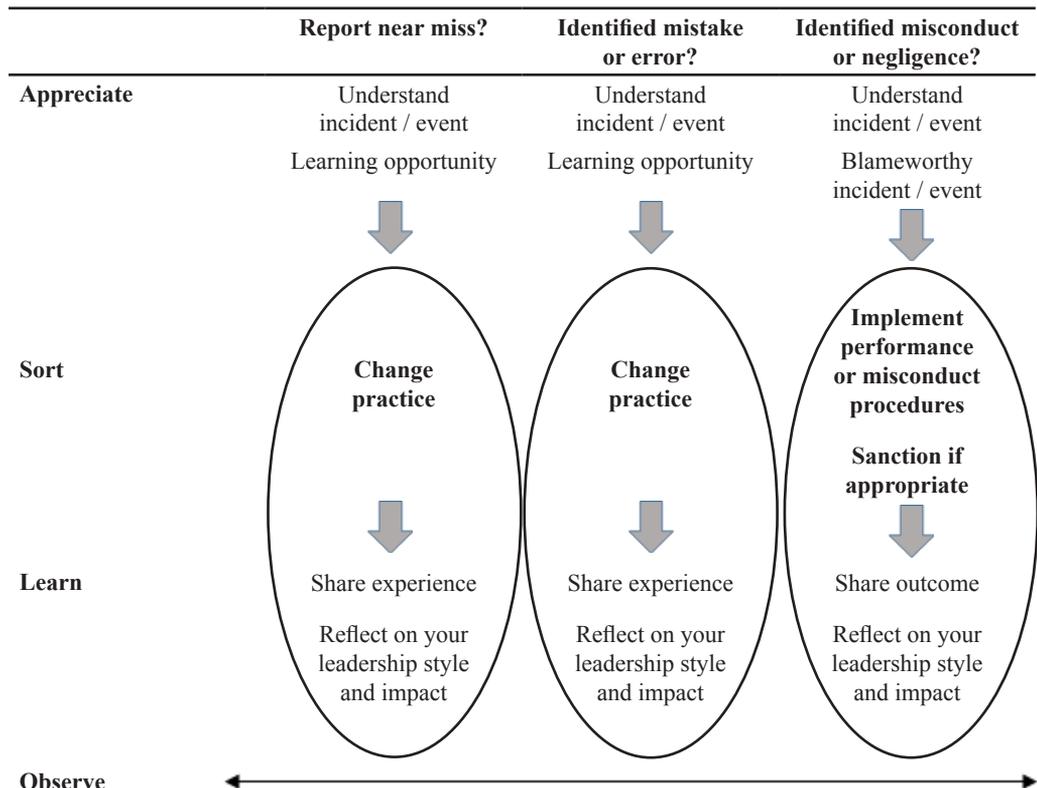


**HRD Forum — Viewpoint**

**Planting the Seeds of Organization Justice:  
 a Force for Change**

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My recent article for this *Journal* — In Search of Individual and Organizational Fairness in Policing (2018) — introduced some thoughts about the importance of organizational justice, particularly in relation to totemic organizational policies and procedures such as misconduct and performance management. I attempted to ground my thoughts in the direction of practical application in the workplace. To assist, I built on one of Matthew Syed’s (2015) core arguments about the crucial cultural shift from blame to learning. In Syed’s work, he contrasted the domains of medicine and aviation. My attention was focused on my own experiences and observations in UK policing.



The article introduced the Appreciate – Sort – Learn – Observe (ASLO) Model — see figure above — to encourage a deeper understanding and assessment of the ‘first up’ circumstances of the information emerging and a more considered observation of the workplace dynamics once the ‘remedies’ had been put in place. In my contention, the sort and learn elements were more substantively covered in previous works on this subject. The appreciate and observe elements less so.

To some extent, if not entirely, by design, I was able to float a subjective construction of fairness — based on the organisational justice literature — as a more digestible concept for managers and workers in everyday workplace contexts. This was shown the light of day in a series of presentations to uniformed and non-uniformed supervisors in Thames Valley Police. During March and April this year, we were able to reach over 1,200 officers and staff, first with a presentation and then through follow-on workshops. The feedback reveals that the ideas put forward were welcomed and are beginning to be introduced by a number of supervisors and those working within the People Directorate. We have also had a number of queries from other forces who have seen my presentations on the subject and are keen to use the ideas within their own environment.

Perhaps just as impactful, our staff associations (Superintendents’ Associations and Police Federation) and UNISON (our recognised Trade Union for non-warranted staff) welcomed the messages delivered and discussed. They report, even at this early juncture, a more thoughtful and learning focused to all but the most serious of misdemeanours or performance findings. Green shoots, yes, but green shoots, at least.

## References

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- Syed, M. (2015). *Black Box Thinking*, London: John Murray.

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