



**FAA**  
Air Traffic Organization

# Leading Edge 2.0

Making the Connection

## Discussion Guide for Managers



An Outreach Initiative for ATO Employees  
2009



## HELPFUL HINTS FOR MANAGERS

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The following are some good tips for helping you connect with your employees when presenting each module.

### DO:

- Brief the material beforehand – don't come into it unprepared
- Deliver it to people you know, directly supervise or work with every day
- Tailor material to YOUR workforce and cite examples that will resonate with them
- Allow plenty of time for discussion
- Ask open-ended questions
- Acknowledge comments and draw others into the discussion
- Let discussion happen – don't feel like you have to read every question in the guide
- Give it a personal touch – you know your team and what will resonate with them
- Be prepared for tough questions
- Be honest and open
- Listen closely. If you don't know the answer to a question, do the research and follow up with your team
- Ask your facility management for support as needed

### DON'T:

- Mass present – for example, don't give the module to eight crews all together
- Give an employee the video to watch by himself/herself
- Present the module in an operations environment – it can be a distraction
- Talk about conditions of work



## MAKING THE CONNECTION

The ATO recognizes the strong connection you already have with your employees. Regular, open communication with your workforce is vital in building a stronger, safer ATO. Employees who feel valued for a job well done contribute to a strong safety culture.

The Organizational Effectiveness office developed the Leading Edge 2.0: Making the Connection initiative to give you the information you need to strengthen connections with your workforce. Making the Connection will give you an opportunity to engage employees in meaningful dialogue around important issues facing the ATO.

Making the Connection is comprised of three modules:

- 1) Connecting with People
- 2) Connecting with Technology
- 3) Connecting with Safety

Each module consists of a brief video followed by group discussion. Viewing all three modules and engaging in a group discussion after each one should take approximately 30-45 minutes per module.

**OVERALL THEMES:** The Making the Connection initiative is about **connecting with our workforce**. We recognize that it is the people of the ATO who make our airspace the safest and most efficient in the world. As we prepare for the future, we want to make sure that we share the information needed to understand why we are making certain changes and how those changes will impact each of us. Making the Connection is an opportunity to give all employees a chance to ask questions, obtain answers and engage in open, honest dialogue.

**USING THIS GUIDE:** This guide is designed to help you shape your delivery of the material. Think of it as a lesson plan – something that will help you focus on key learning objectives while structuring your presentation to stimulate meaningful discussion.

Each module outline:

- Explains how the module is relevant to challenges the ATO is facing today
- Includes objectives that highlight what you want each participant to take away
- Identifies key talking points to guide your discussion
- Provides a resource summary that describes video, web and other tools to communicate module objectives
- Includes sample questions to engage participants and to start and maintain a dialogue

The ATO is confident in your abilities to strengthen the organization by sharing these modules with your employees and working together to identify ways to improve the connection with people, technology and safety.

## CONNECTING WITH *PEOPLE*

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this module is to acknowledge the hard work of ATO's employees and to identify methods for open and ongoing dialogue.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Communicate to employees how much you and the ATO value the great work that they do
- Emphasize the importance of open communication in the workplace
- Discuss ways to make open dialogue between employees and managers a comfortable, everyday practice



### DO

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*Prior to Session:*

- Review materials and Video 1 prior to the session
- Identify which questions to address with your group
- Identify specific examples that recognize individual employee successes
- Familiarize yourself with [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com), especially the feedback section
- Obtain ATO Leading Edge outreach cards for distribution during session

*Day of Session:*

- Set up and test any equipment (DVD player, TV, computer, Internet connection) in advance



### SAY

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- Thank you for the great work you do every day; we couldn't be successful without you
- People are our strength; the ATO is a great place to work because of you
- We don't sit down and talk about important changes in the ATO often enough; that's what we're here to change
- We want to hear what you have to say and answer your questions
- We need you to share your ideas and work with us to build an even stronger ATO



### SHOW

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Video 1: Connecting with People

 **ASK**

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- What are our team's strengths and weaknesses?
- How can we address our weaknesses? What can I do?
- In order for us to be a high-performing team, I need to know what you require. What do you need from your peers? What do you need from me?

