

How voice technology is changing safety around the world

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ABSTRACT

Utilising voice technology in safety came from listening to the workers on the ground. The feedback was consistent - frustration with increasing paperwork and asking, why can't we just talk about it?

More than voice to text, true voice capture and analytics allows workers to have heads up, use Shisa Kanko (point and call), and have genuine conversation about completing work safely.

Voice technology is based on the proven method of forming memories and sharing ideas – storytelling. Retelling experiences verbally enables us to share insights and provides a valuable means of up-skilling others.

Shared dialogue enables us to better process, organise and store information. When we converse with others, they encode information into memories which allows them to recall it more easily.

The Job Safety Analysis (JSA), or equivalent, was developed in the 1930's and is still entrenched today, despite monumental advancements in industry and technology and little evidence of improving safe outcomes.

Most safety meetings involve a supervisor filling out a standardised form, checking boxes, and writing down basic risks and hazards (often “low hanging fruit” e.g. slips, trips, and falls, general PPE).

In many cases, crews are then asked to sign and go to work without any meaningful conversation or critical thinking about what could actually hurt them or their colleagues.

Some examples of how safety meetings and assessment might happen:

- Line and sign - Employees line up, sign the risk assessment and start their work
- Photocopied assessment - Supervisors copy the same risk assessment from one day to the next without putting thought into the ever-changing environment
- Pushing information - Supervisor reads the risk assessment with no crew input, often resulting in a lack of crew engagement.

Speaking about experiences makes for more actionable decision making and removes many barriers to safe work, such as language and literacy.