

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

April 2016

How to Make Good Decisions in the Woods

You've all probably worked with an experienced, veteran forestry worker. Someone with good bush sense: the ability to make the correct decisions rooted in a good understanding of the forest environment, equipment capabilities and personal limitations.

How's your bush sense? Keep reading to learn how to improve your decision-making skills and avoid the pitfalls that often lead to mistakes.

Logical Thinking

- When we make a mistake or experience stress, we start using the primitive part of our brain which triggers a fight or flight reaction. This causes us to stop thinking logically which can make the situation worse.
- When things go wrong, pause and think through the problem carefully. Stopping the work and not immediately reacting to the bad situation will keep you using the logical part of your brain.



Avoid These Hazardous Attitudes

- The Federal Aviation Authority identified 5 attitudes that often lead to pilots making mistakes:
 - Anti-Authority – “Why should I listen to you?”
 - Impulsivity – “Do it RIGHT NOW!”
 - Invulnerability – “Nah, I don't think it'll happen to me!”
 - Macho – “Come on! I can do this!”
 - Resignation – “What's the use? Forget it. I give up!”

Mental Shortcuts - FACES

- Our brains will always try to take shortcuts to be more efficient. Sometime these shortcuts can create problems. Beware of the following:
 - **Familiarity** - When we are familiar with a job we often let our guard down and go on “automatic pilot”.
 - **Acceptance** - Fear of rejection or judgment by others can push us to do things we would not normally do.



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- **Commitment** - Sometimes we can get so committed to performing our job that we have tunnel vision where we miss some obvious hazards.
- **Expert** - We may feel like it is easier to go along with someone else's plan because they are the "expert". Make sure to ask yourself: Is this planned work safe for me?
- **Stress** - Operational pressures, personal problems, and performance expectations can make us rush through work without proper procedures.

HALT

- Remember HALT the next time you go to work. You are more likely to make a bad decision if you are:
 - **H** - Hungry
 - **A** - Angry
 - **L** - Lonely
 - **T** - Tired



Additional Safety Resources:

1) SAFER Video Series – In the Clear

<http://www.safer.ca/>

2) RADAR – A Good System for Logical Problem Solving

<http://www.bcforestsafe.org/RADAR>

3) Video - The Human Brain: How We Decide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2iJF2194pg>

