



■ Shared Purpose

A guide to communicating with your team about smart braking systems



Why?

Given that smart braking systems are now mandatory on newly built prime movers and semi-trailers, one might reasonably ask "Do we need to anything?"

While it is true that this technology will be factory-fitted on new equipment, if your livestock transport business want to maximise the value of these systems and mitigate the risk of things going wrong, having good discussions (at the right times) will be key.

Don't assume that doing nothing is a low-risk option, in the absence of better information, your staff may rely on assumptions, rumours and hearsay.

By taking a 'people-first' approach to rolling out smart braking technology in livestock transport, we can simultaneously support safety and culture within our industry.

Managing change is hard,
but not managing change
is harder!

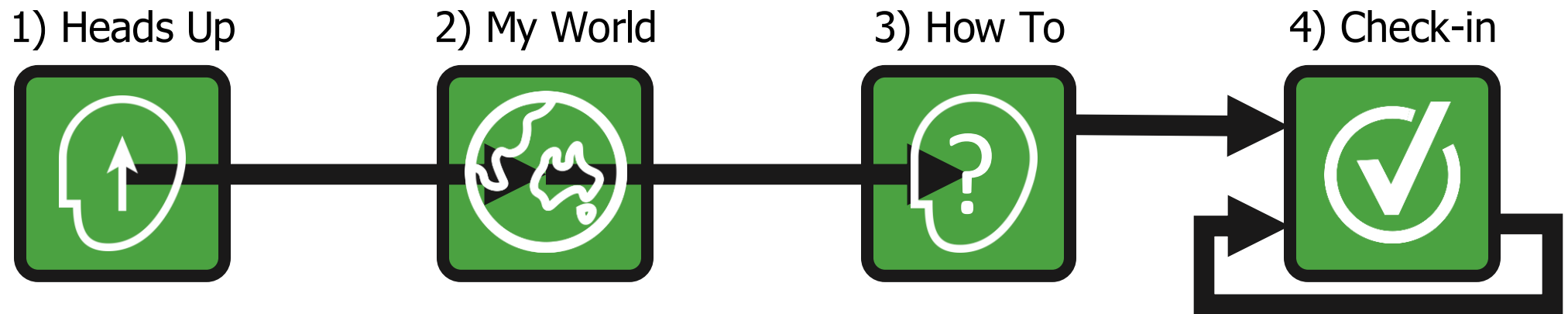
-Adam Gibson
National Truck Accident Research Centre



When?

The next step is to have a plan around how you will take your people along on the journey as your business adopts equipment with smart braking technology.

- 1) The first stage is to talk about what is changing, why and the risks of not changing. People want to hear these messages from senior leaders.
- 2) Next, your people will want to hear what it means to them (the pro's the con's) from their direct boss.



- 3) The next step in the communication is updates as the change is designed and implemented; how they can be involved, give feedback, when they will know more, etc. During this step, it is important that direct leaders are visibly liaising and listening. They need to be their people's liaison and advocate. Senior leaders also need to stay actively and visibly engaged (this is the no. 1 predictor that a change will succeed)
- 4) A critically important but all too-easily forgotten step is, once the change is implemented, giving opportunities for feedback (and keeping people updated on progress – e.g. tweaks made, things to celebrate, goals reached, etc)

Reaching your drivers

Fish where the fish are.

Choose communication channels that your drivers use. Skip that long email and try short posts in a closed company WhatsApp or Facebook group instead.

A picture (or video!) tells a thousand words.

Make your communication visual, not just a wall of text. A short, simple video shot on your mobile phone will get seen and remembered, a 1,000 word email will not.

Make it a conversation

Invite comments, questions and feedback. No one likes to be talked at, and change done with us (not to us) is always more effective.





Lift your skills

If you're interested in more resources to support effective communication, these videos provide insights and guidance on how to communicate with and engage your people.

Daniel Pink talks about motivation
<https://youtu.be/u6XAPnuFjJc>

Daryl Hutton talks driver coaching
<https://youtu.be/cz5yey4WZwE>

David Marquet discusses alternative views of leadership
<https://youtu.be/pYKH2uSax8U>

Kelly McLuckie on communication and culture
<https://youtu.be/L45IX07FtpU>

EBS Data to inform

Decide your approach and communicate

Before you use data from smart braking data in your business, you should review the data the systems can provide and decide what and how you'll use it.

With that decided, you need to clearly communicate this to your people. It should never be the case that the first time a driver learns that there is data being generated by your trailers is when they're called into an office with concerns about their driving.

Make resources available to drivers

To get positive outcomes, your drivers need to understand what EBS data is, how it is generated and how it relates to their driving behaviour.

The ALRTA has a range of materials which sit alongside this guide, plus you can talk with your brake system vendors for more information.

Say what you'll do, do what you say

Once you've got the data, you need to live your commitments. This means the same rules need to apply whether it's a new driver, someone who has worked for you for 20 years or even the boss themselves.

If you tell your people that you'll do one thing, but then are seen doing something else, you're breaking an implied social contract and undermining your own credibility.

You don't have to follow rules where they don't make sense, but it does mean living your commitments even when it's uncomfortable.

The right fit for your business

Finally, don't just adopt someone else's policies. You know your business better than anyone, make your policies work for your unique circumstances.



Driver coaching



Right time & Place

- Pick the right time and place for the conversation, ensuring it's calm and the other person is open to listening.
- Avoid bringing up sensitive topics when they're tired, stressed, or distracted.
- Keep in mind individual preferences—some people may need time to process feedback, while others might prefer to discuss it straight away.



Be clear & concise

- Express your thoughts simply and clearly, explaining your concern and its importance.
- Avoid softening feedback too much, as it can come across as unprofessional or insincere.
- Always remain respectful and polite.



Agree next steps

- Focus on identifying actionable steps to address the issue.
- Ask open-ended questions to ensure mutual understanding.
- Agree on the next steps and set a time to follow up.



Disclaimer:

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