This is also an opportunity for you to ask your employees, "How am I doing as your Front Line Manager?" to further open dialogue and build trust.

 **SAY**

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ATO leadership values what you have to say about the organization, your successes and challenges, and what we can do to make the ATO a better place.

 **SHOW**

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[www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com) and show participants links to provide feedback.

 **SAY**

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Any feedback you provide on the Web site will be reviewed, and your questions/concerns will be answered. Leadership is dedicated to making this happen. There are two more modules in this series, with an evaluation following the final module. Next time we meet, we will be discussing the impact of technology on our jobs.

## CONNECTING WITH TECHNOLOGY

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this module is to explain NextGen and to introduce some of the new technologies and procedures associated with the transition to NextGen.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Engage employees in a discussion about how changes in technologies will impact them
- Discuss how employees can best prepare for these changes

### DO

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*Prior to Session:*

- Review materials, the 2009 NextGen Implementation Plan, and Video 2 prior to the session
- Identify which questions to address with your group
- Obtain a list of NextGen technologies and acronyms for distribution during session
- Familiarize yourself with any service unit-specific technologies
- Familiarize yourself with links on [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com) to additional information about NextGen, as well as [www.faa.gov/nextgen](http://www.faa.gov/nextgen) and [atoexperience.faa.gov/nextgen](http://atoexperience.faa.gov/nextgen)
- Obtain ATO Leading Edge outreach cards for distribution during the session

*Day of Session:*

- Set up and test any equipment (DVD player, TV, computer, Internet connection) in advance

### SAY

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- New technologies and procedures mean new capabilities
- Technology won't replace our jobs – it will help us do them better
- We don't resist new technologies at home – why should we at work?
- Change will be continuous and ongoing
- We need your help to help manage and work through change; we need you to be adaptive
- Technologies are only as good as those who know how to use them; we will train you on new technologies
- There will be great opportunities for you to be involved as technology evolves, e.g., Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), cadre instructors, testers
- **While you watch the video, think to yourself: “How might this impact me?”**

### SHOW

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Video 2: Connecting with Technology

 **ASK**

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- How will the move to NextGen impact us?
- What does NextGen mean for my job?
- How do we prepare now for NextGen?
- How will you embrace NextGen?

 **SHOW**

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- Links on [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com) to other Web sites with information on NextGen as well as links to provide feedback.
- [www.faa.gov/nextgen](http://www.faa.gov/nextgen)
- [atoexperience.faa.gov/nextgen](http://atoexperience.faa.gov/nextgen)

 **SAY**

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The next module is Connecting with Safety. We will define the concept of safety culture and identify steps to get there.

## CONNECTING WITH SAFETY

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this module is to define a safety culture and discuss ways to build a “just” culture.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Engage employees in a discussion around how the agency and management can create an environment that promotes a positive and vibrant safety culture
- Discuss ways to build a “just” culture in an environment that encourages and builds trust

### DO

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*Prior to Session:*

- Review materials and Video 3 prior to the session
- Identify which questions to address with your group
- Review and download information on aviation safety, such as the Air Traffic Safety Action Program (ATSAP), for distribution during session
- Familiarize yourself with [www.faa.gov/safety/](http://www.faa.gov/safety/)
- Obtain ATO Leading Edge outreach cards for distribution during session

*Day of Session:*

- Set up and test any equipment (DVD player, TV, computer, Internet connection) in advance

### SAY

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- Management has always had a passion for safety and recognizes that employees do as well
- Management also recognizes that the level of trust is not where it needs to be
- Management needs to create an environment of trust
- We’re all still learning what it means to be a “just” culture
- There are international aviation organizations that model safety cultures that focus on justice, rather than on blame
- Safety in the future will require changes in technology and culture

### SHOW

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Video 3: Connecting with Safety

 **ASK**

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- We're already practicing safety, so what do you think about what you heard on the video?
- What does it mean to have a "just" culture? How does a "blame" culture differ from a "just" culture?
- What can I do to help build trust needed for a safety culture?
- What do you want to see from me as your manager?

