



Do Deliberate Leadership Values Matter?

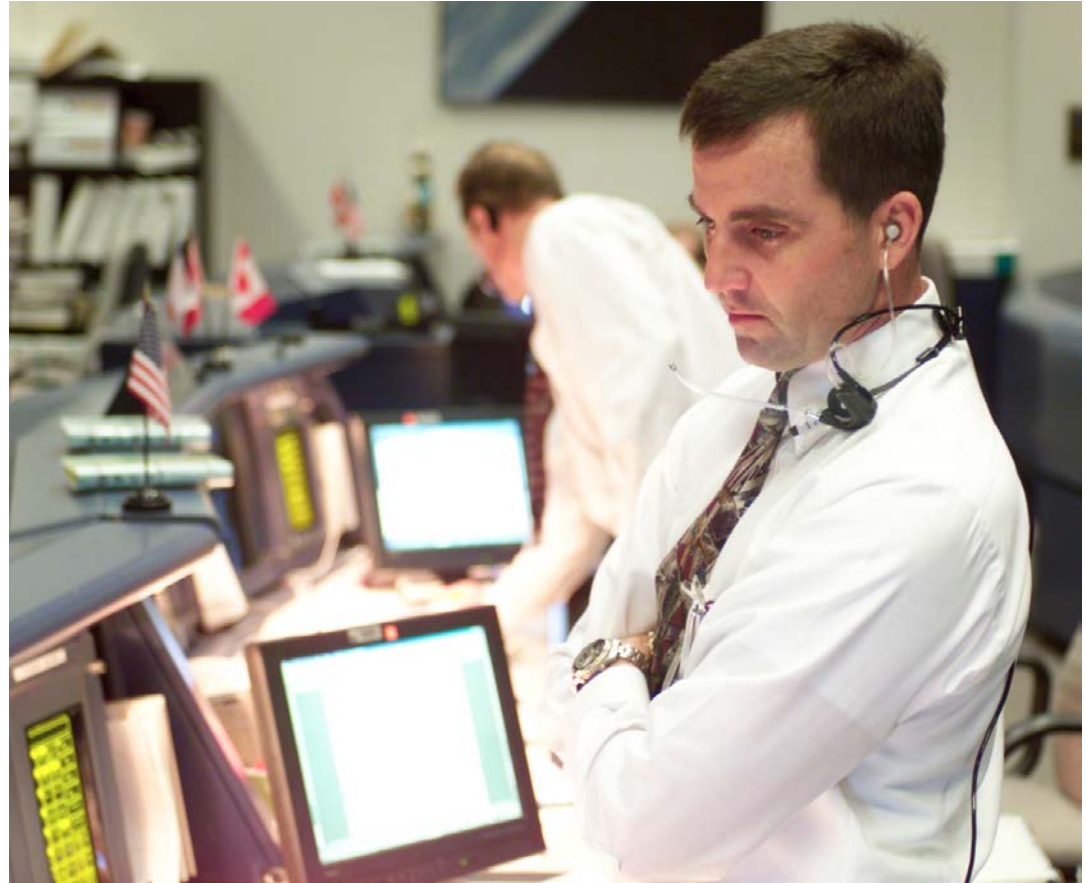
Former JSC Flight Director Paul Hill's Lessons from Apollo 1, Challenger and Columbia

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Paul Hill TED Talk

Paul Sean Hill was the Director of Mission Operations at the [NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center](#) in Houston, Texas.^{[2][3]} He was formerly a [Flight Director](#) in the [Mission Control Center](#) for [Space Shuttle](#) and [International Space Station](#) before serving as Deputy Director and then Director of Mission Operations Directorate (MOD) at JSC until his retirement from NASA. In this Ted Talk, Paul discusses the role leadership, values, and culture have in enabling NASA to do the amazing things we do, and what happens when we lose sight of those values and allow our culture to drift.



Watch Paul's talk:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laTF_z7q_Z8

What did Paul teach us?

- **As an employee:**

- Technical excellence is the key to high performance
- That excellence requires deliberate thoroughness, attention to detail, and occasionally stamina.

- **As a manager:**

- It's your responsibility to balance cost, schedule, safety and technical risk. You can't let them get out of balance. You can't let schedule pressure drive you to poor decision-making through normalization of deviance or "prove it's unsafe" behaviors.
- Upcoming Flight Readiness Reviews for our new crewed vehicles will give our senior leaders the task of deciding on safety of flight issues. We need to guard against making the same mistakes...losing the proper balance.

Remember Wayne Hale's Rule #1

It can happen to you.

“.....don't think that you won't make mistakes and that events can't get away from you. Nobody is smart enough to avoid all problems. That sliver of fear, the knowledge that the universe is out there waiting for the least lapse in attention to bite, is motivation that just might help you avoid catastrophe. Or perhaps not. Let's hope that Dr. Perrow was wrong and that accidents in complex systems are not simply 'normal'. Better yet let us all work to prove him wrong. The first principle of a successful high reliability organization is to be “preoccupied with failure.”

Do that.”