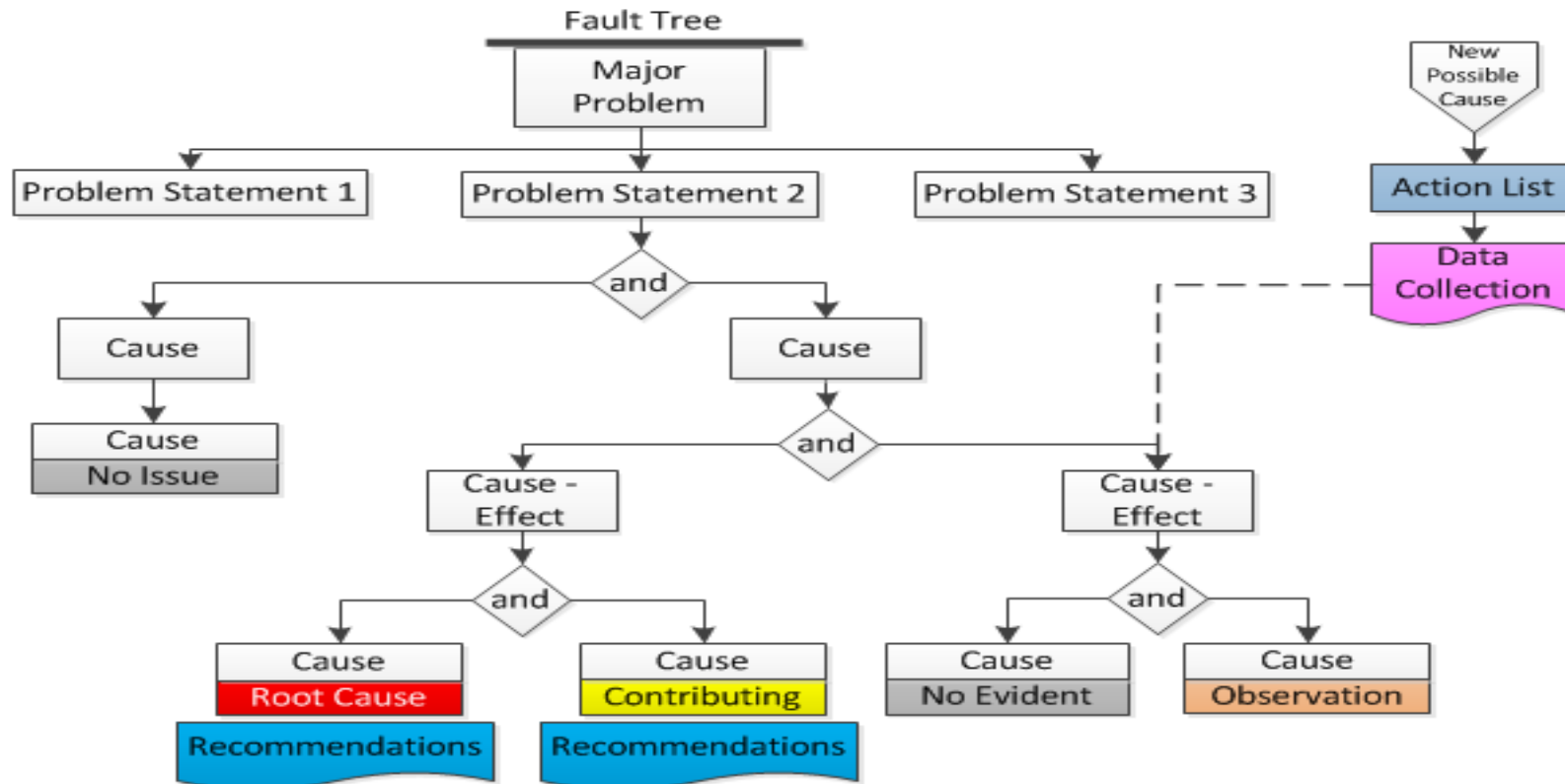
# RCA Process Flow

Step 5

Step 6

Step 7

Step 8





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# Fire Case Study

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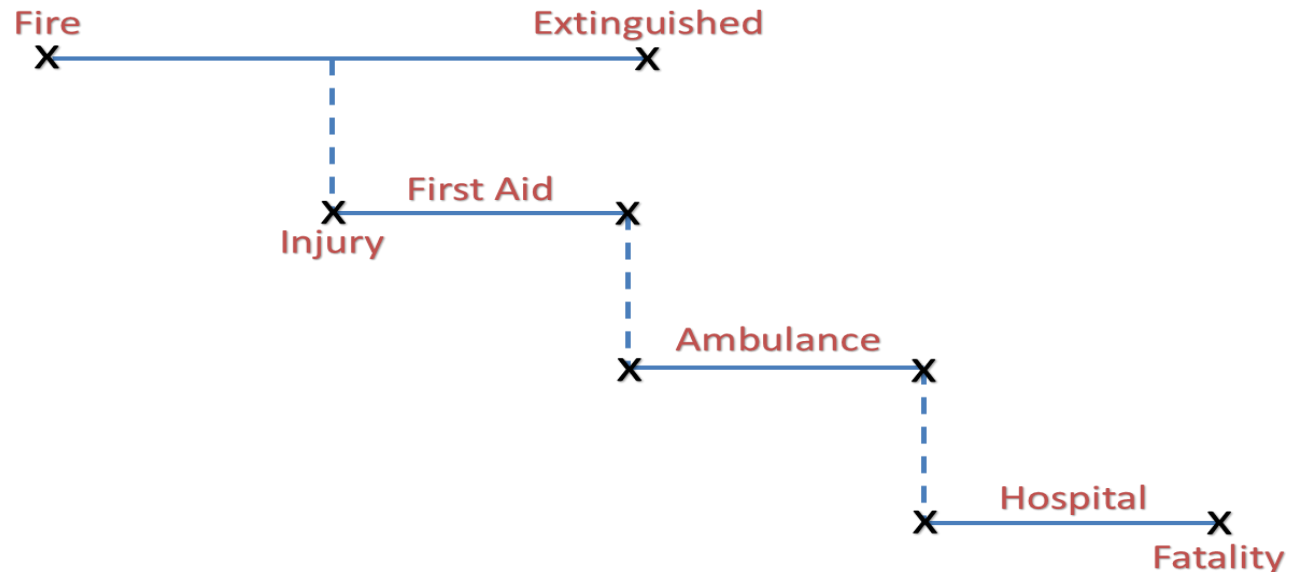
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## Problem Identification

A fire took place and lasted for 2 hours caused plant shutdown for one day, resulted in production loss and one man injured, he died at the hospital emergency room.

### REQUIREMENTS:

- Identify Main Problem
- Identify problem main events
- Identify SME for each events



## Data Collection Process

- ❑ Data gathering process is critical and time consuming.
- ❑ The purpose is to understand what and how the problem happened by creating an accurate and precise sequence of events.
- ❑ Data gathering starts with identifying;
  - ❑ Possible cause/s
  - ❑ Gathering data for each possible cause
  - ❑ Analyzing all data
  - ❑ Building Timeline with accurate causes supported by evidence.





## Possible Causes

There are normally three basic types of causes:

### Equipment Failure (Physical causes)

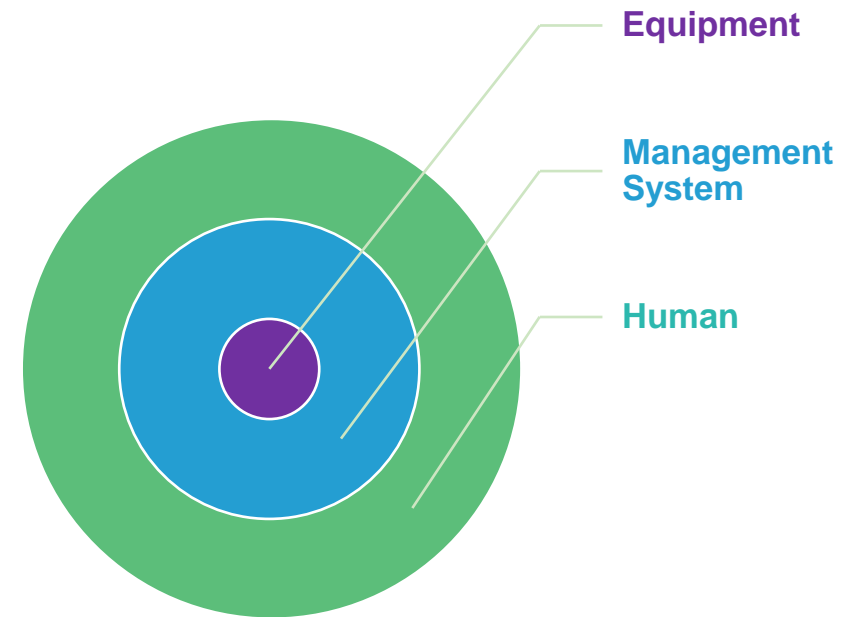
Tangible, material items failed  
(for example, a car's brakes stopped working).

### Management System Failure (Organizational causes)

Procedure, Training, or Software that people use to make a decision  
or do their work, not available or not sufficient.

### Human Error (Human causes)

People did something wrong; or did not do something that was  
required.

