



NUCLEAR SAFETY CULTURE ASSESSMENT PROCESS MANUAL

SIMPLIFIED INPO Principles for a Strong Nuclear Safety Culture

Tab L2

P1: Everyone is personally responsible for nuclear safety.

P1a	Reporting relationships, positional authority, staffing, financial resources support nuclear safety responsibilities.
P1b	Corporate policies emphasize the overriding importance of nuclear safety.
1A	Line of authority defined and designated in writing
1B	Support groups understand roles
1C	People are valuable asset. Staffing levels OK
1D	Board members corporate officers reinforce & visit site.
1E	The line org, only source of direction. No undermining line authority.
1F	Understand importance adhere to standards. Accountability for shortfalls
1G	Relationships don't obscure line of responsibility.
1H	Rewards and sanctions aligned to reinforce behaviors.

P2: Leaders demonstrate commitment to safety.

P2a	Executive and senior managers are the leading advocates of nuclear safety and demonstrate their commitment both in word and action.
P2b	The nuclear safety message is communicated frequently and consistently, occasionally as a stand-alone theme.
2A	Visible leadership "eyes on" coaching, mentoring, reinforcing standards.
2B	Management considers the employee perspective in analyzing issues.
2C	Managers and supervisors oversight during evolutions and testing.
2D	Managers and supervisors involved in training.
2E	Leaders recognize production goals can send mixed messages.
2F	Bases/contingencies/abort criteria for decisions communicated promptly.
2G	Informal opinion leaders model safe behavior.
2H	Selection managers/supervisors contribute to safety culture.

P3: Trust permeates the organization.

P3a	A high level of trust is established in the organization, fostered, in part, through timely and accurate communication .
P3b	There is a free flow of information in which issues are raised and addressed.
P3c	Employees are informed of steps taken in response to their concerns.
3A	People are treated with dignity and respect .
3B	Raise safety concerns without fear & have confidence concerns are addressed.
3C	Encouraged to offer innovative ideas to solve problems.
3D	Differing opinions welcomed. Fair methods used to resolve conflict .
3E	Supervisors respond open, honest manner & translate safety culture into practice.
3F	Effects of changes anticipated managed to maintain trust.
3G	Incentive programs biased for plant performance/safety.
3H	Complete, accurate, information provided to oversight & regulators.
3I	Managers communicate decisions/bases , building trust. Check understanding.

P4: Decision-making reflects safety first.

P4a	Personnel are systematic and rigorous in making decisions that support safe, reliable plant operation.
P4b	Operators are vested with the authority and understand the expectation, when faced with unexpected or uncertain conditions, to place the plant in a safe condition. Senior leaders support and reinforce conservative decisions.
4A	Knowledgeable workforce maintained & outside expertise employed
4B	Mgrs/supv/staff understand/respect each other's decision-making roles.
4C	Rigorous problem-solving. Conservative actions when understanding incomplete.
4D	Single-point accountability for decisions, allow feedback as circumstances unfold.
4E	Candid dialogue encouraged. Healthy conflict recognized as OK.
4F	Decision-making " allowable " choices vs prudent choices.
4G	Decisions questioned by new facts, reviewed to improve quality of future decisions.

P5: Nuclear technology is recognized as special and unique.

P5a	The special characteristics of nuclear technology are taken into account in all decisions and actions. Reactivity control, continuity of core cooling, and integrity of fission product barriers are valued as essential, distinguishing attributes of the nuclear station work environment.
5A	Activities affect core reactivity conducted with care and caution .
5B	Critical safety functions recognized as important.
5C	Design/operating margins guarded & changed w/great thought/care.
5D	Equipment meticulously maintained well within design requirements.
5E	PRA insights considered in daily activities and plant change processes.
5F	Activities governed comprehensive, high-quality processes and procedures .
5G	Mastery of fundamentals establishes solid foundation for decisions/behaviors.
5H*	Work is planned and performed per established schedules, processes and procedures to achieve clarity of direction and quality of performance .

P6: A questioning attitude is cultivated.

