

# The Blame Virus and its Antidote

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*This paper has been written from the perspective of a root cause analysis practitioner, teacher, and mentor – someone whose journey has taken him from a fascination about the physical mechanisms of life to the seemingly infinite depths of the human experience.*

*Several people are quoted in this paper. The inclusion of their quotes does not infer that these people agree with everything the author has said.*

## Introduction

Try taking notice of the damage being caused by our human tendency to “blame one another.” Notice what happens when something goes wrong in your life, either at home, within your community, or at work. Listen to what people say, and observe how they behave. More importantly, acknowledge your own thoughts, words, and actions in response to something that has gone wrong.

According to a web-based poll conducted by Failsafe Network, Inc. over a period of 8 months during 2009, our corporations are awash in blame. The poll asked 14 questions in an attempt to characterize a root cause analysis culture within an organization. One of the 14 questions asked about the prevalence of blame with the organization. 74% of poll respondents

inferred that blame and finger pointing were rampant in their organizations! It was the most lop-sided response to any of the poll’s 14 questions about root cause analysis culture.

<http://questionpro.com/s/1-507205-1283965>

Can there be any doubt that we’ve all been infected with “the blame virus?”

What would it be worth to you and your organization if everyone (at all levels) stopped pointing their fingers at other people and things and instead looked at themselves as part of their problems?

Root Cause Analysis has long helped organizations understand why things go wrong, and could be the vehicle for distributing an antidote to the blame virus. Instead of stopping at the physical and systemic causes of our problems, what if Root Cause Analysis also required people at all levels to answer:

“What is it about the way I am that contributed to this problem, and what am I going to do about it?”

***Everyone wants to change the world, but no-one wants to change themselves.....  
Leo Tolstoy (Russian author and philosopher)***

Yes, there is an antidote to the blame virus, and the antidote is profoundly easy. Instead of finding fault with other people and things, everyone could be looking at themselves – EVERYONE.

Imagine what might happen.

## A remarkable title

It is remarkable that the title chosen for this paper was “The Blame Virus, and its Antidote.” The title was chosen almost on a whim, prior to knowing much about viruses and their affect on

the human being. Having researched the subject of viruses, however, I learned more than I ever imagined.

The more we know about our existence, the more extraordinary it becomes --extraordinarily complex in some ways, and elegantly simple in other ways. The viruses that attack our bodies are very similar to the enemies that attack our countries. If we know how one works, we know how the other works. Even more, the defenses that our bodies use when outside invaders penetrate our skin are almost identical to the way we protect our national sovereignties. It is a marvel how we have taken processes that are occurring within us (unknowingly at that) and have externalized them. The way we live on the outside seems to be how we are in the inside. The great mystery of this is that we've mimicked our internal workings without even knowing it.

How shocking! Even more, how disturbing! Is our behavior as inevitable as our chemistry? Is the way we live on the outside predetermined by how we "tick" on the inside?

### **What is a Virus?**

A virus is an invader – an unwanted entity that appears to have no function other than to take over the resources of its victim. It is a well organized, molecular parasite that yearns to propagate itself. Unfortunately for human beings, the only way the virus can do this is to invade the living cells within someone's body because it does not have what it needs to duplicate itself on its own.

Viruses act as if they are either desperate, or relentless. They enter the human body anyway they can – through the mouth, nostrils, cuts, or



scrapes. Any opening will be invaded. They find an unsuspecting, worthy cell and then attach themselves to it. Some of them look like alien beings, with elaborate "drilling mechanisms" which penetrate the living cell's wall. Others look like fuzzy balls, similar to the fruit of a "sweet gum" tree. Many of these camouflage themselves, and become so welcome by the victim's cell that the virus is actually escorted into its innermost sanctum – the nucleus.

Once into the cell, the viruses reveal their "purpose" – to propagate themselves. The invaded cell yields its resources to the manufacturing of additional viruses – almost as if it were an unwilling "Xerox machine." As the cell's energies are depleted in the copying of the virus, the newly created viruses



explode out of their victim and immediately look for other cells to invade.

The result of this attack on the unsuspecting cell is death of the cell. When a sufficient amount of cells die, human beings feel "sick."

### **What is the "Blame Virus?"**

If the way we live on the outside is related to the way we "tick" on the inside, let us attempt to acknowledge the existence of a "blame virus," and how it might work.