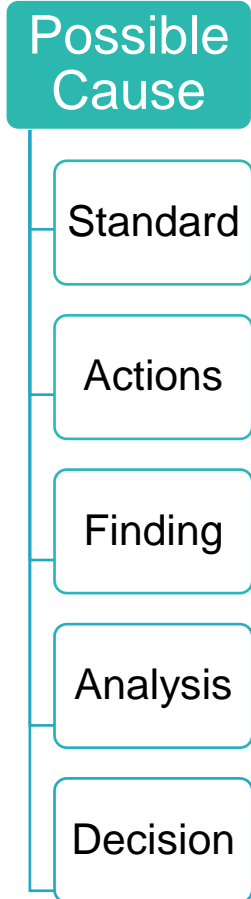




## Possible Cause Action

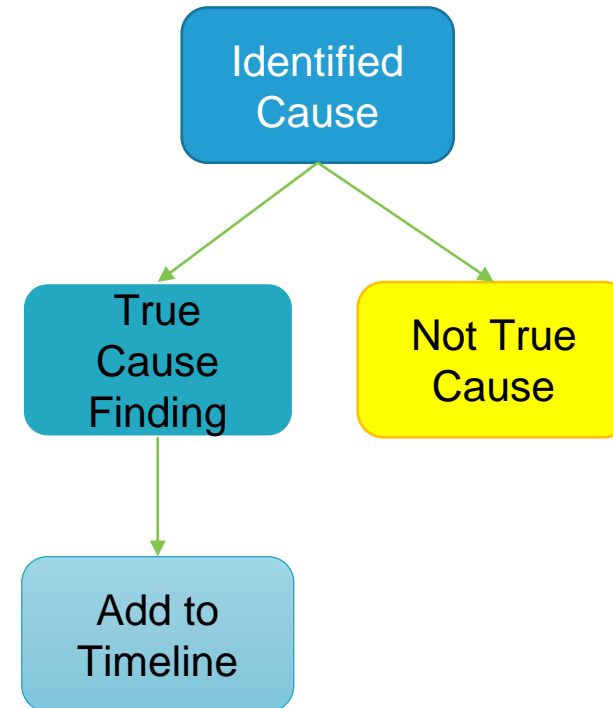
The purpose of developing actions for possible cause are to gather data in order to proof or eliminate the possible causes.

- Start with identifying the standard.
- Create minimum one action and maximum three actions.
- All actions should be SMART.
- Team write the “ What action” and SMT explain “How action shall be created”



## Possible Causes

- ❑ Identification of causes takes time & some causes can be ignored.
- ❑ The possible cause can identify multiple causes which, if true and relevant, would explain what happened.
- ❑ It provides paths to follow in collecting data.
- ❑ Looks for changes
- ❑ Some possible causes will be proven, and some may be eliminated.





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## Data Collection Area

### Data Collection

Equipment

People  
Interview

Management System

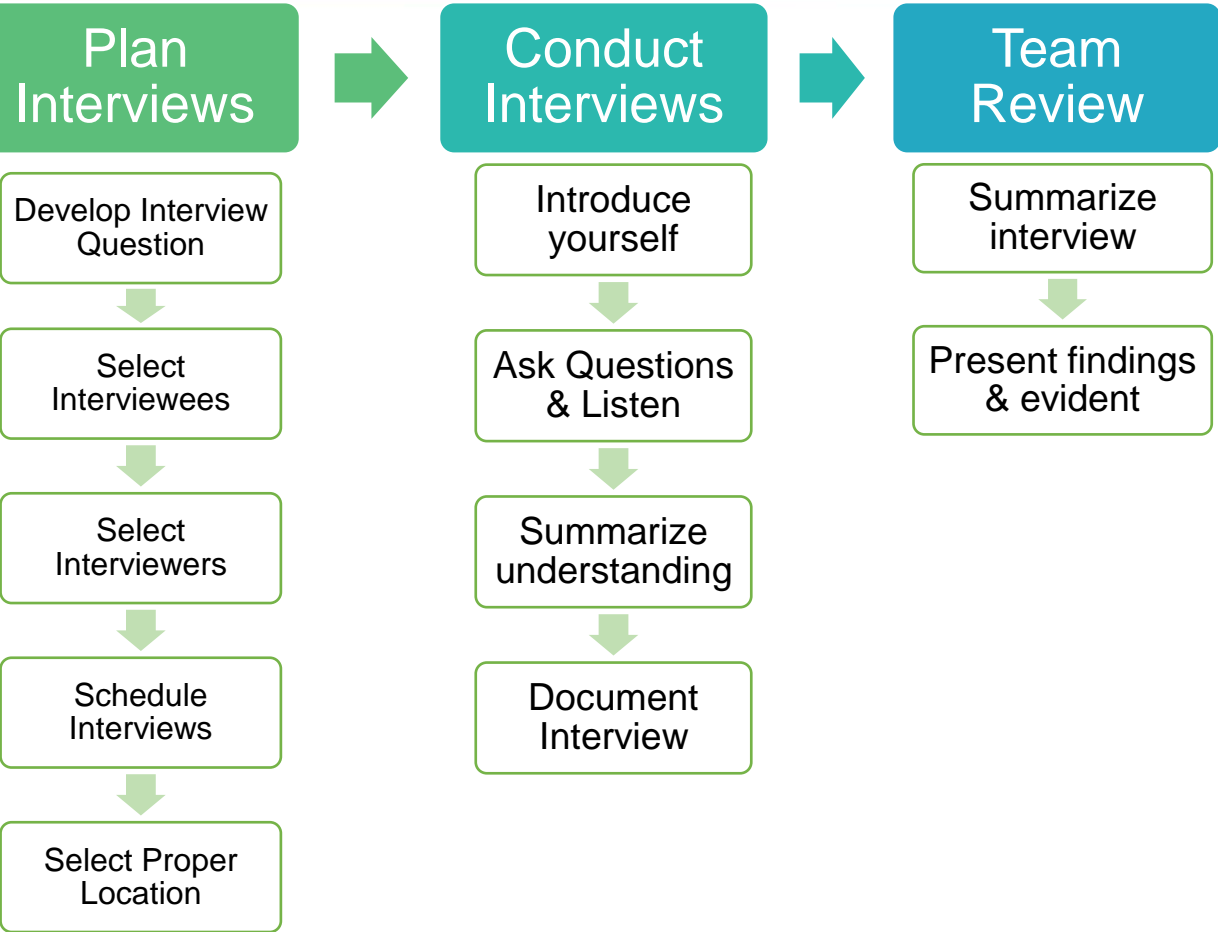
The intent of data collection is to prove or eliminate the identified possible causes. The data collection will be:

- Through developed action list.
- Collected from Equipment, People, or Management Systems

# Interview

The purpose of the interview is to collect factual data and not to blame the persons involved in incident directly or indirectly.

- Interview questions can be extracted from possible cause actions.
- Questions can be sent to interviewee prior to the meeting .
- Identify all people directly involved in the incident.
- Use one to one meetings only.





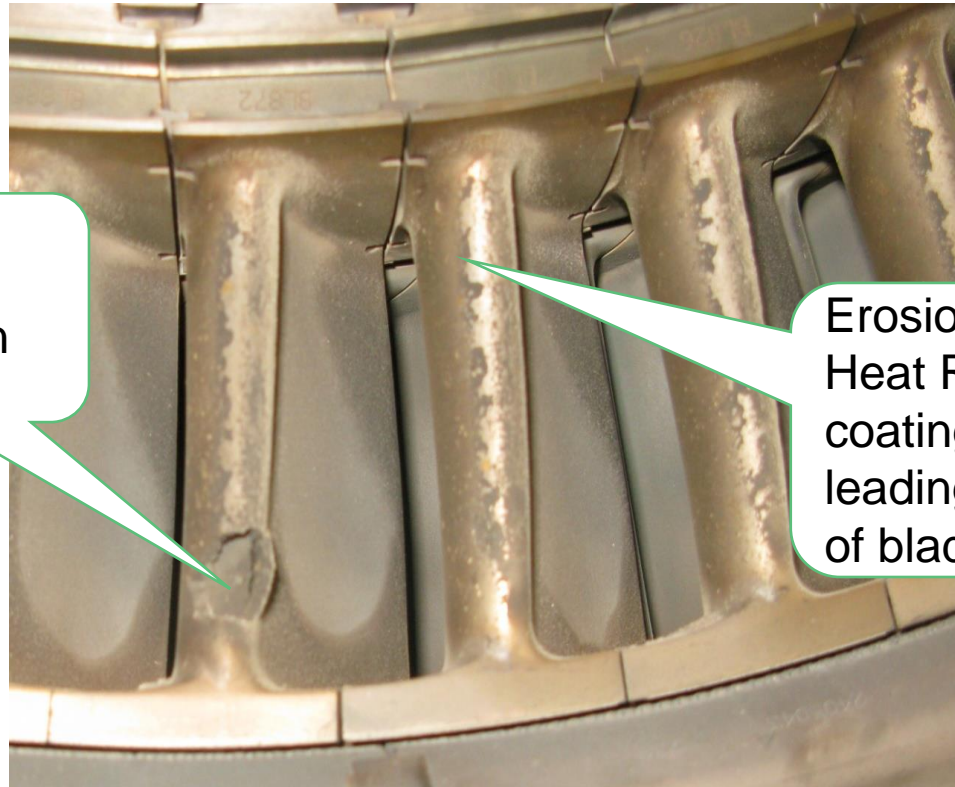
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## Data Collection Example

#	Possible Cause	#	Actions	Action By	Date	Finding
2	Hi Moisture air to EP from Air Blower	2.1	Identify design temperature of air conveyor system	Omar	4/8/2019	Design temperature is 200 degrees C
		2.2	Identify actual temp of air conveyor system.	Ali	4/8/2019	184 F
		2.3	Test performance of condensate trap	Ali	4/8/2019	No condensate trap
3	Low Air Flow to Drive the Ash	3.1	Identify actual air flow	Hamza	4/8/2019	Air pressure design is 1.26 Kg, and actual is 1.1 Kg.
4	Rotary Feeder not working	4.1	Test condition during operation	Osama	4/8/2019	Vibration test performed during operation and found OK

## Case Study (Damages)

Hole and  
impact  
damage on  
blades



Erosion of  
Heat Resistant  
coating on the  
leading edges  
of blades



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# Data Quality

Collected Data can be rated for quality as follow:

Qualities of Data	Definition
Facts	Precise, Accurate, Verifiable, Measurable
Inference	Logical deduction based on facts
Hypothesis	Causal theory (if true) could explain the facts
Assumption Opinion	Individual perception
Common Belief	Shared perceptions
Hearsay	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , or 4 <sup>th</sup> -hand information
Guess	Educated or wild deduction
Fantasy	No basis, distortion



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Only data with proven evident rated “Facts, Inference & Hypothesis” can be used during investigation.