P6a	Individuals demonstrate a questioning attitude by challenging assumptions, investigating anomalies, and considering potential adverse consequences of planned actions . All employees are watchful for conditions or activities that can have an undesirable effect on plant safety.
6A	Mistakes/ worst-case scenarios recognized . Contingencies developed
6B	Anomalies recognized/investigated/mitigated , analyzed in the aggregate.
6C	Don't proceed in the face of uncertainty .
6D	Workers identify/resolve degrading operating/design margins .
6E	Understand complex technologies fail unpredicted ways , latent problems can exist, conserv decisions consider potential.
6F	Group think avoided. Opposing views encouraged/ considered .

P7: Organizational learning is embraced.

P7a	Operating experience is highly valued , and the capacity to learn from experience is well developed.
P7b	Training, self-assessments , corrective actions, and benchmarking are used to stimulate learning and improve performance .
7A	Org avoids complacency & learning environment. “It can happen here” .
7B	Training upholds standards expectations. Trainers adept @ instilling safety/beliefs.
7C	Individuals informed of lessons learned from industry and station events.
7D	Expert root cause analysis applied to identify/correct causes of events.
7E	Processes established identify/resolve latent org weaknesses that can aggravate
7F	Issues with nuclear safety implication prioritized/tracked/resolved timely.

P8: Nuclear safety undergoes constant examination.

P8a	Oversight is used to strengthen safety and improve performance. Nuclear safety is kept under constant scrutiny through a variety of monitoring techniques, some of which provide an independent “fresh look.”
8A	Mix of self-assessment & independent oversight reflects balanced approach.
8B	Periodic safety culture assessments conducted used as a basis for improvement.
8C	Pitfalls of focusing on narrow set of performance indicators recognized. Org is alert to detect and respond to indicators signaling declining performance.
8D	Insights perspectives by QA, assessment, employee concerns, and independent oversight personnel are valued .
8E	Senior execs/board members periodically briefed on results of oversight group



Interview Techniques Including NRC Guidance

Tab N1

Conducting Group and Individual Interviews

This tab serves as a temporary information source until a basic course in interviewing and observing plant employees is developed. Team members should review this TAB prior to their deployment to the field in support of NSCA interviewing activities. NRC Guidance on the performance of interviews is located in Attachment 1.

Interview Standards

- All interviews and observations are conducted in paired groups of assessors that generally consist of at least two assessors (one from within the plant and one from an outside organization).
- Wherever possible an experienced assessor will be teamed up with a novice assessor with the understanding that they are to be the role models.
- Always state your question in as neutral a manner as possible – do not ask questions that are to essentially corroborate your position. Do not state the outcome and ask the participant to supply a “yes” or “no” response.
- Avoid all questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.” Remember you want them to explain their opinion using real examples (that you will record).
- Ask open-ended questions that allow the person to speak to the issue and give you good examples. Your non-verbal body language should also be “encouraging” through open hand gestures, voice inflection, and however else you behaviorally invite “openness.”
- Never be reluctant to ask for an example. Such statements as: “How does..., Can you give me an example (no names)..., When was the last time you..., How often does this happen..., Where do you generally see... These are essential in follow up questions to direct the person towards providing an example that speaks to the behavior that was involved in the situation.
- Without fail the assessment team will be on time to appointments and absolutely respect the time allocated to the interview (generally one hour for individuals and sometimes longer for small groups).