First, we need to consider the notion of blame. According to dictionary.com, to blame someone is "*to hold them responsible, to find fault with,*

*or to censure -- to place the responsibility for a fault, or an error."* Its synonyms include *"fault, criticize, reprimand, show disapproval, condemn, knock, reproach, and scorn."*

Whereas the germ-form of virus attacks our physical bodies, the blame virus might be thought of as attacking the human psyche, i.e., the mind and its capacity to govern behavior. The inference is that there is an initial, healthy psyche – in this case free of the need to “blame” – just as there is an initial, healthy body whose cells are able to function as intended.

If one would observe a psyche that has been infected by the blame virus, one would see a person that blamed all the problems encountered in their lives on other people and things. The blame virus distorts the psyche so much that it is not able to see much of anything in an uncontaminated manner – especially the truth about itself.

In summary, whereas the germ-form of virus invades the cells of live beings, the blame virus invades the psyches of live beings. As it invades the human psyche, it uses its host’s energy to replicate itself within the minds of other human beings. The end result of the invasion is death of the healthy psyche – first in one and then in many human beings.

### **Why is blame bad?**

We humans have become so infected with the blame virus that we hardly know the damage it causes. In fact, many people think that blaming is a necessary, valid part of life.

The issue of blame was recently explored on a 1,000 member, international forum that discusses root cause analysis:

(<http://www.yahogroups.com/group/rootcauseconference>)

It must be stressed that the people discussing this issue have spent their professional lives trying to help people learn from things that go wrong. (Some call these people “rooticians,” a phrase coined by Dr. Bill Corcoran – a long-time, experienced rootician himself). Their responses were singularly and absolutely against the human tendency to blame. The author wishes he could share all of the comments received, but they were too numerous (over 100). The following are typical:

*To my mind, "BLAME" is a negative force directed outwards from a person who shies away from personal responsibility and is based on the misconception; "I am above board - the fault lies elsewhere." A culture of blame breeds complacency and decay. The viruses of ignorance and arrogance breed blame and the corresponding negative forces of death and destruction. Tony Fernandez (note: it was Tony's comments that inspired the title of this paper).*

*It doesn't take phenomenal ability to realize that a person who is given blame learns how to avoid the blame next time, while a person who gives blame learns nothing. As a result, things continue to go wrong... Bill Salot*

*I see blame as defensive and aggressive and a tactic to make sure everybody knows I am not responsible in any way for what happened.... Mike Van Leuken*

*I see a trend in healthcare where it would appear there are attempts to criminalize human error to curb it. This shows how little the legal system understands human error. In some recent highlighted cases where patients have died due to errors by nurses, the nurses have been personally sued. It is hard enough in healthcare knowing that your error may have killed someone, but 99% of the time it was not intentional and usually it was due to systemic deficiencies that contributed to the error in decision making. When it goes to criminal court then the focus is on the person and not the system. This is usually the difference between a criminal investigation and a safety investigation. In my experience, criminal lawyers tend to focus on winning and not on finding the truth. Evidence can be suppressed and interpreted to fit the case they want to present. Confirmation bias enters and evidence that supports our case is introduced and evidence that contradicts our case is refuted. Health care reform may add 30,000,000 more people going through our existing hospitals. Hospitals are strained now but add that additional patient load with existing bed capacity and we have to conclude we will have a decrease in the quality of care. Couple this with the trend to criminalize human error in healthcare and then try and properly staff these existing hospitals with the increase patient load. If I knew I could lose my freedom for an innocent error caused in part by poor systems, is that the profession I would I want to pursue? Robert J. (Bob) Latino (Reliability Center, Inc.)*

Does the reader sense the frustration? It is important to note that the general consensus

about the futility of blaming one another is not limited to those of us in this profession. Note the following:

*All blame is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you. The only thing blame does is to keep the focus off you when you are looking for external reasons to explain your unhappiness or frustration. You may succeed in making another feel guilty about something by blaming him, but you won't succeed in changing whatever it is about you that is making you unhappy... Wayne Dyer (author and speaker)*

***If the vast majority of our problems are caused by people, what is wrong with blaming them?***

*Take your life in your own hands and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame..... Erica Jong (author)*

*He who excuses himself accuses himself.... Gabriel Meurier (French author)*

*Sometimes I lie awake at night and ask why me? Then a voice answers nothing personal, your name just happened to come up..... Charles Schulz (creator of SNOOPY)*

***But people ARE often at fault, so what's wrong with blame?***

Is it true that people are at fault? Yes! The vast majority of our problems are caused by people.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider whether mankind is responsible for natural disasters and diseases, so let us put those kinds of phenomena to the side and consider two other kinds of problems.