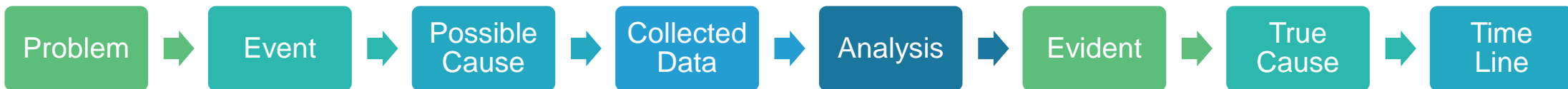
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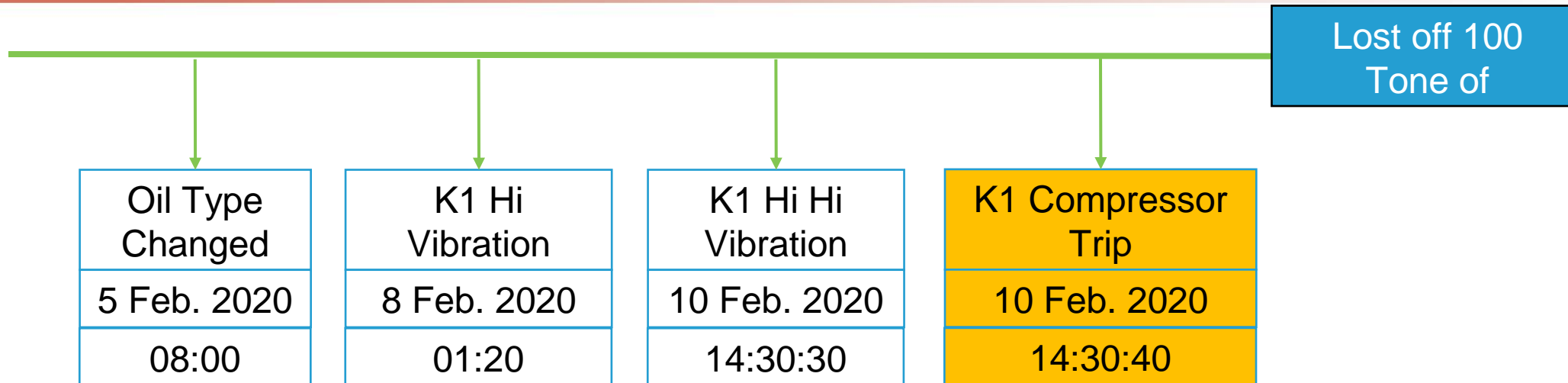
## Timeline

Accurate Timeline is based on an Accurate result of:

- ❑ Selecting the right [Problem](#)
- ❑ Determining the right [Event](#)
- ❑ Identifying all [Possible Causes](#)
- ❑ Collecting the right [Data](#)
- ❑ Conducting the right [Analysis](#)
- ❑ Determining the right [Evident](#)
- ❑ Pinpointing the [True Causes](#)
- ❑ Building the right [Timeline](#)



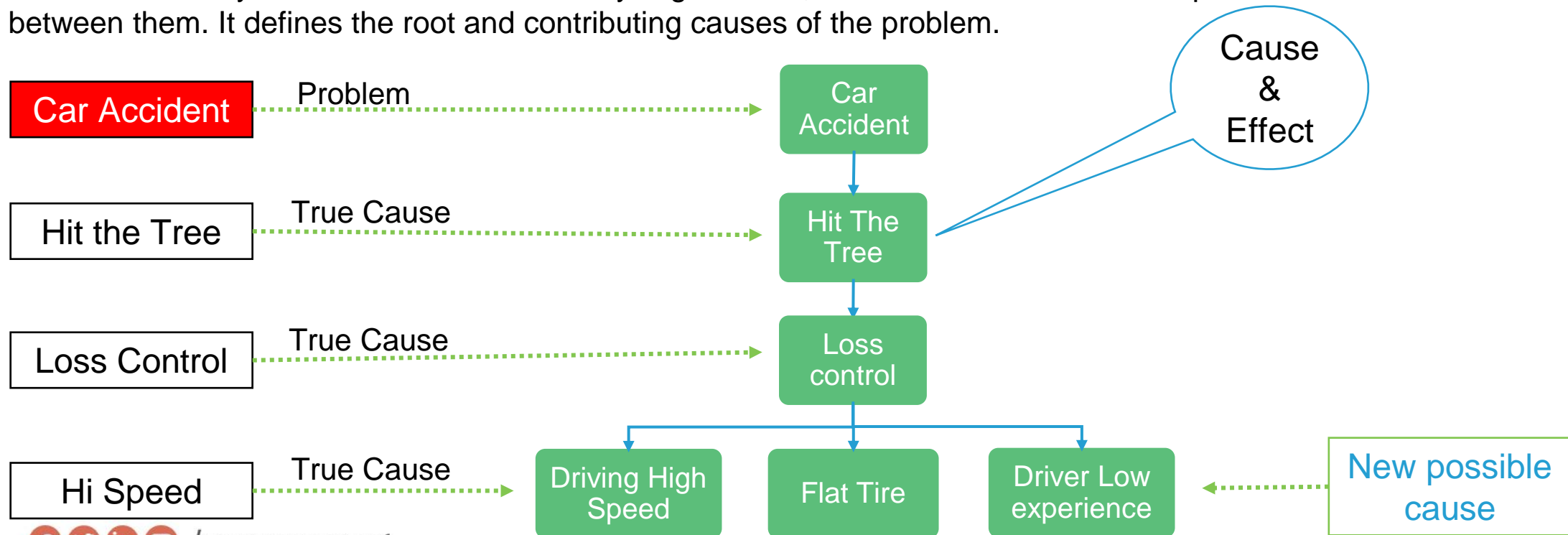
## Timeline (Example 1)



- Timeline follows backward direction. It starts from the time incident happened and ends with the first event or action that cause or contributed to the incident.
- The time scale on a timeline can be based on years, months, days, weeks, hours, minutes, or even seconds. Normally more than one timeline is created for one incident

# Fault Tree Analysis

Fault Tree Analysis is a method for analyzing causes, effect and the relationship between them. It defines the root and contributing causes of the problem.

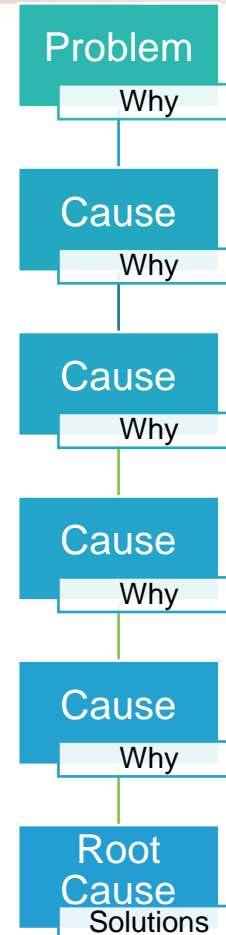


## 5 Why

**5 Why** is a question-ask technique used to explore the cause and effect relationship for one single small problem.

Car did not start. (the problem)

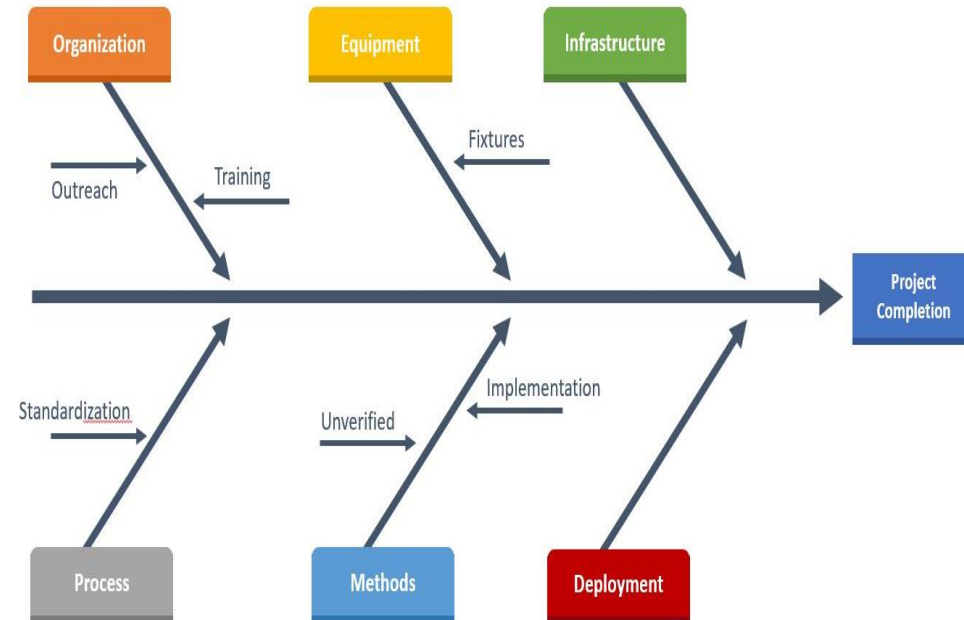
- ❑ **Why?** - Battery is dead.
- ❑ **Why?** - Alternator is not functioning.
- ❑ **Why?** - Alternator belt has broken.
- ❑ **Why?** - Belt was not replaced on time.
- ❑ **Why?** - No maintained as required.