- The two person team will collaborate in the selection of the questions they wish to use from the Interview Guideline in the conduct of the NSCA interview.
- Always sit facing the participant and the person asking the questions should maintain eye contact at all times while the other person takes the notes.
- Alternate between assessors the roles of doing the interviewing and taking the notes.
- Notes should never be lengthy – use bullet points. DO NOT attempt to replicate exact words other than in citing an example or passing on a memorable quote.
- Continue to pursue the concept in the question until you get a good example, some actual comparison of tracked data frequency of occurrence, last time it happened etc. The point is that you stay with the question until you have some form of solid metric that gives the concept shape, substance and quantification.
- Always use the term “please give me an example of…” with each person you interview once you understand their general position on the subject.
- Always treat the participant with dignity and respect.
- Always stand to meet the participant/s and shake their hand while introducing yourself and your partner.
- At the end of the interview, Always stand and shake their hand while thanking them for their participation and the valuable information that they shared.
- When meeting with any group of participants always actively manage the process. Ensure that all the participants get a chance to speak and that they are not overshadowed by one person.
- In any group, ensure that the boss of any employee in the group is not also in the group. If this develops, one of the assessors needs to peel off and go out into a hall or other area and conduct the interview separately.
- If you end up with a mixed group of Supervisors and Individual Contributors, one of the assessors needs to take one group (the smallest) out of the room for a separate discussion.
- Always explain the issue of confidentiality and how the information that you may collect will be used.
- Never make any statements that tell the participant’s what the plant management will be doing – leave that to the plant management.
- Stay on task, avoid “sea stories” or “jokes” and keep on point to the questions that you brought into the room – avoid being distracted and going off into the weeds on tangential or thinly related topics.
- When starting an interview pay attention to a few important preliminaries:
 - Choose a setting with the least distraction or if given a location, close the door and minimize distractions.
 - Explain the purpose of the interview and why it is being done now.
 - Address terms of confidentiality and how the information you get will be used.
 - Explain the format of the interview – let them know what to expect.
 - Indicate how long the interview usually takes (55-60 minutes – no more).
 - Provide contact information of the interviewer- identify where you are from and your name.
 - Allow interviewee to clarify any doubts about the interview by asking you questions. Explain your method for recording data, *e.g., take notes*.

Interview Techniques

General

Personnel interviews are an important and effective tool in the self-assessment process. Interviews may result from a request from the plant that specific individuals or groups are interviewed for a specified purpose or may just be one of the tools being used to achieve the assessment objectives. Personnel interviews are primarily used to gather data and generally will yield some combination of the following three outcomes:

- The interviewee's perspective, involvement and knowledge of the subject matter are determined.
- Additional documents are identified to the interviewer, which contain the information being sought.
- Additional personnel are identified who can provide the information being sought or can provide additional information on the subject.

The quality and quantity of information collected in an interview is directly related to the team member's ability to ask appropriate questions, gain an understanding of the interviewee's perspective, and determine the appropriate action based on the information gained. Throughout this process, the interviewer will need to use a variety of communications skills which will be discussed in this document.

Preparation

As with all other phases of an assessment, preparation is the key element. The assessment team member and the interviewer should research the subject matter of the interview to the extent necessary to be able to conduct an effective and professional interview. Organizational information on the interviewee and the organization represented may also be helpful.

The following additional items should also be considered when preparing to conduct personnel interviews.

- Each interview should have a purpose, which supports the overall objective of the assessment.
- The desired outcomes/results of an interview should be determined before the interview. (What is it that you want to get out of the interview?)
- A series of key questions should be developed that supports the purpose of the interview and will achieve the desired outcome/results. In the case of Nuclear Safety Culture Assessments, comprehensive Interview Guides have been prepared for the five levels of employees at typical nuclear power plants).
- Interviews should be scheduled at a time mutually convenient for both parties. Scheduling becomes more important as you move up the organizational chain of command.
- The interview setting is very important. The best location is where the interviewee is most comfortable and where the least amount of distraction is present.
- As part of the interview, the interviewee may request such information as:
 1. "Why do you want to talk with me?"
 2. "How long will this interview take?"

3. "What will you do with what I tell you?"
 4. "Will my name be used?"
 5. "What is an assessment?"
- Sufficient time should be allowed between scheduled interviews to reconstruct and complete interview notes.

Conduct the Interview

General

The flow of information in an interview usually starts with the interviewer and generally follows the following sequence:

1. Open the interview, state the area of inquiry, and ask an **open** question.
2. Obtain response.
3. Ask probing questions and search for examples.
4. Use active-listening skills (reflect back what you hear in summary form)
5. Record the information using bullet points, not detailed verbatim narrative unless an example is provided – then copy it closely.
6. Repeat process for each question. (minus the "open the interview part")

The Opening

The interview opening is very important in that it sets the tone for the rest of the interview and determines the effectiveness of the interview. The opening should put the interviewee at ease and establish the interviewer's credibility. The interviewer should demonstrate interest in the interviewee and his/her job, and establish the pattern of the interviewee speaking and with the interviewer actively listening.

Questioning

The type of questions asked during an interview influence the climate of the interview situation and the amount and type of information received. The four basic types of questions are **open**, **closed**, **probing** and **leading or loaded**. The interviewer should plan a few questions, usually the open type, after deciding on the objectives or desired outcomes of the interview.

