

TWELVE KEYS TO LEADING PEOPLE SAFELY

THE SKILLS REQUIRED to help lead people safely are similar to those needed to run top-notch operations: attention to detail, focused execution, standardized and disciplined processes, an understanding of roles, meaningful metrics, personal accountability, and alignment around the group mission and vision. There is no “secret ingredient” that makes safety leadership different from overall organizational and operational leadership. There is no finish line to leadership. You may be tested repeatedly on your ability to lead others.

Safety Performance can be a reflection of your leadership!



This is not a grassroots affair. A positive safety culture should be leadership driven. A healthy safety culture does not “bubble up” organically.



This won't happen by chance. Just like any other major strategic undertaking, instilling and sustaining a culture of positive safety requires a deliberate plan and uncompromising focus on execution.



A great safety culture is a journey. It is not a destination. You may never achieve total safety. The benefit to the organization can be achieved in the journey itself.



Safety is not a “priority” – It is a core value of the enterprise. Priorities change. Values don't change.



Management must have courage to stay the course. Disappointments may happen in the journey. Naysayers can be quick to claim defeat. Don't let it happen.



Zero should be the only acceptable goal. Although 99.9 percent is a pretty good performance standard in most business arenas, it may not be when it comes to safety.



CAUTION! A healthy safety culture should be under a constant state of improvement. Review your safety culture periodically to be sure that it is working as designed. Left unattended, dysfunctions can creep in and undermine your systems.



There should be organizational accountability for safety failures. Blaming individuals at the front line without examination of organizational issues can demonstrate inadequate safety focus.



Safety can be a low-cost solution. No big-capital expenditures are necessarily required. Thinking and acting in a new way, where leaders set the example, is important.



Safety goes beyond compliance. Regulations, rules, and laws should be the baseline. Great safety requires individual and organizational commitment and accountability.



Leaders should focus on execution, pay attention to detail, and not overcomplicate matters. Execute the basics.



Safety success in the past doesn't guarantee safety success in the future. There must be leadership commitment to continuous improvement.



Safety necessitates solid SOPs. Ensure SOPs are meaningful, clear, and followed. Ensure that your SOP's are understandable by the intended audience.

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