## Fish Bone Diagram

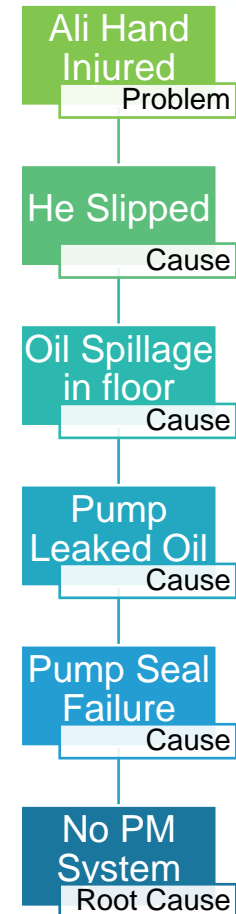
The Fishbone diagram is a tool often used together with brainstorming. It provides a pre-defined set of axes in looking for the root causes.

- ❑ Ishikawa diagrams were proposed by Ishikawa in the 1960s.
- ❑ It shows the cause/s of a certain event.
- ❑ Best to use for identifying possible causes.

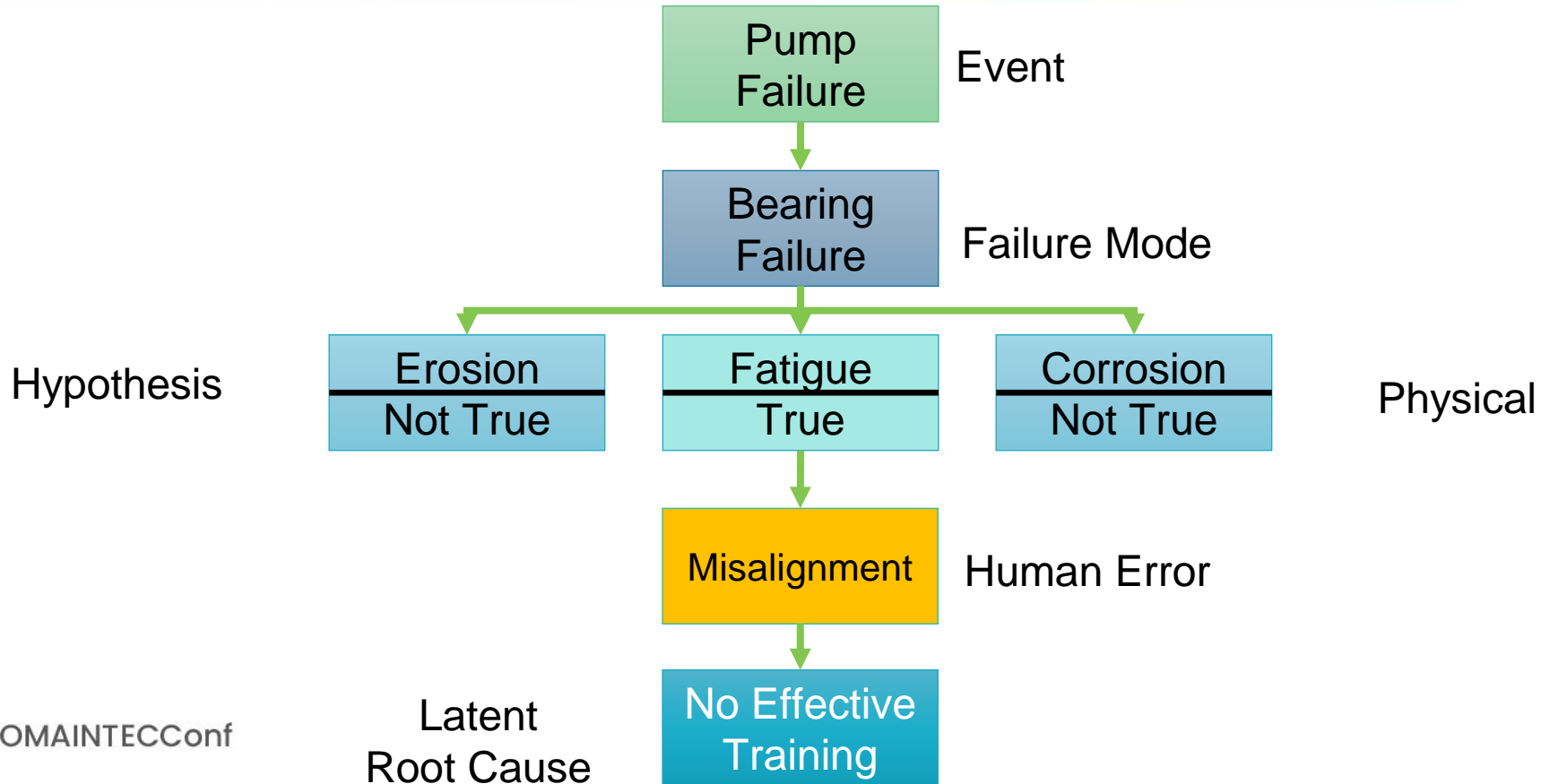


## Fault Tree (Single Line)

- ❑ A Fault tree is built based on cause and effect relationship.
- ❑ It starts with problem statement.
- ❑ Use the WHY process to find the right effect
- ❑ Each cause/effect box must have a proven evidence
- ❑ 2<sup>nd</sup> box normally is a direct cause.
- ❑ End boxes are defined as root causes and contributing causes.



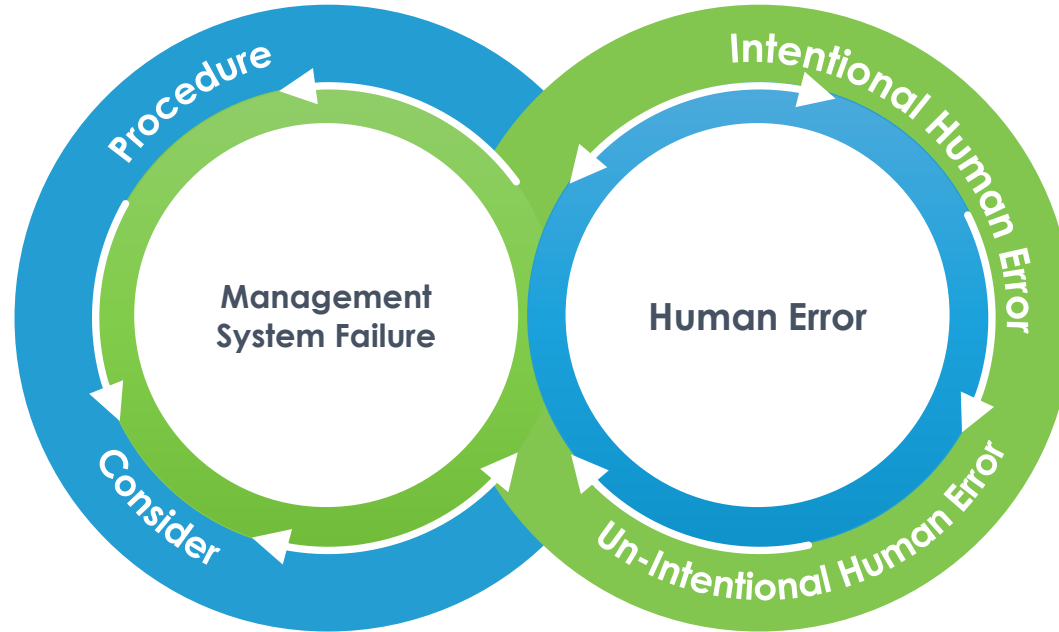
# Logic Tree (Example)