Open Questions -

1. Open questions ask for general information and allow the interviewee to structure the response.
Example: "Tell me about yourself."
2. The advantages of open questions are:
 - Allows the interviewee to present not only the information requested but also attitudes and feelings about the subject.
 - Open questions provide information that is used to formulate other types of questions, and do not create a defensive attitude because the interviewee is controlling the responses.
 - Allows the interviewee to volunteer information.
3. The disadvantages of open questions are:
 - Increased time to conduct the interview.
 - Interviewer is not directly in control.

- Note take is more difficult.
- Interviewee may feel the interviewer does not know what he/she is looking for in specific terms.

As a rule, use open questions for starting each area of inquiry. These questions usually begin with “What,” or “How,” or “Please explain” or “Can you give me an example”

Closed Questions -

1. Closed questions are designed to limit the response available to the interviewee. Usually a closed question can be answered with a word or phrase.
Example: “At what time did the trip start?”
2. The advantages of closed questions are:
 - Saves time. The interviewer can ask many questions in a short time frame
 - Note taking is easier
 - Interviewer retains control
 - Appropriate when limited or specific information is required.
3. The disadvantages of closed questions are:
 - Limits the amount of information that is given
 - If not used properly, the rapid fire questioning sequence can make the interviewee feel like he/she is being interrogated
 - The disadvantages to closed questions must be considered carefully. The cooperative climate of the interview can be destroyed quickly if the interviewer overuses this type of question. Generally, use closed questions only when seeking specific items of information. Do not ask more than three closed questions in succession.

Probing Questions -

Probing questions are used to clarify information or gain additional information, usually based on a response to an open question. Probing questions are “follow-up” questions always based on the information given by the interviewee. They are useful because they focus the response on the information you need to know. They can be used to clarify apparent inconsistencies or discrepancies.

Examples: “Tell me more about...” of “What do you mean by ...?”

Leading/Loaded Questions -

Leading and loaded questions have hidden agendas and usually ask the respondent to agree with a position already held by the questioner. Asking loaded or leading questions should NEVER be used in an interview situation.

Active Listening -

After asking a question, the interviewer evaluates the information and attitude of the interviewee and reacts in a manner to foster a constructive climate. An interviewer’s reaction, verbal and nonverbal, should indicate to the interviewee that active listening is taking place. Failure to do so may reduce the amount of information given and negatively influence the climate of the interview situation. Active listening is providing the interviewee with feedback. Active listening skills are **paraphrasing, reassuring sounds, summarizing, and nonverbal responses (body Language)**.

Paraphrasing -

Paraphrasing is using your words to convey your understanding of what the interviewee stated. To use this technique, the interviewer must listen and comprehend the message. Is a technique that fosters a positive climate because it shows the interviewee that you are paying attention and the information being presented is important. Paraphrasing also requires the interviewer to wait until the interviewee has finished presenting the information. Not interrupting the interviewee also fosters a positive climate. Paraphrasing should be used when you feel the interviewee has made a statement that clearly needs to be understood by both parties. Notice that paraphrasing can also lead to another line of questioning. If the interviewee answers, "right" or "that is correct" the paraphrase serves as a closed question. If the interviewer's perception was not correct, the paraphrase functions as an open or probing question.

Reassuring Sounds -

Periodically indicate to the interviewee that you are actively listening by making reassuring sound. These sounds can be words or phrases such as "OK" or "I see" or "That's interesting." Very often, the reassuring sounds are combined with body language such as nodding the head.

Summarizing -

This technique should be used by the interviewer at the end of the conversation for each area of inquiry and at the end of the interview. The difference between summarizing and paraphrasing is that summarizing covers all the key points related to an area of inquiry or to the entire interview. This technique is especially useful when a great deal of information is covered during an interview. It serves as a comprehension check for both parties.

Non-verbals -

Nonverbal messages are given to the interviewee. A high percentage of the meaning conveyed during a face-to-face conversation comes from the nonverbal messages. When you send nonverbal signals, you are confirming for the interviewee that you are or are not listening and comprehending the information. These confirming signals may be head nods, smiles, raised eyebrows, leaning forward in the chair, maintaining good eye contact, etc. Remember, if the interviewee has to choose between what you say verbally and what you say nonverbally, he/she is more likely to accept the nonverbal signals over the verbal message.