There are at least two scenarios where people are always at fault. The first is in interpersonal relationships, where behaviors sometimes exist which drive people, families, and nations apart. In these cases, it is our human response to the circumstances that present themselves that either draw us together or pry us apart. When it comes to interpersonal relationship problems, yes – people are always at “fault.”

The second scenario where people are always at fault is when something goes wrong with something we have created. For example, if we design and build a bridge and it unexpectedly collapses, we will be able to trace its causes to something that someone did (or did not do). Likewise, if we build hospitals to perform surgeries and administer medicines and something goes wrong within these facilities, its causes can be traced to people. After all, since bridges and hospitals are human creations, we are ultimately responsible for anything that happens to or within them. Any other conclusion seems irresponsible – and is merely another example of “blaming something” aside from ourselves.

No matter how one looks at it, humanity is and always has been inundated with people problems. Therefore, it is NOT the premise of this paper that people are never responsible. On the contrary – people are almost always responsible for the things that go wrong in their lives.

It is the premise of this paper, however, that the blame virus has turned the truth of this fact – a truth that can be one of the most liberating discoveries imaginable – into a death spiral. The blame virus convinces us that:

*It's not me, it's you.*

*It's not us, it's them.*

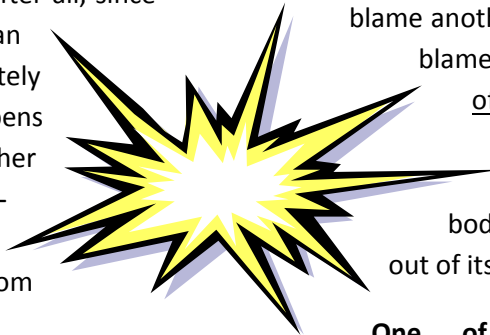
*It's not human beings, it's our systems.*

*And on and on and on....*

Imagine an organization with 500 employees, each of them seeing problems in other people and things – all of them pointing their fingers each other. No-one would realize that they were part of the problem. Each would be too busy seeing the other person's problems.



Even worse, every time someone blames another person, it causes an equal and opposite reaction. The blamed person will, in turn, blame another person who, in turn, will blame yet another – an explosion of blame that is uncannily similar to what occurs in the cellular levels of our bodies when the virus explodes out of its host to infect new cells.



**One of the most liberating discoveries imaginable!**

What if, instead of the festering and stymieing nature of blame, the following attitudes prevailed?

*The best years of your life are the ones in which you decide your problems are your own. You do not blame them on your mother, the ecology, or the president. You realize that you control your own destiny....* Albert Ellis (American psychologist)

*When you don't take responsibility, when you blame others, circumstances, fate or chance, you give away your power. When you take and retain full responsibility - even when others are wrong or the situation is genuinely unfair - you keep your life's reins in your own hands.... Jeff Olson (American author and speaker)*

*Never blame what you are on what someone else is... Wes Fessler (American author)*

*A strong leader accepts blame and gives the credit. A weak leader gives blame and accepts the credit.... John Wooden (former head coach, UCLA basketball)*

*A boss creates fear, a leader confidence. A boss fixes blame, a leader corrects mistakes. A boss knows all, a leader asks questions. A boss makes work drudgery, a leader makes it interesting.... Russell H. Ewing (British Journalist)*

*I blame my mother for nothing, but forgive her for everything.... Mary Blige (Rhythm and Blues Singer and actress)*

### **The human immune system**

Are we defenseless in the face of the blame virus?

Let us return, for a moment, to a discussion of our physical bodies and think about its immune system. Perhaps the best way to understand the role of our immune system is to consider what happens at the end of our natural lives. Before death, the immune system is a phenomenal, miraculous success – staving off a continual barrage of attacks. At the moment of death, however, the immune system ceases to operate. Immediately, the invaders see no resistance, and they begin to rapidly annihilate the body.

Although this graphic description might be unpleasant to consider, it is important in our understanding of the power of the attacking viruses as well as the defensive immune system.

As stated, when the body is alive it is prepared for these invasions. When even a single cell is attacked by a virus, for example, it sends a distress signal to adjacent cells which warn them of an impending attack. This takes away the element of surprise, and strips the disguise from the invading virus. Most of the time, this is all that is needed to stop the attack in its tracks.

But other times, the quantity of invading viruses outruns the speed of the distress signals and our body's cells become overrun. At this point, our secondary defenses become alerted – as if responding to the cry of mass death (when cells die, they literally send-out chemical messages alerting the immune system of their own death).