## Root Cause

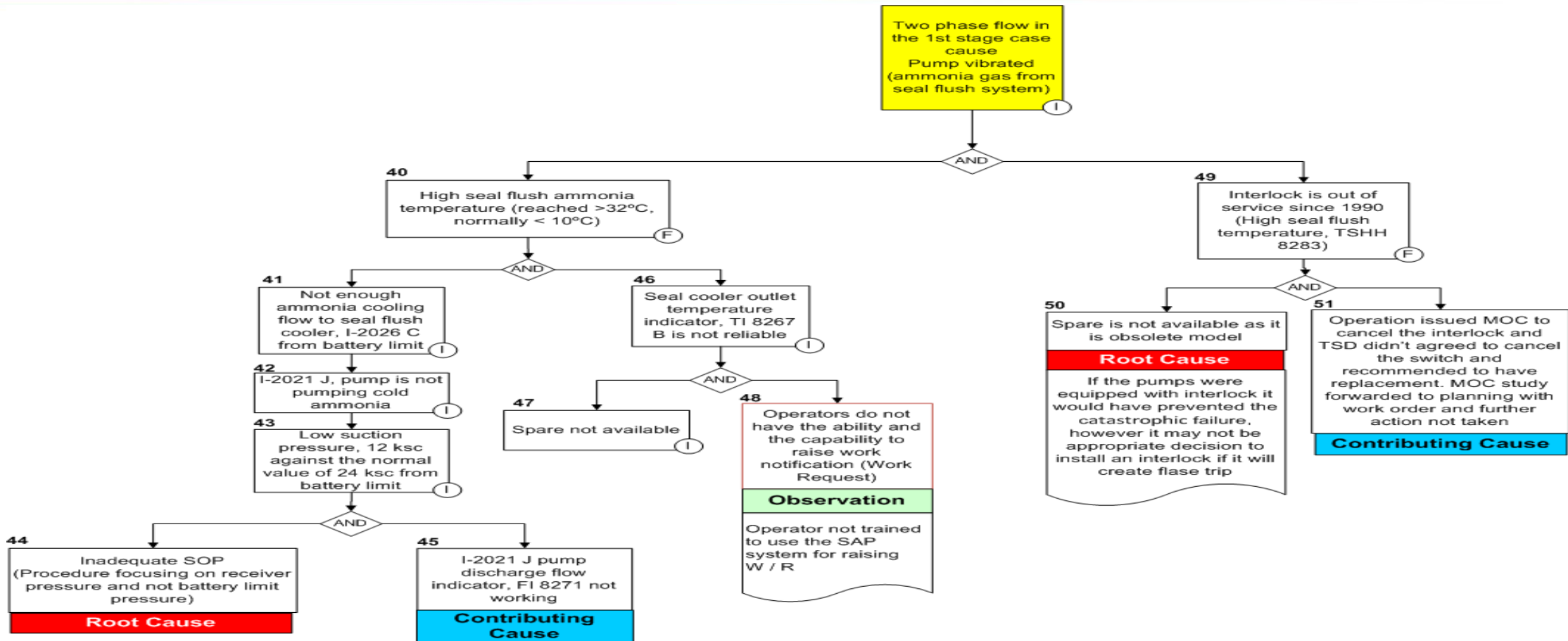
The root cause is the main cause of the problem, which is the one that we can prevent from recurring. It is the absence of effective management system or lack of compliance.

السبب الجذري هو السبب الرئيسي لحدوث المشكلة وهو الذي بإمكاننا منعه من التكرار، ويحث عادتنا لغياب الممارسات الصحيحة لإدارة العمل من ناحية الأنظمة أو عدم الالتزام بها.





# Fault Tree Example





## Determining Root Cause

### Method for Determining Root Cause:

- All Root causes are Human Error
- All Root causes are Management System Failure
- Root Causes can be:
  - Equipment Failure
  - Management System
  - Human Error

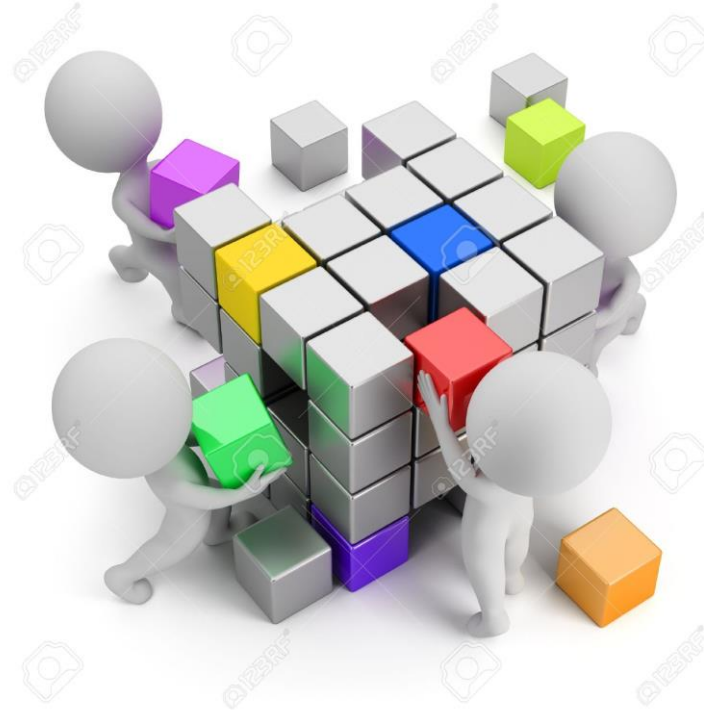
Human Error

Management System Failure

Equipment Failure    Management System Failure    Human Error

## Contributing Cause

Contributing cause is the cause that helps to create the problem, cannot make the problem by itself. For example ineffective procedure.



**On average, incidents had Five to ten contributing causes per Incident**

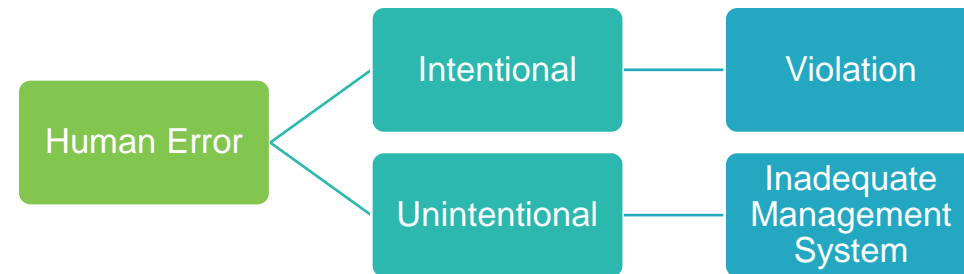
## Human Error

**Intentional:** Action committed because it is believed, he believe it's quicker, easier, safer etc.

For Example. Walking on top of the pipe rack without safety belt

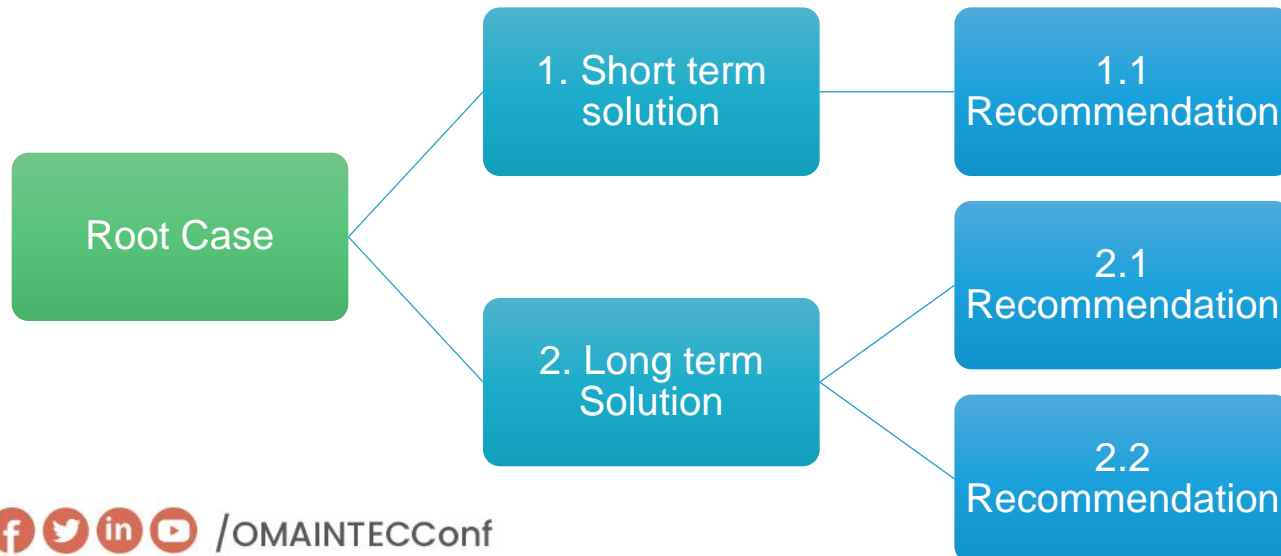
**Unintentional :** Action committed without prior thought or intent.

For Example. Pushing a wrong switch – No label on the switch



## Effective Solution

The purpose of conducting investigation is to develop and implement effective solutions that will prevent incident from recurring



- Solutions shall be SMART.
- Connected with Root & Contributing Causes.
- Prevent the causes from reoccurring.
- Can be implemented
- Not creating new risk



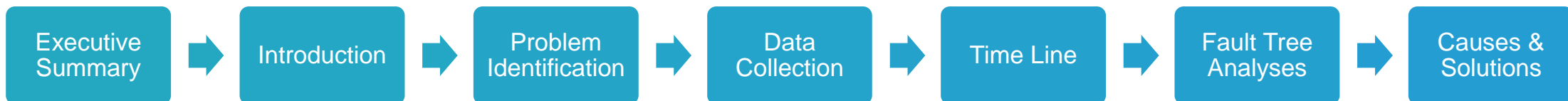
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# Final Report

The final investigation report consist of a presentation and a written report. The written report can be a generated from RCA software or hard copy document and the presentation can be developed in MS power point.

