

SPECIAL ACTION REPORT

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Corrective Action Report

Identifying and eliminating those little mistakes

I'm so busy fixing yesterday's mistakes that I don't have time to think about tomorrow. Oh yes, you've heard that before, haven't you? Perhaps you've said it yourself. Little mistakes, frustrating mistakes, morale-sapping mistakes. Bloody mistakes! Not to mention profit-draining little mistakes.

Remember the Challenger space shuttle disaster of 1987? It was caused by two faulty O rings, which were very small by comparison to the enormity of the shuttle itself. A little mistake? A little error? Perhaps.

Expensive? Sure was, not only from a monetary perspective - and, of course, the tragic loss of life - but what about the loss of opportunity. You see, those little rubber O rings put science back 76 years, because Challenger was on its way to observe Haley's Comet, which won't be back again until 2063!

Now, every day in every business there are O rings exploding. More importantly in your business, there could be literally dozens of O rings just sitting there like limpet mines waiting ... waiting ... waiting.

Should we tolerate this situation and accept it as inevitable? I say No, because

Little mistakes = Rework = Lost Profits and Lost Opportunity

Little mistakes. One thing I do know as a result of speaking to many thousands of business people is that we all have them. And we'd all like to get rid of them, wouldn't we?

Now, here's the rub: Many of the mistakes are those which recur time and time again. And they're the ones that cost. Someone once said that mistakes are important because we learn from them. But, how many times do we have to learn the same lesson before we do something about it.

Now, here's where a little system called the Corrective Action Report (CAR) comes in. Its purpose is to provide a mechanism for recording and correcting non-conformances. Non-conformances? That's what the quality control people call screw ups and stuff ups.

The CAR serves as a great fixer of the PROCESS, rather than the mistake itself ... and that's important. I've enclosed a sample of the CAR I hope you find it useful as a starting point.

Corrective Action Report – Identifying and Eliminating Those Little Mistakes

Corrective Action Report

If in doubt, fill it out

Initiated by: Date: Time:am/pm

Is this a direct customer complaint? Yes No
 Is this a product failure? Yes No Which product?.....
 Is this a system failure? Yes No

Details of the complaint, product or system failure

Possible causes (Attach any documentation you may have to support your observation)

Keying entry <input type="checkbox"/>	Shipping delivery <input type="checkbox"/>
Database error <input type="checkbox"/>	Incorrect mailing <input type="checkbox"/>
Non-delivery on promise <input type="checkbox"/>	Slow performance <input type="checkbox"/>

Other (Please describe)

Need for an Oops card? Yes No

Suggested action and responsibility from here

What	Who	When	Done	Time taken