When the immune system receives these mass obituary notices, it sends-out an army that surpasses anything devised by mankind. Some army members act like sophisticated spies, others like huge communication centers, others like laser-guided snipers, guided missiles, and tanks. There are even parts of our immune system that arrive on the battlefields to dispose of the dead.

Unless the immune system has been compromised in some way, it handles the invasion with amazing precision and effectiveness. The viral attack has no chance!

### **The psyche's healthy immune system**

It is difficult to write about the psyche's "immune system" without considering what it is

protecting. Whereas our body's immune system protects our cells so that they can function as intended, perhaps the psyche's immune system can be thought of as protecting the individual's consciousness so that it can function as intended.

And just as our physical bodies can be attacked by various viruses, each with a specific target – so can our psyches be attacked by various “viruses,” each with specific targets.

Consider the psyche's immune system response to the blame virus.

When the psyche is alive and its immune system is active, it is prepared for this invasion. When a psyche is attacked by the blame virus, for example, it sends a distress signal to other people's psyches to warn them of an impending attack – just as happens within our physical cells.



For example, think about what happens in a healthy group of people (just as in healthy cells) in response to something that has gone wrong.

Note: the blame virus only appears when something goes wrong.

A teenage son had recently washed his car with a hose and spray nozzle attached to the outside spigot. After washing the car, he coiled-up the hose on the driveway, but he forgot to turn off the faucet (leaving the hose pressurized with water). A week later, an early cold-front came through the area. The water in the hose froze, and ripped it apart. Unfortunately, the thaw came when the family was not home, and the water leaked rapidly from the hose continuously for two days until the source of

water (their well, in this case) was totally depleted.

In a healthy family, where the blame virus had not done its damage, the teenage son would not be criticized, reprimanded, shown disapproval, condemned, knocked, reproached, and scorned. Instead, there would be a genuine desire within the family to discuss the problem to the point it was thoroughly understood – without even a tinge of blame.

Part of the understanding would, of course, reveal that the teenage son did not turn off the faucet.

But because of the absence of blame within this family (remember, not even a tinge), each family member would freely and openly share what they, themselves knew about the burst hose.

In this true story (not the author's family), the teenage daughter freely admitted that she knew the hose was pressurized with water because there was a small puddle on the ground near the nozzle for at least a week prior to the incident (*"I thought Dad saw it, and would eventually take care of it."*) The mother admitted to knowing the same thing. Even more, the father admitted to using the hose as well, without turning off the faucet after he finished. *"Why turn it off when I know I'll use it again tomorrow."* And then, as they were discussing it amongst themselves, they all admitted: *"We do not do a very good job with checking our home before we leave on family outings. Let's talk about some things we ought to be doing to make sure our house is safe before we leave it."*

In the absence of the blame virus, each family member is **FREE** to see themselves as part of the problem. They are **FREE** to be **INTROSPECTIVE**.

Along these lines, one of the author's favorite quotes comes from a Canadian friend and fellow rootician, who says:

*Blame  $\propto$  1/Understanding..... Doug Emberley (rootician)*

The above quote is a **profoundly important** mathematical expression which reads "*blame is inversely proportional to understanding.*" In other words, when blame is absent, understanding thrives. When understanding is absent, blame thrives.

In this respect, note that the existence of personal responsibility is at its highest when the blame virus is absent, because when people truly see themselves as part of their problems, they will want to do something about it.

#### **An attack of the blame virus**

In the prior paragraphs, we have been discussing how a healthy family (or organization) would respond to an unfortunate event. Now let us consider an attack of the blame virus.

Imagine what would happen if a visitor to the above family, say an uncle, exhibited a tendency to blame. The family members would quickly and calmly explain to the uncle that "we're all part of the problem, so we'd rather not point fingers at just one person." In other words, each individual's psyche senses an invasion of the blame virus, and sends a distress signal to the other members of the family as soon as it senses an invasion – just as occurs at a cellular level.

If this is hard to imagine, consider another example. Consider what would happen if a visitor to your family, say the same uncle, showed up at your house without wearing any pants. He would either be booted-out immediately by the mother or father, or all the children would run into their bedrooms and lock their doors as fast as possible – because such behavior is totally unacceptable to the family.

A similar response would occur within a family devoid of the blame virus, where a sudden appearance of blame would cause an abhorrent reaction.