A typical outline of the Final Report shall be as per the following:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Process Description
- Problem Identification and Description
- Cause Analysis
- Conclusions
- Key Learning
- Recommendations
- Other Observations
- Appendix



## Key Learning

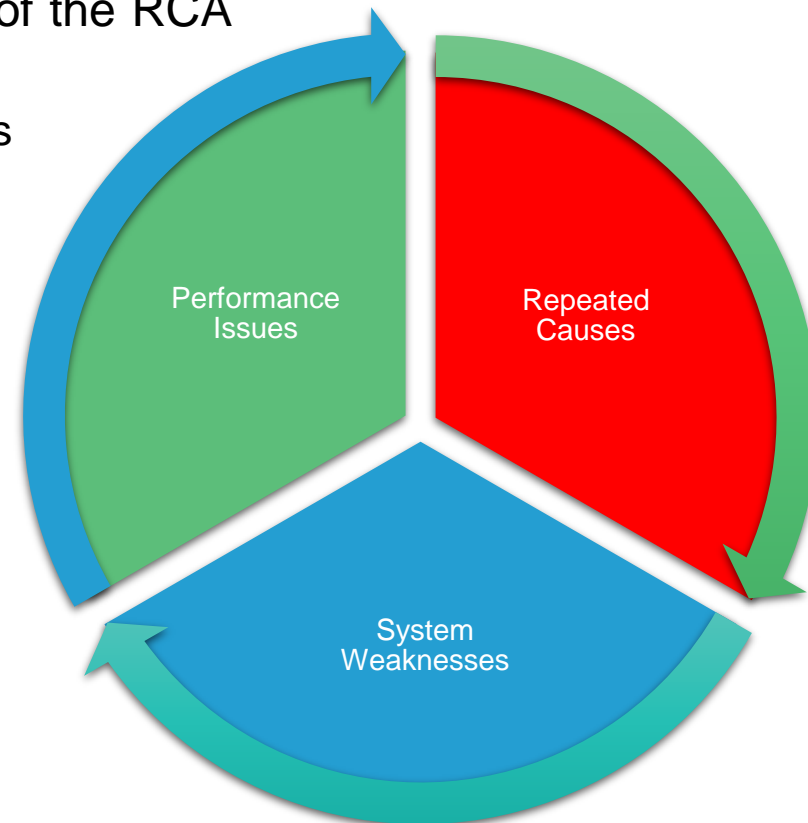
A **Key Learning** is a high-level overview of the investigation final report, The intent is to share investigation results and encourage culture change to avoid repeated problem.



## Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis is the method for identifying the repeated root/contributing causes & measuring the effectiveness of the RCA system.

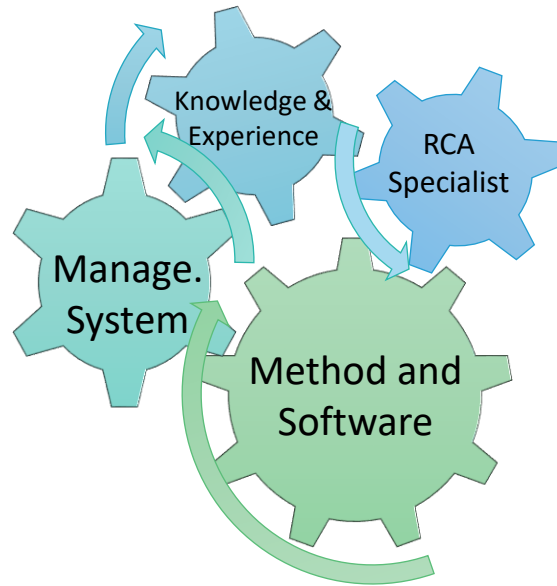
- ❑ Review all incidents & Investigations on quarterly basis
- ❑ Identify;
  - ❑ Repeated Causes relationships
  - ❑ System weaknesses
  - ❑ Performance issues
- ❑ Develop long term solutions
- ❑ Present finding & Solutions to Sr. Management
- ❑ Issue Statistical Report.



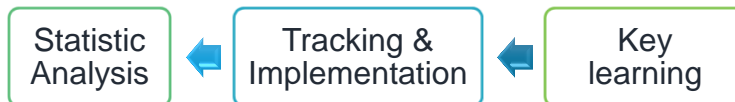
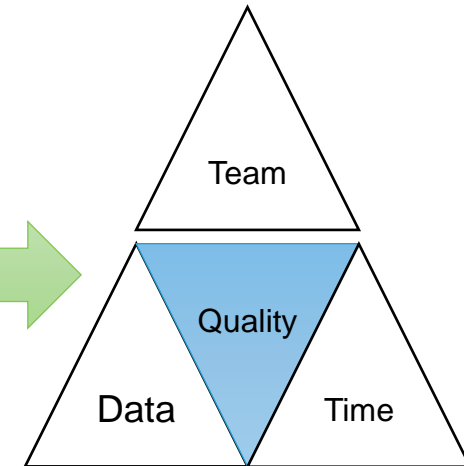
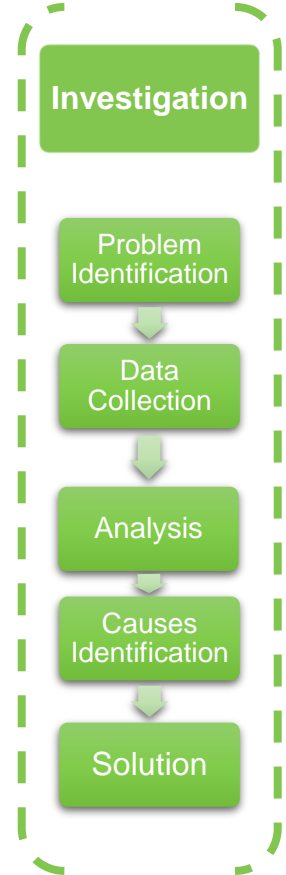


# Reactive and Proactive

## Proactive



## Reactive





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# Equipment Failure Case Study

    #OmaintecConf

An Initiative by



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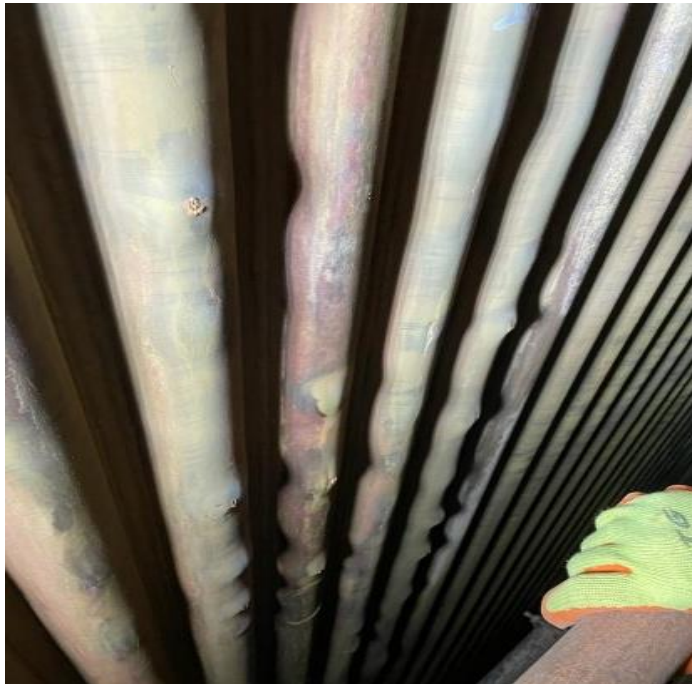
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## Equipment Failure

Fish mouth opening in tube 21 along with a shot of other bulges and an earlier patch repair





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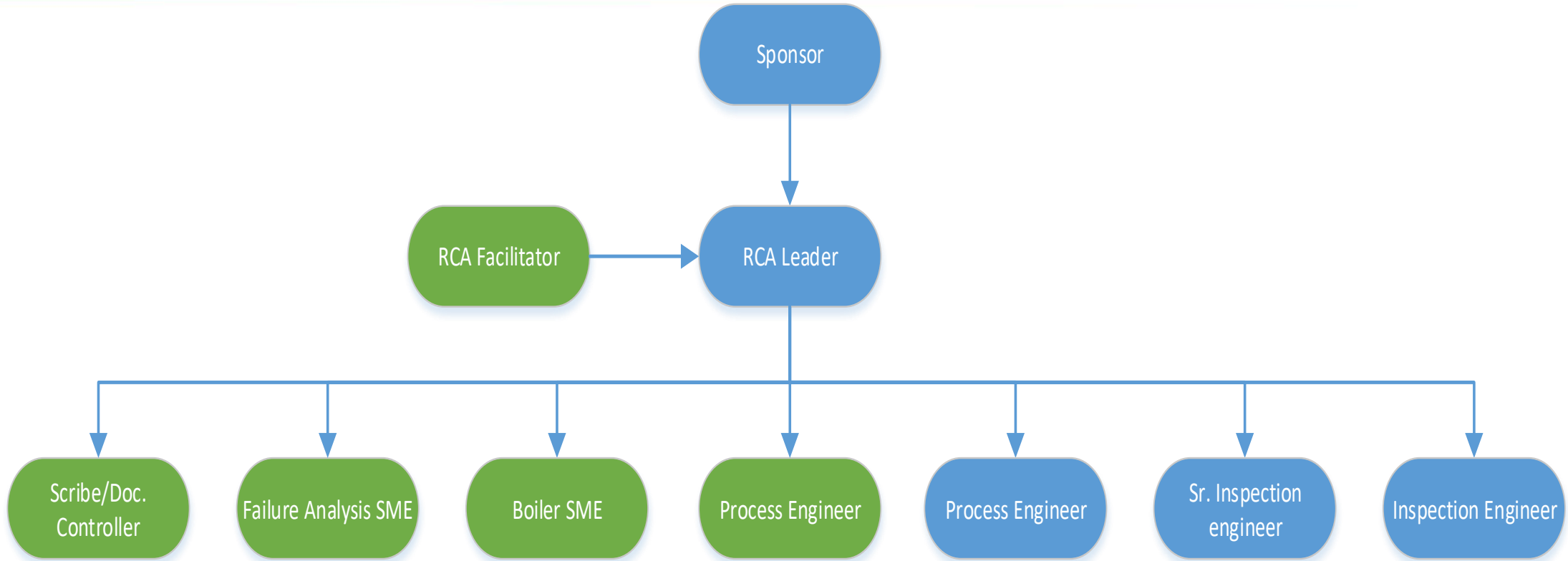
## Problem Statement

On Saturday, December 26 at 01:05 AM, Boiler-4 has experienced an Emergency Shutdown after only 5 months of operation due to multiple Tubes Failures, leading to production loss, an increase in maintenance cost, and Severe business interruptions.



