



Building a Resilient Safety Culture

Understanding how to strategically navigate your Safety Culture toward Resilience – the key to bouncing back when the “bad stuff” happens



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Description:

A 2-day intensive program to develop, improve and enhance knowledge of Safety Culture and how it can be shown to have a powerful influence upon human behaviour and decision making through all levels of the accident/disaster causation sequence. Participants shall also be provided with key tools to add layers of resilience to pre-existing safety cultures – the latest technologies available in the armoury of accident/disaster mitigation.

This workshop demystifies the concept of Safety Culture. For over twenty years now almost all investigations into major accidents have determined that a failed safety culture has been amongst the most significant contributors to the disaster occurring. Just some examples where this has been the case are the BP Texas City refinery explosion (15 deaths), the Deep-water Horizon rig explosion (11 deaths), the Upper Big Branch mining disaster (29 deaths), the Pike River explosion (29 deaths), the Santiago de Compostela train crash (79 deaths), the Soma mine disaster (301 deaths), and numerous others

In all of these accidents failed Safety Culture is described as the key culprit. At the same time very little is discussed with regard to methods/strategies that the business can put in place to even gain an understanding as to what the current Safety Culture even looks like.



Transportation
Safety Board
of Canada

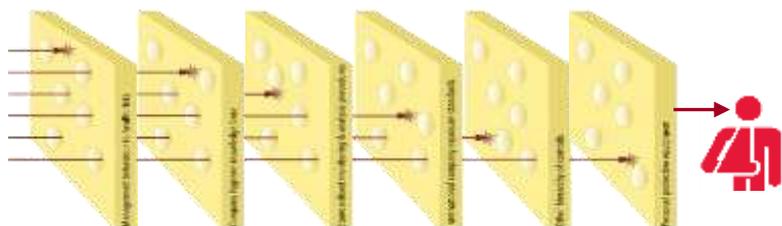
More recently major disaster investigations have pointed not only to a failed safety culture; they have also identified the need for any safety culture to also be able to demonstrate resilience. The Transportation Safety Board of Canada, when investigating the Lac-Mégantic runaway train derailment, concluded¹:-

“.....The cornerstone of a truly functioning Safety Management System (SMS) is an effective safety culture”, and notes that “an effective safety culture is one where past experience is not taken as a guarantee of future success and organisations are designed to be resilient in the face of unplanned events.”

This program powerfully partners with participants towards a scientific understanding of Safety Culture, how to give it a “face”, what needs to happen to encourage/develop resilience, and then how to design intervention strategies that are clearly targeted towards developing an environment that maximises the opportunities for positive and resilient safety culture development. The ultimate goal is a safety culture that functions to minimise the “bad stuff” happening, whilst at the same time having adaptive technologies in place to maximise resilience and a return to healthy functioning.

Background

To first understand the need for a resilient safety culture we also need to understand that our work systems, and the system failures that occur within them, are actually not linear. In contrast, traditional old-school safety thinking is grounded within that linear progression. Consider for a moment the well-respected accident causation model put forward by James Reason. Essentially it is based upon a view that all accidents occur as a consequence of system energy being allowed to travel from one point to another without being challenged. The image below is a representation of what has become known as the “Swiss Cheese” model of accident causation.



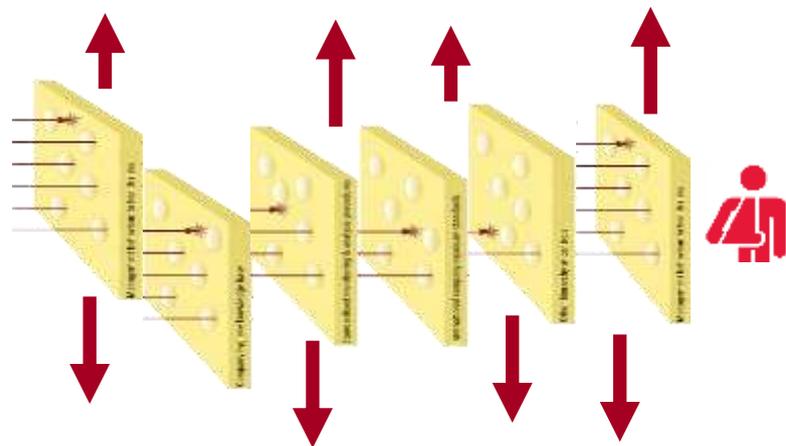
¹ Ross D et al, (2014), “Railway Investigation Report - R13D005”, Transportation Safety Board of Canada, 200 Promenade du Portage, Place du Centre, 4th floor, Gatineau, Quebec, Canada



In short, each time you have a system failure, you investigate etc. and apply a new “barrier” to get in the way of that system energy, or you may try and plug up a hole in a slice of a pre-existing barrier. Experience has shown, over many years, no matter how many barriers you put in place “bad stuff” still happens, and sometimes it is really “bad”. That is because the entire understanding around the Swiss Cheese model is premised upon the predictability of causation. Yet, we have shown, time and time again, that “bad stuff” does not fit that predictability model. If it did, we would have controlled for it, and it would not happen.

