

'YOU CAN ONLY GROW IF YOU MOVE OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE'



Safety is top priority at Boskalis. But making sure everyone can work safely is far from straightforward. It is essential to focus every day on making sure that colleagues are physically safe during their work on a project, on a vessel or in the office, but also that we have a socially safe culture where everyone feels they are being encouraged to speak up. To strengthen that culture further, Corporate SHE-Q developed the NINA Safety Leadership Expedition: a course of intensive meetings in which participants work on the safety ambitions they have set for themselves. The first two teams reached the summit recently, an achievement that merits a small celebration.

This summer, a group of 22 Salvage colleagues was the first large group to complete the Expedition successfully. After eight intensive meetings, they reached the summit of the mountain, the metaphor that was selected for the 'safety journey'.

What does the journey look like in practice? In the case of Salvage, it meant that colleagues described their own personal

safety development and the associated concrete actions. Managing director Richard Janssen was one of them. 'I started looking for feedback myself about the impact of my approach to leadership and communication. I hope I am accessible enough, and open to concerns from colleagues during a salvage operation, but is that how other people see it? I asked myself that question out loud.'

SAFETY TALK



'WHETHER YOU WORK ON THE FINANCE SIDE, IN OPERATIONS OR ACTUALLY PLAY A ROLE IN LOGISTICS: EVERYONE HAS A RESPONSIBILITY WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY. WE DO IT TOGETHER.'

CRAIG ERASMUS, SALVAGE MASTER

feels safe and has a sense of responsibility for discussing those dilemmas and tackling any problems with each other. The course helps here and so we learn as an organization.'

TOUGH GUYS

Richard: 'Yes, we are in this business to make money from the work we do. But that mustn't be at the expense of the people you work with. So you need different approaches to communications and it's good to be aware of them. As far as I myself am concerned, I am still the same person and I communicate in the same way as I did ten or twenty years ago. But my role and responsibility at Salvage have changed. That includes being able to talk about the *soft side* of the job with colleagues. We all want to be known as the tough guys who work on salvage. Even so, at the same time, you also want to be sensitive – and at least open – and establish an atmosphere where everyone can share their concerns if there are any. These sessions have helped in that respect. Because you can only grow if you engage in the difficult, and sometimes uncomfortable, discussions.'

UNCOMFORTABLE

The fact that all colleagues can pursue their own goals during the NINA Safety Leadership Expedition is a big plus, explains Pieter Kuzee, SHE-Q manager at Salvage. 'With your colleagues, you work on your own development and that of the group. At first, this sometimes leads to quite uncomfortable discussions between colleagues. The strength of the process is precisely in these difficult conversations because they lead to mutual understanding, bonding and trust.'

In addition to the Salvage team, a team of six project leaders from Boskalis Environmental has now reached the summit. Other teams that are completing the process at the moment include the Boskalis Offshore Heavy Lifting management team, project management teams from both the Togo and Benin and the Fehmarnbelt tunnel projects, a team of superintendents from Boskalis Nederland, and teams from both Fleet Offshore and Fleet Dredging. New teams will follow them later this year.

SAFE CONDUCT UNDER PRESSURE

The Expedition is a deepening of the existing NINA program and it focuses on two aspects. 'On the one hand, it develops a long-term form of team building in the field of safety, creating a safety relationship that contributes to trust and openness. On the other, it focuses on assuming responsibility,

in other words the willingness and ability of each colleague to lead the way when it matters most,' says Annette Panajoti, program manager at Corporate SHE-Q. The participants are challenged to think about themselves with questions such as: 'what do you do when an important safety decision has to be made under pressure?'

Do you make safety a priority, or do you opt for a solution that is less safe, and why? But there are also basic questions

like: 'what is your reputation as a safety leader?' and 'how do you make an impact?'

Annette: 'We want to use the Expedition to launch a movement and anchor NINA more firmly. Because it's in everyone's interest for the work to be done safely.'

Salvage master Craig Erasmus is aware of this as well: 'It's up to us now to maintain this high level of competence. Whether you work on the finance side, in operations or actually play a role in logistics: everyone has a responsibility when it comes to safety. We do it together.'

Annette regularly hears from the project organizations that, even though numerous issues are discussed during preparations, colleagues in operations still run up against some dilemmas and have to make difficult choices. 'Things often work out well because we're good at coming up with solutions, but you really want a culture where everyone



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