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## Investigation Team





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### Possible Causes

1. Localized overheating due to localized scale buildup
2. Improper heat distribution from burners
3. Running boiler at a temperature higher than design spec (about 410C Vs 390C)
4. Burner & Flame shape
5. Not detect flame Impingement
6. Scale deposited below the failure tubes increasing the metal temp. more than the design leading to reduced yield strength (High heat flux area)
7. **Burner angle problem - flame impingement more on dividing walls**
8. Sudden temperature raised
9. Flame Impingement
10. Overload
11. Bad alignment of burners
12. Flame temperature more than the tube
13. During S/D the scale agglomerate than rap with heat
14. **Improper water treatment causing abnormal scale buildup**
15. Wrong thickness of the tube
16. Flame direction
17. Overheat
18. Burner controls, T & flam direction
19. Wrong selection of material
20. Improper water circulation



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## What is Wrong ?









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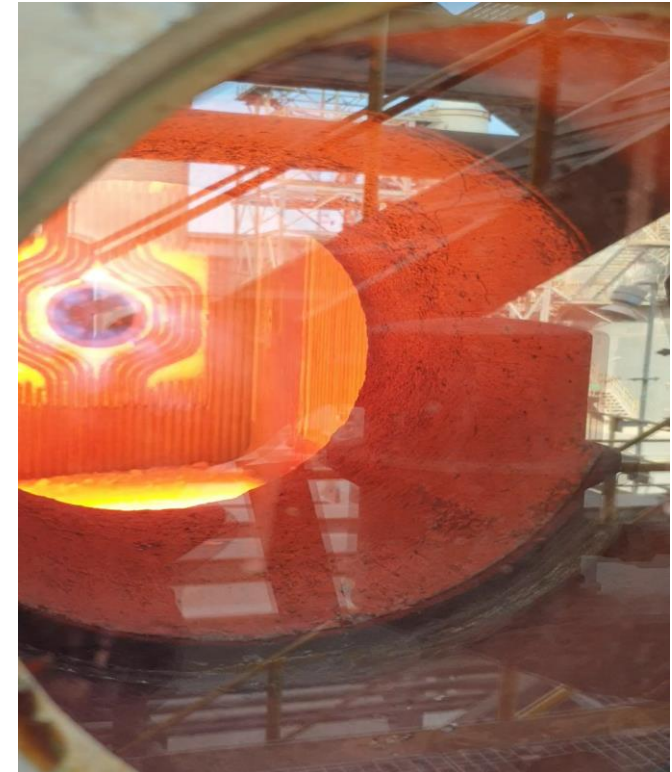
## Flame Impingement



    /OMAINTECConf



Boiler- 3 Video

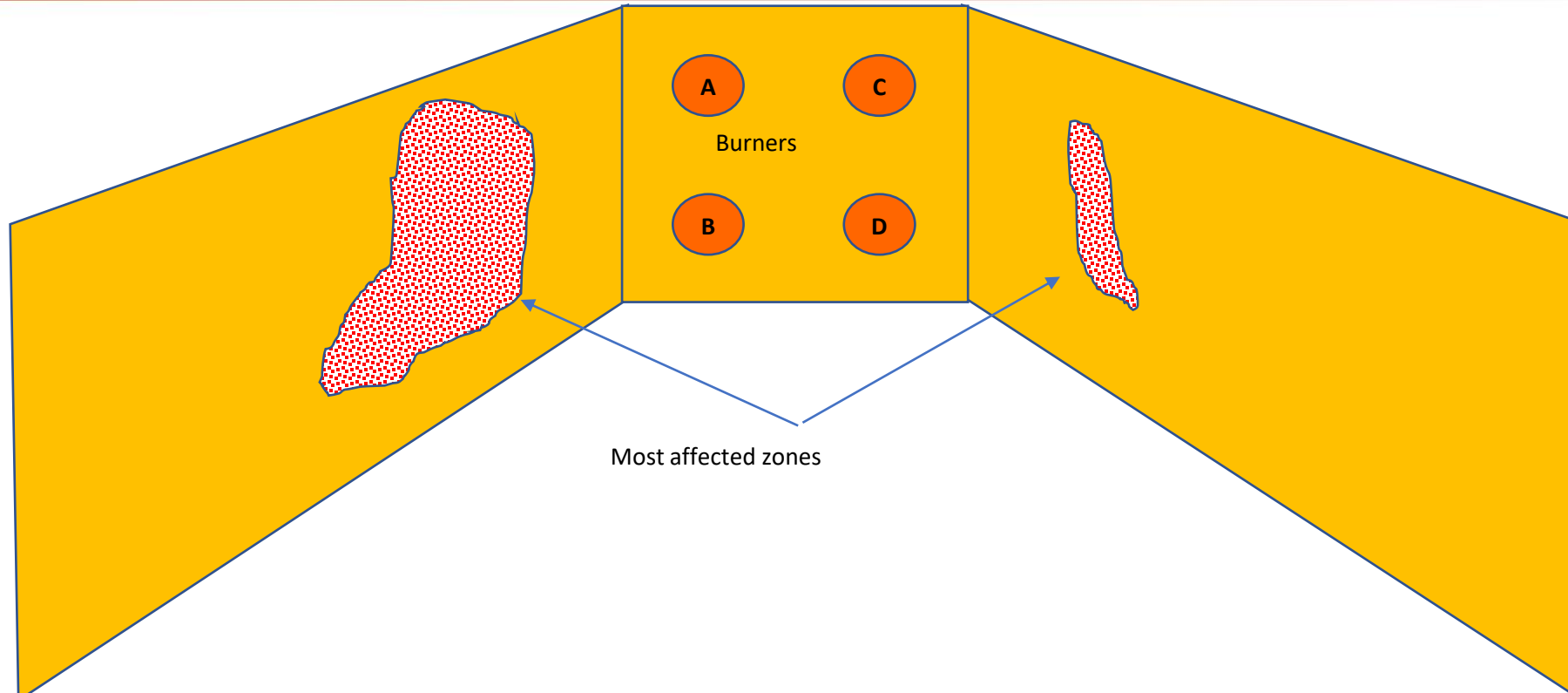


Boiler- 1 Video

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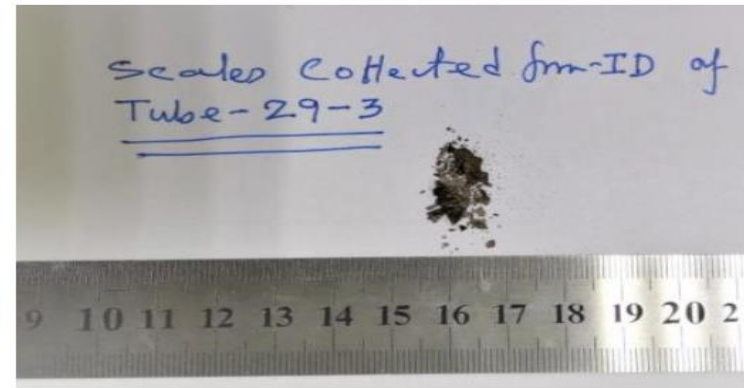


# Flame Impingement



## Metallurgical Failure Analysis

Figures shows boiler tubes as received for laboratory tests: (a) Cut piece of boiler tubes (tube, 21-2, 29-3 & 32-1) (b-d) sample after cross-sectional cutting details for further metallography analysis, (e) scale collected from the ID surface of the tube# 29-3 for SEM-EDS analysis.





