

eGuide

# 5 Daily Habits of an Effective Drilling Manager

# Introduction

It takes a highly motivated, dynamic and experienced individual to be a successful Drilling Manager. Not only do Drilling Managers have to ensure drilling operations are carried out in accordance with approved procedures and industry standards, but it is key for this to be completed in the most efficient and effective way possible.

A Drilling Manager is typically based onshore and is responsible for ensuring the people on the facility are safe, and the drilling operations are delivered on time and within budget. Their day is typically comprised of:

- Reviewing reports of the past 24 hours
- Reviewing HSSEQ performance and identifying risk
- Analysing and planning for operational and logistic requirements
- Reviewing cost progress and forecasting
- Attending multiple meetings with both the rig team and the office-based team to communicate progress or manage any conflicts
- Identifying and implementing solutions to any challenges that occur
- Communicating progress, issues and risk exposure
- Managing and communicating delivery expectations

Ivar Holm is a Drilling Manager and consultant at Add Energy, boasting over 35 years of drilling experience, and he has shared what he believes are the top daily habits Drilling Managers should consider to help overcome their biggest challenges, maximize time and resources, and ultimately achieve success.

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# Hold regular yet efficient meetings

“Meetings are a big part of a Drilling Manager’s day, so be as prepared as you can be. Ensure you review data and information available before going into the meeting to avoid wasting time discussing or asking questions about results, data or reports in great detail, so you can focus efforts on identifying key solutions and actions.

“It’s so easy to slip into the habit of having meetings with no outcomes. Make sure actions are captured, action owners identified and due dates assigned, tracked and reviewed in your next meeting to drive effectiveness. This can easily be documented by having a dedicated person take minutes and distributing them on the same day.

“I would say your morning meeting is the most critical, and provides the best opportunity for you and your team to share valuable information or insights that need to be communicated to the relevant stakeholders.”

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# Talk to the team, and offer discussion opportunities across the entire workforce

“From team leads and drillers to roughnecks and lease hands, it is critical to open up communication avenues and actively encourage the people to talk to you. It’s easy to say “my door is always open”, but actively opening it up through one-to-one invitation and continuous encouragement provides a platform for people to engage with you.

“I make it my mission on a daily basis to talk to as many people in the team as I can, and in doing this, I gain a much more holistic understanding of challenges that people are facing and what is working well. In my experience, these discussions often reveal improvement opportunities that were not previously identified, and more often than not, the people who are experiencing the challenges offer great solutions. My advice here would be to be transparent and show that you are doing something about the issues that are flagged, follow up and communicate updates on the topic where possible.

“In addition to the valuable insights you can gain from doing this, this habit can have a profound effect on morale and culture, by ensuring the team feels appreciated and they are adding value - happy people do a much better job!

“Video calls can be great, but I would also recommend investing time to travel to the base or the rig and speak face-to-face with the people conducting the work.”





# Delegate work and responsibilities

“It is impossible to be involved in every single aspect of the project, so it’s important to delegate work and give team members responsibility. In order for this to be effective, you must have a strong team around you who not only have the capability to complete the work you are requesting, but they should also portray the right behaviours and drive to complete it to the best of their endeavours.

“It can be difficult to dedicate time to what is sometimes perceived as “non-productive work”, but by investing time and focusing on being a coach, mentor and good listener, you will be able to ensure the work is being done to your high standards.

“In this type of role, it is critical to identify a predecessor, someone who you can rely on who will confidently step into your shoes when you are not available, and this is only achieved through mentorship and delegation. Not only will this enhance the capability within your team, but it will also help to free up some of your time to focus on more critical and strategic work such as:

- Addressing softkill issues in your workforce to ensure personnel is supported and motivated
- Look at other technologies to improve individual and system performance.

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## Discuss HSSEQ as part of your daily briefing

“Never underestimate the importance of HSSEQ. It is important to keep it front of mind at all times and host regular opportunities to discuss risks that could impact safety, integrity or the project progress.

“I would recommend building this discussion point into your morning briefing meeting agenda. Because all of the key stakeholders from each function typically attend this meeting, it provides the perfect opportunity to capture potential risks and conflicts that could impact HSSEQ. Mitigation actions should be discussed and documented on the risk register with the relevant probability and consequence ratings detailed, to determine priorities and where to focus efforts.

“If any issues do arise, my advice would be to firstly assess the risk profile and then inform the relevant stakeholders. In my experience, small non-critical issues can escalate quickly, so by keeping everyone informed, and putting relevant actions in place as quickly as possible, you can eliminate the risk and save a lot of time and extra work.”



# Focus on team spirit

“This goes without saying, but to achieve great results, you must invest in your team, and have fun. Take time out of your busy day to ask how your team members are doing, ensure they’re okay and have everything they need, and don’t forget to praise the good work they do in a public setting to encourage others to behave the same way.

“Also don’t forget to focus on building your team’s spirits through regular and consistent communication and engagement. In my experience, vulnerability is key to good leadership and transforming culture for the better. By being vulnerable, sharing your emotions, frustrations or challenges, it will help people to relate better to you and encourage them to open up.

“This is so important during stressful times, when they’ve been working long hours and feeling tired. It will also bring your team closer together, and build positive relationships across the entire team, which will in turn improve communications and the quality of the work being done.”

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