A pretty confronting example of the reality of that observation is the number of refinery fires in the United States since the Texas City disaster. They have not significantly reduced. That is despite huge investments in process safety programs etc. In the same industry space it has also been shown that the number of fatalities has not significantly reduced since Texas City either. OSHA has even acknowledged they are not even “sure” how many fatalities have actually occurred within the petrochemical industry – it could even be more than the recorded number. Now this is the United States saying that; not some third world country with questionable data collection methodologies. That just has to be plain scary. This one example, and there are many others, shows that “safety” as we would like to think of it, is not significantly improving in these areas.

This representation, at right, pretty clearly shows what can happen to a safety system, and does. I would argue strongly that this is what happens within our safety management systems all the time. We know that organisational safety systems are entropic in nature. This means that, left to their own devices, they shall naturally degrade and inevitably fail. They also suffer greatly from “variation” – this is defined by the red arrows. It is this “variation” that allows for highly protected environments such as petrochemical and aviation etc. to still suffer from all sorts of disasters. What is actually happening is that this “variation” is permanently present in all of our safety management systems. It is just that the degree of “variation” varies from one environment to another. The Swiss Cheese model only becomes more useful; if we can see it operating through this third dimension (variation). Failure to acknowledge the influence of “variation” means that the only solution to terminate the linear causality sequence, is to just add more and more complexity to the system. This means just more and more barriers. We know that this just does not work!



It also means that if this way of describing accident causation is going to be helpful, we need to do everything we can to minimise or extinguish that “variation”. In other words, ensure those barriers consistently line up – that way the barrier model (Swiss Cheese) might just work?

What is the solution: The development of Resilient Safety Cultures.



Overview

In this program, participants shall experience one of the world’s most toxic organisations and be introduced to one of the world’s safest. The surprising observation is that both of these organisations are involved in exactly the same industry and manufacture exactly the same product. In other words you are finally comparing apples with apples!



Using these very real-world examples, we see powerfully inside what kills people, and what is required to develop and sustain a proactive optimal safety culture. The conclusions shall both astound and confound at the same time.

Participants shall also explore real world examples of some of the world’s most horrific workplace disasters. In so doing they shall have an opportunity, through using state of the art action learning methodologies, to discern what it was that allowed these organisations to act like a magnet for disaster.

Participants shall be introduced to a number of Safety Culture Models. The pros and cons of each shall be explored, and consideration given as to what approach would provide the greatest value (return on investment) within participant organisations.

In the second half of the program, High Reliability Organizing (Weick & Sutcliffe), Resilience Engineering (Hollnagel), Transformational Safety (Broadbent), and the Black Swans (Taleb) shall be just some of the “thinking” that shall be explored. Methods for using these ground breaking approaches to understanding the world of safety, and disaster formation, shall be both introduced and practically applied. If you truly want to disaster proof your organization then these are the guys you need to be listening to.

Participants shall also become skilled in using the Collective Mindfulness HRO Organizational Awareness Instrument. This tool allows for an introspective understanding of where an organization sits with respect to the Five Hallmarks of HRO integrity. They shall also be introduced to the “new” Collective Mindfulness HRO Personal Development Instrument. This allows participants to gain an understanding of their own “place” with respect to the HRO Hallmarks and, just as importantly, provides a sequential development plan with respect to how to further develop HRO competencies.

Participants shall gain experience using a number of other techniques than can add exponential value to their own workplaces.

There shall also be an introduction to the very powerful mechanisms of Safety Leadership and how, when consistently applied, this can be the defining difference between a Safety Culture that “works” and one that does not. Each participant shall leave with a powerful Personal Transformational Safety® Leadership Development Plan.