 **SHOW**

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- ATSAP and other aviation safety information, [www.ATSAPsafety.com](http://www.ATSAPsafety.com)
- [www.faa.gov/safety/](http://www.faa.gov/safety/) where employees can get more details

 **ASK**

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Please take a moment to share your feedback on this series by completing the evaluation found online at [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com).

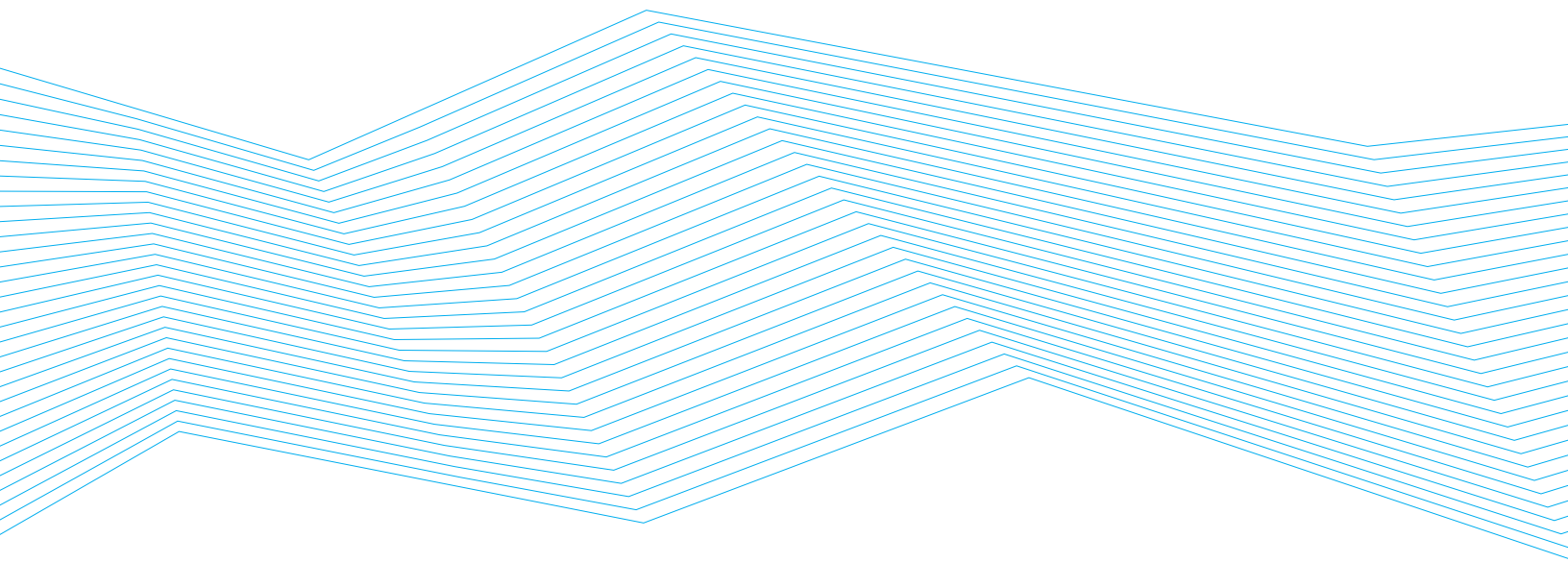
 **SAY**

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ATO leadership values what you have to say. Please continue to provide feedback on [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com) and your questions/concerns will be answered. We hope to continue the dialogue that was started with this series.

**NOTE TO MANAGERS:** After completing the three module discussions, complete an attendance record and send to your Service Center Point of Contact for tracking purposes.

Please continue discussions with your employees on topics of importance. Use FAA Web sites and [www.atoleadingedge.com](http://www.atoleadingedge.com) to obtain information and answers to employee questions.



# Leading Edge 2.0

## Making the Connection

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