



Peer-to-Peer Observations. Audits conducted by external agencies and internal safety department may result in altered and rehearsed work behaviors, which potentially leads to inaccurate data.

Management & Labor Agreement. In order for LOSA to succeed as a viable safety project, there needs to be support not only from the management side but also from the technicians and ramp workers. The joint sponsorship provides a “check and balance” for the project to ensure that change, as necessary, will be made as a result of LOSA data. When considering whether to conduct a LOSA, the first question to be asked by management is whether labor endorses the project. If the answer is “No,” the project should not be initiated until endorsement is obtained.

Volunteers. All LOSA observations are collected with voluntary technician and ramp worker participation. Before conducting LOSA observations, observers should first ask the technicians and ramp workers for permission to be observed. If the technicians or ramp workers decline, the observer selects another technician or ramp worker with no questions asked. If an organization conducting a LOSA has an unreasonably high number of declines, this should serve as an indicator that there are critical “trust” issues to be resolved.

Non-punitive. LOSA observers are required to not record names, aircraft tail numbers, or any other information that can identify a team or individual. The purpose of LOSA is to collect safety data, not to punish technicians and ramp workers. Aviation organizations cannot allow themselves to squander a unique opportunity to gain insight into their operations by having technicians or ramp workers fearful that a LOSA observation could be used against them for disciplinary reasons.

Systematic Observations. The LOSA observation guidance, training, and forms provided at www.MRLOSA.com describe a systematic method, Threat and Error Management, for conducting LOSA observations. Comments written by the observer should have sufficient detail to allow others to understand the task and all its activities. The observers need to describe the environmental conditions and activities surrounding the technicians' and ramp workers' behavior so that performance can be understood in full context.

Trusted & Trained Observers. Primarily, frontline employees conduct LOSA. Observation teams will typically include line technicians, base maintenance technicians, shop technicians, management technicians, ramp workers, and representatives of the technicians' or ramp workers' safety committee. It is critical to select observers that are respected and trusted within the organization to ensure line acceptance of LOSA. After observers are selected, they are trained and calibrated in the LOSA methodology.

Secure & Private. In order to maintain confidentiality, the organization should have a trusted data repository. This site can be in-house, such as that used for other confidential data, or it can be offsite. The goal is that no individual observations will be misplaced or improperly disseminated through the organization.

Targeted Enhancement. The final product of a LOSA is the data-derived targets for enhancement based on emergent patterns in the data. It is then up to the organization to develop an action plan based on these targets, using experts from within the organization to analyze the targets and implement appropriate change strategies.

Inform Workforce. In order to ensure long-term success of LOSA, organizations should communicate the results back to the frontline employees. Employees will want to see not only the results of the observations, but also management's plan for improvement.