Summarize and Close

As previously stated, at the conclusion of the interview the interviewer may want to summarize all the key points covered in the interview. The ending summary serves as the last check of communication between the interviewer and interviewee. The interviewer should make a closing statement thanking the interviewee and, if not previously discussed, let the interviewee know how the acquired information will be used.

Post Interview Activities

The most important post-interview activity is to ensure that all the pertinent information provided by the interviewee is contained in your interview notes. This could be done as soon as possible after the interview, while the interview is still fresh in your mind. It is also recommended that an interview summary be written, organized around the desired outcomes or objectives of the interview. Other post-interview activities might include performing any required follow-up; briefing the team leader, and briefing the other team members.

When involved in a Nuclear Safety Culture Assessment, upon completion of the interview the two-person interview team will assign a single overall score to each question and where there is a “delta” from “what is expected,” it should be explained using examples, statements of behavior or quotes from the interviewee. The two-person team must agree on the score and comments prior to them being entered in the database. If agreement is not reached, the Team Leader can be sought to facilitate the process further or more data can be gathered later to make the determination.

Types Of Interviews:

Individual

The individual interview gives you a chance to find out about the employees on a more personal level. It also gives you the opportunity to ask employees questions, clarify points of interest, and elaborate on their specific points. Afterwards, ask yourself questions like "Do I understand the employee/e on this area of the NSCA investigation?" Individual interviews can be used to supplement **online surveys**. Sometimes interviews are used first to narrow down and refine the questions you will be using on a survey. In the case of Nuclear Safety Culture assessments, the interviews follow the survey and probe for details, examples and deeper reasons behind the survey outputs.

Group

Group interviews involve more than one person being interviewed. Often this involves small groups of employees sharing some point of similarity that is a variable of the assessment. For example, it may be a small group of first level supervisors or mechanics – and the interviewer is looking to formulate an understanding of people in whatever job classification or demographic variable is being considered. Group interviews often require a more active facilitation role by the interviewer to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and that one person does not dominate the conversation. A group interview allows for more people to be included in the study and it saves time by explaining the process one time to all selected employees at one time. This will avoid repetition when interviewing many people

The Interviewer’s Tasks:

- Initial description of the process, introductions and rapport building
- Posing questions
- Listening with the intention of understanding the whole message the interviewee is offering.
- Evaluating answers and probing for elaboration or more precision in understanding the response of the interviewee
- Emphasizing the need for examples and clear behavior associated with the answer
- Noting down answers
- Leading the interview through the use of the Interview Guideline Questions, but at the same time encouraging the informant to give spontaneous information relevant to the topic by letting him/her talk
- Unless the interview is carried out in pairs, the interviewer will have to carry out all these tasks at the same time. In conducting Nuclear Safety Culture assessments the interviewers are paired up, generally an in-plant person and someone from another plant outside of the system.

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Guidance for Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

This enclosure provides information about the strengths and limitations of different interview types and methods. It also provides guidance for conducting individual and group interviews.

This enclosure is arranged in the following five parts:

<u>Part</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	Individual Interviews
2	Group Interviews
3	Structured Interviews
4	Unstructured Interviews
5	Sampling Guidance

Note that both individual and group interviews may be either structured or unstructured.

The first four parts are subdivided into Overview, Strengths, and Limitations subsections. Parts 1 and 2 also include a Guidance subsection. Part 5 presents considerations in selecting samples of participants for interviewing.

1. Individual Interviews

a. Overview

Individual interviews consist of collecting information in a face-to-face, one-on-one setting where an interviewer poses a series of questions/topics to the interviewee and records the information provided. The degree of structure in the questions/topics can vary. (See parts 3 and 4.)

b. Strengths

- (1) Permits detailed exploration of an individual=s values, perceptions, attitudes, and views about the organization=s norms.
- (2) Preferred method when information is more sensitive or personal and anonymity can be assured.
- (3) Useful when additional probing on answers is required.
- (4) Interviewer has good control over the session in terms of topics discussed and detail provided.

c. Limitations

- (1) Time-consuming and resource-intensive.
- (2) Quality of interview data strongly influenced by interviewer skills.

