TEN FACTS about human failures

FACT 1: Human failures are universal and inevitable
“Right. That was easy. Can we get back to work then?”

FACT 2: People cannot easily avoid those actions they did not intend to commit
“So, more training isn’t always the complete answer then?”

FACT 3: Errors are consequences rather than causes
“So, when I find out who messed up, I could try to find out why it happened, rather than just sacking them?”

FACT 4: Many errors fall into recurrent patterns
“Then why don’t we predict what could happen, rather than just watching it happen?”

FACT 5: The same or similar events have often occurred before
“Does this mean that we can learn from other people’s expensive mistakes?”

FACT 6: The best people can make the worst mistakes
“Experience isn’t everything then?”

FACT 7: Similar failures occur in all industries
“So, our people aren’t any different from say, train drivers, doctors or pilots?”

FACT 8: Safety-significant failures can occur at all levels of the system
“You’re saying that some managers are human too, and they can get things wrong?”

FACT 9: There are certain situations and conditions that lead people into the same failure (regardless of who is performing the task)
“This means that, if I was in their shoes, I would have made the same mistake?”

FACT 10: You cannot change the human condition, but you can change the conditions in which humans work
“That’s it! Why don’t we change those things that make failures more likely?”