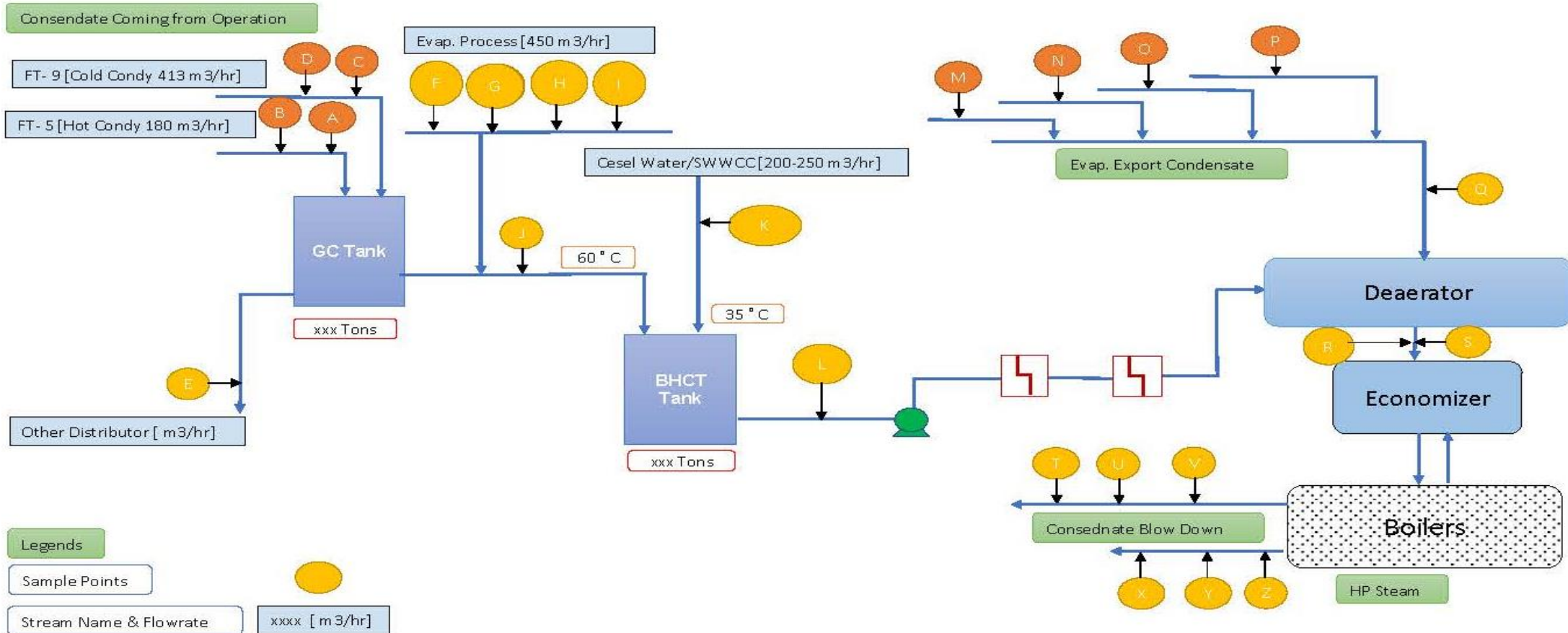
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# Metallurgical Failure Analysis – Lab Analysis

### The possible findings observed based on the analysis & results as given samples–

- a) Localized bulging observed on ## tube no. 29-3.
- b) Longitudinal parallel fine cracks on the tube surface observed (## tube 21-2).
- c) Microstructural analyses revealed pearlite disintegration / spherodized carbides microstructures at 424°C to 427°C clearly on (## tube no.29-3 (bulged) & 21-2 compare to intact (32-1) or initial bulging locations of the tube (29-3).
- d) Creep voids / Fissure cracks found clearly with intergranular cracking nature on (## tube no.29-3 (bulged) & 21-2, The creep voids started in triply points of grain of the component which may agglomerate and forming cracks at high temperature.
- e) **The localized temperature may reach on the tube surface behind the design temp approximately above 500°C according to microstructure features for damaged one.**

# Water Quality Analysis – Sampling Points



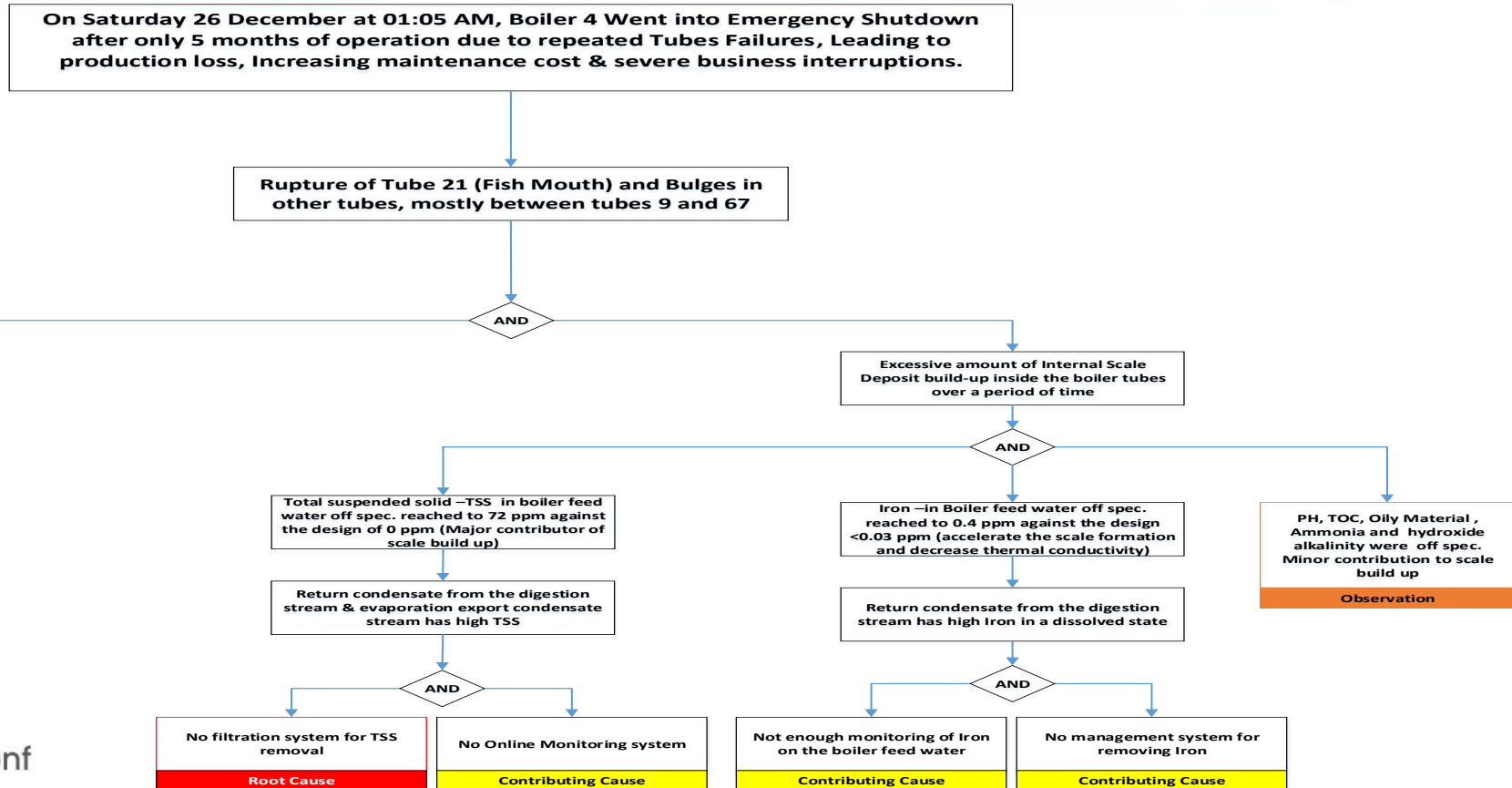


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# Water Quality Analysis – Sampling Point B

S . No	Item	Unit	Design	XYZ 2021	ASL 1st Sample	ASL 2nd Sample
1	PH Value (at 25°C)	-	9- 9.5	10.23	9.66	9.87
2	Total Hardness (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	<0.01		<0.1	<1.0
3	Iron	ppm	0.01 - 0.03	0.061	<0.01	0.02
4	Total Alkalinity (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	30		34	43
5	Oily matter	ppm	NIL		<5	<5
6	Total Dissolved Solids	ppm	30 - 50		26	31
7	Sodium phosphate as PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>3-</sup>	ppm	0.1		<0.01	<0.01
8	Silica SiO <sub>2</sub>	ppm	0.04 - 0.08	1.16	<0.1	1.1
9	Aluminum	ppm	3 -- 5		1.34	5.16
10	Copper	ppm	0.004 - 0.01		<0.001	<0.001
11	Chloride	ppm	5 max.		<1	<1
13	Direct Conductivity	µS/cm	50 -100	51.51	45	54
14	Caustic Alkalinity (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	40 - 50			
15	Ammonia (NH <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	3-- 5		7	4.75
16	Calcium (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	1.50	0.2	<1.0	<1.0
17	Magnesium (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	0.20		<1.0	<1.0
18	TSS	ppm	<0.03	4	<5	15
19	TOC -total organic carbon	ppm	<0.001		9.3	24.6
20	Total Phosphate	ppm	<10		<0.03	<0.03
21	Calcium Hardness (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	<1.0		<0.1	<1.0
22	Hydroxide Alkalinity as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	ppm	<20		6	8
23	Dissolved Oxygen	ppm	<0.007		7.9	8.1

# Fault Tree Analysis





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### Recommendation

S/N	Causes	TYPE	Recommendation	Sponsor	Target Date
1	Improper Original Design/configuration of burners.	Root Cause	Burners should be redesigned to ensure proper heat distribution that maximizes performance while not allowing flame impingement on tubes. As an intern resolution, flue gas temperature should be controlled below 400°C.		
2	No Filtration system for removal of impurities in the feed water, especially Total Suspended Solid (TSS).	Root Cause	Demineralized feed water should be considered. If not possible, an effective filtration system should be installed to limit ingress of impurities into feed water.		
3	No Online Monitoring System for TSS	Contrib. Cause	A proper online monitoring system for TSS should be installed.		
4	Not enough monitoring of Iron in the boiler feedwater	Contrib. Cause	A proper online monitoring system for iron should be installed.		



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Please let us know your feedback...

<https://forms.gle/C7WtKyS2vmezCagG7>



# Thank You

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