In essence, therefore, it is the healthy psyche of each individual that protects one another from an invading "psyche-virus." In a group of healthy psyche's (just as in a group of healthy cells), this is all that is usually needed to stop the attack in its tracks.

#### **A mass invasion of the blame virus**

But let us consider the teenager who lived in this healthy family one more time. Years later,



let us suppose that this same teenager got a job at the local refinery and eventually became a control room operator. One night, at about 2:30 AM, an event occurred which required his immediate response – but he had fallen asleep at the control panel and therefore was not aware of the event. Because he did not respond, a fire occurred which spread rapidly. Massive physical damage occurred, firefighters were injured, and environmental damages were severe.

The reader might think: “It is one thing to be “understanding” when a person makes a mistake at home and the end-result is a dried-up well, but it is quite different in a high hazard industry where our equipment, the environment, and people can be destroyed! This person needs to be severely disciplined – even fired!”

Hmmmmmm.....

Why is there more of a tendency to blame one another in these catastrophic cases than with smaller incidents? Why would it be acceptable and practical to be introspective about small problems, but unacceptable and impractical in response to a catastrophe? If anything, should we not try to understand catastrophes to a greater degree than anything else?

One of the reviewers of this paper was an ex-Plant Manger who said:

*“Now wait a minute. Sleeping on the job is never acceptable in an industrial setting and is usually a termination offense.....no excuses. It's one of those rules that are set to keep the 2% of*

*the population in enough respect of failure to consciously avoid it.”*

What happens to our psyche in response to catastrophe? Why is the above kind of comment so prevalent?

It almost seems as if a mass invasion of the blame virus occurs in response to a catastrophe – the larger the consequence (and greater the pain), the more virulent is the attack. Even when reading this scenario, the attack has probably begun within you, the reader.

When the above kinds of thoughts enter the psyche via the blame virus, and are allowed to fester and even propagate, the healthy psyche will die and eventually be CONVINCED that:

**“It isn’t me, it’s you.”**

Note the subtle, dramatic, and deadly change of attitude. The dead psyche no longer says “it’s not only me.” The “dead” psyche totally excludes all possibility of being part of the problem.

Imagine this occurring within ten, then one hundred, then one thousand people (within the organization where the incident occurred) – everyone pointing fingers at one another – no-one accepting responsibility.

When this is allowed to happen, it GUARANTEES more finger-pointing in the future, a corresponding lack of introspection, along with no personal accountability (responsibility), and the eventual demise of the company, families affected by the company, and even the individual family members.

**The dead psyche totally excludes all possibility of being part of the problem.**

It is not an exaggeration to say that entire societies are at stake.

### Calling for secondary defenses

As noted earlier, this paper has been written by an experienced root cause analyst, trainer, and mentor – a field of endeavor that forces one to consider the deeper aspects of life.

When something goes wrong, it is the sole role of the “rootician” to understand why the event occurred. This role is both a luxury and curse in this fast-paced world we all live in.

It is a luxury because when something goes wrong, everyone else is on the “fast track.” *“We need to contain this problem and then restore the system to the status quo, FAST! And by the way, WHO CAN WE HOLD ACCOUNTABLE?”*



The rootician, however, has the assigned and often legally-required task of being on a 180 degree opposite track. While everyone else is going fast, this person has the luxury of being able to slow down – because it takes time to understand why something went wrong.

This luxury, however, leads to “the curse.” Because of their “role” in life, rooticians understand why things go wrong to a greater degree than most other people. Rooticians, therefore, exist with a knowingness that comes with the stigma (or curse) of being “impractical, idealistic, liberal-minded obstacles” to restoring the system to the status quo.

*It’s the equipment, the systems, the vendor, the doctor, the nurse, Congress, the President, anything or anyone except ME! So now that I*

*know how it happened, and who did it, get out of my way and let me do something about this!*

Because of their stigma (curse), rooticians are especially sensitive to these kinds of thoughts (which they know comes from the blame virus). Certainly, other people – people who have been the victims of “witch hunts” in the past – have also been stigmatized, and jump when they see it coming again. However, it is the rooticians themselves who are the main defense against the blame virus. It is their most important role.

Rooticians are the organizational-psyche’s secondary immune system. Without the presence of an established, respected, and bold group of rooticians, an organization has no defense against the blame virus, and is likely to enter a death spiral.

Although the blame virus is something everyone ought to know about, the primary target of this paper are these rooticians.