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- (3) Interviews with approximately 10% of the population are needed to adequately understand existing issues.
- (4) Information from a single interviewee cannot be considered unless validated through other sources of information.

d. Guidance

Complete individual interviews as follows:

- (1) Note that the main objectives of the interview is to gain opinions on:
 - (a) the licensee=s actual awareness of nuclear safety issues;
 - (b) the safety-related attitudes of management and staff;
 - (c) the degree of compliance with policies and procedures;
 - (d) the possible reasons for observed inconsistencies or contradictions between actual and expected behavior, thus gathering data on social norms, beliefs, and values relevant to safety culture.
- (2) Prepare an interview plan in advance of the interview, and follow that plan to conduct the interview.
- (3) Conduct the interview in 3 stages, as follows:
 - (a) Establish a relationship of trust and cooperation with the interviewee
 - (b) Gather interview data
 - (c) Tell the interviewee that the results of all the interviews are captured and considered along with other results, and that observations, findings, and conclusions are documented in the Inspection Report.
 - (d) Discuss and evaluate issues raised by the interviewee
- (4) After the interview, prepare a written summary of the interview results, with emphasis on the issues raised by the interviewee and insights gained by the safety culture assessor.

2. Group Interviews

a. Overview

Group interviews (i.e., focus groups) consist of collecting information in a face-to-face, group setting, where an interviewer poses a set of questions/topics to the participants and records the information provided. The degree of structure in the questions/topics can vary.

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b. Strengths

- (1) Group interaction can prompt/sustain discussions without a high level of interviewer input.
- (2) Efficient - requires fewer team resources than individual interviews to obtain adequate sample size.

c. Limitations

- Should not be used (1) for sensitive or personal topics, (2) when there is evidence of conflict within or between work groups, or (3) when the participants have concerns about anonymity and confidentiality of responses.
- Interviewer does not have a high degree of control over the session; time may be lost on irrelevant issues. Participants will react to others' statements in addition to the interviewer's questions.
- The interview session may be dominated by the views of a minority of the participants.
- Participants may feel pressure towards consensus.
- Qualitative data may be difficult to analyze.

d. Guidance

- (1) The typical amount of time to conduct the focus group interview will range from 90 – 120 minutes. Open each focus-group interview by introducing the safety culture assessors who are in the focus group. Ask the participants to introduce themselves (first names should be sufficient) and describe how long they have worked in their current organization, as well as, on site in total. This information (time in current organization and time on site) will provide context to the data collected during the focus group interview. Verify that the attendees are as selected by the safety culture assessors. Question the inclusion of substitutes. If supervisory or management personnel are among the working-level attendees, ask them to leave and invite them to meet privately with the safety culture assessors at another time or check if they are in the supervisory focus groups. Then tell participants:
 - (a) that the purpose of the focus group is to determine whether and how underlying issues contributed to the performance deficiencies which prompted this inspection;
 - (b) how interview participants were selected;
 - (c) that the focus group will consist of discussions prompted by questions;
 - (d) indicate that, to the extent possible, information obtained during the inspection will not be attributed to individual participants who are interviewed by the NRC. Remind the participants that the discussion is

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occurring in a group so others will hear what is said. Also, state that if an individual provides details about a specific event in which he or she was uniquely involved, and if the NRC includes those details in their write-up of this inspection, then those details may identify the participant who provided the details;

- (e) all records held by the NRC of people participating will be destroyed after the focus group; that the NRC expects that cooperating with the NRC inspection, including participating in the focus group should not be used in any way to threaten, punish, or retaliate against an individual. The safety culture assessor should explain that if the individual wishes to discuss issues in a separate private interview, the safety culture assessors or residents if the safety culture assessors are no longer onsite, will make themselves available. Such concerns may be handled as allegations (e.g., claims of retaliation or wrongdoing) or included as input into the ongoing inspection, as appropriate.
 - (f) that the results of all the interviews are captured and considered along with other results, and that observations, findings, and conclusions are documented in the Inspection Report.
- (2) From the set of questions developed or selected for this interview (see parts 3 and 4), ask one of the questions and invite participants to respond. Ask follow-up questions as necessary to clarify responses and encourage discussion from other participants. Continue follow-up questions until the group's response is complete and understood, and the team has obtained from the participants as many insights into safety culture components as are reasonably associated with that question. After that, ask another question.
- (3) Continue question-and-answer conversations as described above, for as long as participants willingly respond, or until the planned questions are all asked, subject to the following:
- (a) Encourage all participants to speak up. Ask the same question or a variation of it to at least one other person.
 - (b) If any participant(s) does not answer any question directed to the group, direct a question or two to that participant, and encourage him or her to say what he or she thinks.
 - (c) If any participant(s) appears reluctant to answer a question or if his or her answers suggest an underlying issue or concern, make note of the question and the answers (if provided), for later follow-up. Do not persist if someone shows continued reluctance to speak.
- (4) Close the focus group by thanking the participants for their participation. Tell them that if:
- (a) they have anything else to say that they did not feel comfortable saying during the session,

