



Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Frustration with Lack of Management Support

Description

Part Four of Seven Discussions Concerning the Challenger Disaster.

Body

After my presentation, I asked for help in the form of design improvement suggestions, but no one said a word. Bob Ebeling and I spent the remainder of the convention time meeting with seal vendors whom we had previously contacted for help. From the beginning, the Seal Task Team was frustrated from a lack of management support to provide the resources necessary for us to accomplish our task.

Discussion Question

Morton Thiokol doesn't want to appear like a company with a flawed product, so they would prefer that Boisjoly play down the O-ring problem. While there have been a few cases of hot gas blow-by, almost twenty flights have flown successfully. Boisjoly has already written memos expressing his view of the seriousness of the joint problem. What can he do now?

Answer 1: Inform astronauts of danger.

No flight is imminent. Those working on the space shuttle flights have seen and fixed many potential safety problems. It is their job, and yours, to find remedies for

such problems, not to bother the astronauts.

Answer 2: Inform client (government) of dangers.

The client seems to know.

[Continue to Temperature Forecast for Challenger Flight](#)

Rights

Use of Materials on the OEC

Resource Type

Case Study / Scenario

Topics

Catastrophes, Hazards, Disasters

Engineer/Client Relationships

Lab and Workplace Safety

Safety

Social Responsibility

Discipline(s)

Aerospace Engineering

Mechanical Engineering

Engineering