**Human Performance: The Small Things**

Sometimes it’s the small things that make the big things. The small things easily go unnoticed unless someone looks at them. Here is an example from the Cardiac Surgery Registry.

Patients were doing well after cardiac surgery and then shortly after being transferred from the CCU to the ICU complications began to arise. Patients were screened for risk factors, standard procedures were followed, all food and liquid intake was suspended prior to surgery. Why all of a sudden was there a spike of complications within the same timeframe post-surgery? After studying the Registry data, it was determined that the complications were related to dehydration. But nothing in the surgical procedure was changed. Or was there a change? A small change, the procedure of moving patients from CCU to ICU in order to be more efficient for the hospital was recently implemented. In this new process, while the nurses in ICU were getting established with their new patient, the patient was running out of fluids and dehydration was setting in. The solution was simple; give the patient fluids before being transferred from CCU to ICU. It was a small thing that turned into a big thing... life or death.

Human Performance Improvement is often about the awareness to notice the small things. The solution is often just as small, but the impact is *gigantic*!