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- (b) they later want to clarify or revise something they said during the focus group,
 - (c) they later remember something they wish they had said during the focus group, or
 - (d) they want to talk about something that wasn't discussed during the focus group, then they should contact the safety culture assessors, and tell them how to do that.
- (5) After closing the focus group, review the focus group notes, and add relevant safety culture assessor observations and comments.

If any participant's response identified a concern or issue related to a safety culture component, or if any discussion suggested or otherwise indicated a concern or issue related to a safety culture component, then address that concern or issue as described in 02.09.

NOTE: Information that reflects negatively on licensee performance or safety culture, if provided in the context of the purpose of the inspection, is not an allegation. However, information that describes an inadequacy in licensee performance, which is specific and outside the scope of the inspection, may be an allegation if the NRC has not already assessed the validity of the issue. Any issues related to wrongdoing, whether provided by licensee management, licensee employees or contractors, or NRC staff, are allegations. For more specific guidance, refer to Management Directive 8.8, [Management of Allegations](#), or contact the appropriate regional allegation coordinator.

3. Structured Interviews

a. Overview

Structured interviews consist of using a pre-defined set of questions that are consistently asked of each interviewee or of subsets of interviewees. Can be done in a face-to-face or group setting.

b. Strengths

- (1) Ensures similar topic areas are explored across multiple interviewees.
- (2) Reduces differences in the process followed across interviewees and interviewers that could bias the results.
- (3) Semi-structured interviews still allow follow-up questions and more in-depth probing of a topic.
- (4) Ensures all key topics are addressed during the allocated interview time.
- (5) Provides a basis for comparison between respondents.

c. Limitations

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- (1) If conducted as a fully structured interview, does not allow for additional follow-up on issues that arise.
- (2) The question sets used require careful consideration.

4. Unstructured Interviews

a. Overview

Unstructured interviews consist of an interviewer asking interviewees a series of questions that are developed as the interview is conducted. Can be done in a face-to-face or group setting.

b. Strengths

- (1) Gives interviewer complete freedom to fully explore topics of interest that arise.
- (2) The interviewee largely guides the interview in terms of discussion topics. This may lead to the identification of previously unknown issues.

c. Limitations

- (1) Provides no basis for comparison between respondents.
- (2) The interview process is more likely to be influenced by the style and biases of interviewer.
- (3) Information collected may not be highly relevant to the assessment.
- (4) No framework is available to guide the interviewer.

5. Sampling Guidance

- a. Develop a sampling plan that is informed by the findings of the licensee's independent safety culture assessment and review of background material.
- b. Include all functional groups at the site and possibly some corporate functional groups in the sampling plan.
- c. Select licensee and contractor participants using a stratified random distribution (as described in (1) and (2) below) of personnel from organizational rosters, focused on specific groups as appropriate. Nominally:
 - (1) For the work group(s) most closely associated with the performance deficiencies, plan to interview approximately 20% of the working- and supervisory-level personnel.
 - (2) For the major functional groups that were not closely associated with the performance deficiencies, plan to interview approximately 10% of the working- and supervisory-level personnel.

Attachment 1
Nuclear Regulatory Commission Guidance on
Conducting Group and Individual Interviews
Enclosure 95003.02-C
Guidance for Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

- (3) Plan to interview all heads of functional groups within the licensee's management structure, and all managers organizationally above those individuals.
- (4) Work with the licensee to select permissible substitutes for selected participants, based on unavailability due to shift work, vacation, sickness, or press of duty.