Please recognize what is happening around us. Notice the damage that is occurring. As we witness the escalating explosion of the blame virus and the damage it has done to our friends, families, organizations, country, and even the world at large, please understand that...

**...we are the crucial antidote!**

Consider what might happen if we strove to make the following a reality:

## ANTIDOTE to the BLAME VIRUS

(A vision of what could be)

1. The Golden Rule of Things that Go Wrong has been engrained in all our psyches.

*I will try my best to understand why people did what they did (especially if I am tending to blame someone) – to such an extent I am convinced I would have done the same thing in a similar situation.*

Note: getting to this point will guarantee that you understand.

2. A no-blame mentality is the norm for everything and anything that goes wrong within our lives. In anticipation of big things that go wrong, an official, no-blame policy is in place, and strongly re-emphasized when such things occur (in anticipation of a mass invasion of the blame virus).

3. A corresponding self-discovery (introspection) mentality is the norm for everything and anything that goes wrong within our lives. In other words, everyone tries their best to see themselves as part of every one of their problems. This mentality is progressively detailed, i.e., it is suggestive for small problems and required (in a specifically delineated format) for larger ones. When (if) a catastrophe occurs, this policy is strongly re-emphasized (in anticipation of a mass invasion of the blame virus.)

4. At work, an Accountability Contract is considered as a condition of employment. The contract might read as follows:

*We, the management team, recognize that all failure is caused by people, and that all*

*people learn in retrospect. We also recognize that we will all, at one time or another, be part of the problems we experience (ourselves included).*

*Knowing this, we require that all people that are involved in undesirable events be considered “stakeholders” of these events.*

*All stakeholders will be required to try to see themselves as part of the problem, as well as required to state what they intend to do about their admitted role.*

*No-one will be allowed to blame anyone for anything. Instead, all of us will be required to see our own roles.*

*We consider personal introspection to be the ultimate in personal responsibility.*

*We also consider this a condition of employment.*

*In return for your agreement and participation, the management of this organization promises that they will not punish you or anyone else as a result of being a stakeholder.*

## Summary

Our physical bodies exist in near equilibrium between agents that want to destroy us, and other agents that try to protect us. This is especially true with viral infections, and the way our immune system responds.

As long as immune system remains healthy, it is superior to the invading viruses, and we live.

But as soon as the immune system is compromised, the viruses soon take control and literally suck the life out of our bodies.

It is the premise of this paper that the same sort of thing that is happening within our cells is also happening within our psyches.

Healthy psyches are free of the need to blame other people for the problems they encounter in life. But the blame virus is relentless in its pursuit of the healthy psyche. It looks for every opportunity to invade it, and suck out its life.

Fortunately, the healthy psyche has defenses against blame virus. Healthy psyches can fend off the normal attack with little, if any assistance.

The problems in our lives, however, seem to be the generators of the blame virus. As the consequence of the problem goes up, so do the quantity of the blame virus.

The normal, healthy psyche is not able to withstand the quantity of invading viruses when catastrophic problems occur. It needs support of the secondary immune system. This secondary system is the root cause analysis function within the organization – a formal, dedicated “psyche” whose sole function is to understand, rather than blame.

This root cause analysis function can anticipate the attack of the blame virus, and can establish polices to assure the future health of the organization – no matter what attack is presented.

### **Epilog**

The story of the operator that fell asleep at the control panel is true. Unfortunately, the operator was terminated from his job within hours of the incident. Upon further investigation, where introspection was required

and blame was not allowed, people admitted to the following:

- Operations: We have been sleeping at this particular control panel for years. It is not intentional! It is almost unavoidable. It’s one of the most difficult assignments in the plant, especially at night.
- Supervision: We knew that our operators were sleeping at the control panel, but we never did anything to correct it. Everyone knew. No-one did anything about it.
- Supervision: We felt sorry for them. It is normally one of the mundane jobs in the plant, so we purchased comfortable, reclining chairs to make their lives a bit easier.
- Instrument techs: We disconnected the audible alarms that would have woken the operators. They kept tripping prematurely and we didn’t have time to troubleshoot them.
- Area management: We had no idea any of this was occurring right under our noses. We are consumed in meetings, rather than being dedicated to our people.

Each of the above issues was addressed. The operator who was terminated was re-hired.

### **About Failsafe Network, Inc.**

Failsafe Network, Inc. was formed in 1985 to help people learn from things that go wrong. Failsafe is a sought-after provider of Root Cause Analysis training, support material, and services. Failsafe has increasingly focused on helping organizations shift from a blame mentality to one of introspection.

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