From Zero Harm to Learning
Leader Checklist

The goal is not perfect performance, rather, **earlier learning.**

NEAR MISSES

➢ Do people report near misses without fear?
➢ Are near misses discussed more often than incidents?

If not: you may be reacting too late. Try asking:

○ What was the last near miss reported?
○ What changed because of it?

INVESTIGATIONS

➢ Do investigations focus on system conditions, not just individual actions?

If not: individuals may be carrying system risk. Try asking:

○ What made the action/decision make sense at the time?
○ What pressure or constraints were present?

LEADERSHIP RESPONSE

➢ Do leaders visibly thank people for undesirable news?

If not: silence may be growing. Try asking:

○ When was the last time someone was acknowledged for raising a concern?
○ What message did our response send?

THREE PRACTICAL SHIFTS LEADERS CAN MAKE NOW

Practical Shift	What This Looks Like In Practice	Questions Leaders Should Ask
Talk about near misses more than incidents	Near misses are raised routinely in meetings and treated as early warning signals, not failures. Discussions focus on how work actually happens, not just what went wrong.	• What does this near miss tell us about how work is really done? • What conditions allowed this to almost happen? • What small change could reduce risk next time?
Reward transparency, not perfect numbers	Leaders respond constructively to bad news and visibly acknowledge people who speak up. Metrics are discussed without blame, and honesty is reinforced through action.	• How do we usually react when the news is uncomfortable? • What behaviours are we unintentionally rewarding right now? • What visible action can we take to show speaking up matters?
Measure learning, not just outcomes	Safety discussions focus on what changed as a result of learning, not just whether targets were met. Leaders track whether insights led to updates in procedures, equipment, or planning.	• What changed because of what we learned? • Where can we see that change in the field today? • How do we know this actually reduced risk?

The
Resilience
Loop