Some of the Rules of Culture:

- Cultures are not good or bad in themselves, but are good or bad at achieving certain results such as safety or quality.
- There is always a safety culture in an organisation. The question is whether it is what you need it to be, and whether it is improving or degrading.
- Cultures are a product of social learning. Therefore they cannot be shifted without a learning orientation, and without a lot of explanation and discussion, as well as action.
- A safety culture cannot be delivered and sustained by way of external pressure – it must be created from within.
- Safety cultures are entropic in nature (they degrade). The basic assumptions can get forgotten, leaving the patterns of thought and action; these then degrade in turn through complacency, changes in personnel and other means.
- At its worst safety culture can degrade so far that safety behaviours become almost random in nature. What develops is an almost “anything goes” mentality.
- Leaders change safety culture by intervening at all levels: they hold new and different assumptions and patterns of thinking, they establish new patterns of behaviour and they can change the physical environment and the language and images.



Key Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the program participants will have gained:

- A state-of-the-art understanding with respect to how culture impacts workplace safety behaviours.
- A recognition of the power of “values” and a framework for addressing value “dissonance” within the organisation.
- A powerful understanding of the common factors that underpin all accident causation.
- An ability to apply the principles of High Reliability Organizing (HRO) to their own safety practices, and those around them.
- The knowledge to use the Collective Mindfulness (HRO) Organizational Assessment as a diagnostic tool within their own organization.
- The ability to explain the power of “positive variance” within an organization and how it must be encouraged as a key strategy to extinguish unsafe practices.
- Specific understanding of Transformational Safety Leadership (TSL) competencies, including a Transformational Safety® Leadership self-assessment and development plan.

Who will benefit?

Strategic decision makers including:

- Managers, supervisors, engineers, safety personnel, and others involved in the design, operation, modification or maintenance of plant or processes
- Anyone who would like to develop an understanding of Safety Culture and its influence on safety performance outcomes.
- Those who want to progress from being a compliance based organisation, and seek world’s Best Practice toward a resilient safety culture

Program Structure

The program is structured using video footage from multiple sources, participant experiences, self-assessment, and group discussion.

Development of the Program

The Building a Resilient Safety Culture Seminar Series was developed following the increasing identification of resilience as a “missing” element within the safety cultures of many organizations.

The watershed influence of HRO, Resilience Engineering, Transformational Safety and a flock of Black Swans made it imperative that a safety intervention be created that introduced the world to these synergistic technologies.

How is the Program delivered?

Recognising that development programs achieve maximum benefit when the participant applies the learning’s within the workplace, the program facilitator identifies specific organisational background with the client in advance, so as to determine client needs to be met during the facilitation.

The facilitation of the program is typically conducted over two consecutive days. In some cases the program is delivered with a development day in the middle – this allows participants to go and trial some of their “new” learnings prior to day two.



Course Facilitator



The facilitator for the “Building a Resilient Safety Culture Seminar Series” is internationally recognised Safety Psychologist, David G Broadbent. David is the creator of the globally recognised Transformational Safety® System and SAFE-T-SOS™ Behavioural Technologies.

Just some of the comments past participants have said at programs conducted by David are:-

- "I have been working in Safety for many years. This is the first time that anyone has made sense of accident causation for me. Thank you".
- "David's ability to make sense of this safety stuff is amazing. If I had not been here I would not have believed it".
- "I thought I had been around long enough to not see anything 'new'. I was wrong".
- "This has been the best safety learning experience I have had in many years. Thankyou David for your passion and belief"
- "I would never have believed anybody could have a room full of passionate South African rugby supporters singing 'Waltzing Matilda' to images of the Wallabies scoring tries; and during the World Cup. UNBELIEVABLE! Truly shows the power of transformational leadership within a training session. Well Done!"
- "When I was told that the day was being 'taken' by an Australian safety guy, and he was speaking about 'safety culture' in South Africa was sceptical at best. How wrong was I! David's breadth of knowledge was amazing. I have a lot to think about. thank you.
- "The Transformational Safety Leadership competencies are so 'simple". I see them being played out around me every day; why has no-one made sense of this in the past? Well Done David"
- "I attended David's safety culture seminar. It is one of the most powerfully influencing days of the last decade for me. Culture is just so much more powerful than I ever imagined and David makes it make sense. Not only that; he shows you what you can do to turn your culture around. I shall be having David work with our senior leadership team on this stuff. The world is a small place. Get ready to spend more time on a plane David. We want you in the US."

Investment

The Building a Resilient Safety Culture Seminar Series

2-day program (including a pre-program consultation, and a post-program review).

1-15 participants	US\$ 1950.00 per person, thereafter:
15-20 participants	US\$ 860.00 per person

- Minimum program numbers 10. Maximum program numbers 20
- The cost for an in-house facilitation includes the pre and post program consulting, as well as facilitating the program.
- Reduced fees apply for multiple facilitations.
- Transport and accommodation, if required, are additional (free travel may apply to this intervention – just ask)