



Creating a Safer Workplace by Reinforcing Its Immune System

Paradigms and Parallels

September 2, 2021

JOB SAFETY – Freedom from Harm



WELLNESS – Freedom from Disease

Company's Safety Culture : A Safe Workplace

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Body's Immune System : Wellness

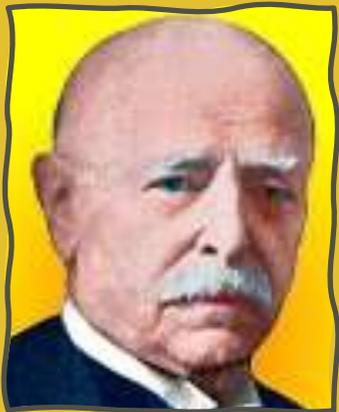
Definitions and Examples

Two Paradigms – Existing and Evolved

Dynamic Safety Culture Drivers

Disease

Negative effect on function or structure of organism

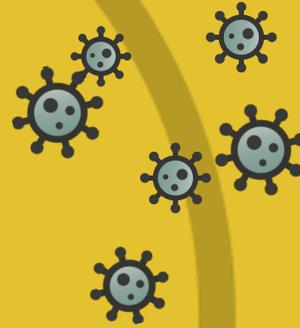


“Disease may ... be thought of as the negation of the normal.”

William Thomas Councilman
Pathologist

Meets Three Conditions

- Affects certain part(s) of body
- Has definable symptoms, processes, outcomes
- Progresses if not treated



Progression of Disease
Example: Hepatitis B

Immune System

Defends against disease



“...to protect the body against invaders either from without... or from within.”

Dr. Anthony Fauci
Epidemiologist

Wellness is the Desired Outcome

Wellness is Freedom from Disease

- Infection – bacteria, viruses, parasites
- Genetic Abnormalities - cancer
- Environmental Exposures

Some Key Immune System Drivers

- Hydration, nutrition, sleep, exercise, hygiene, vaccinations, weight, habits

Immune System Prevents and Protects

- Overall Wellness, Prevention, Control
- Recovery, Reversal, Protection

Immune System

Defends against disease



Dr. Anthony Fauci
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“...to protect the body against invaders either from without... or from within.”

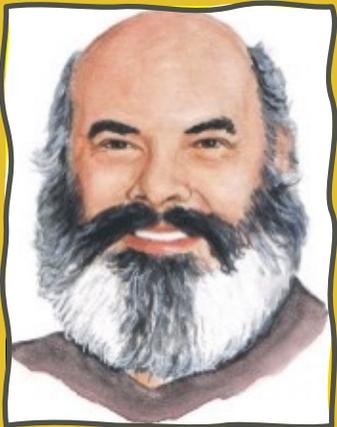
Not Preventative for All Bodily Threats

- Physical and Chemical Injury
 - Falls, burns, cuts, hearing loss
 - Chemical burns, asphyxiation
- Results of Poor judgment
- Psychosocial
 - Mental health conditions
 - Substance use disorder
 - Work environment: inequity, prejudice, hostility

But! Immune System Does Aid in Managing, Repairing Injury and Illness

Unsafe Workplace

Negative effect on company operation and increased bodily risk for workers

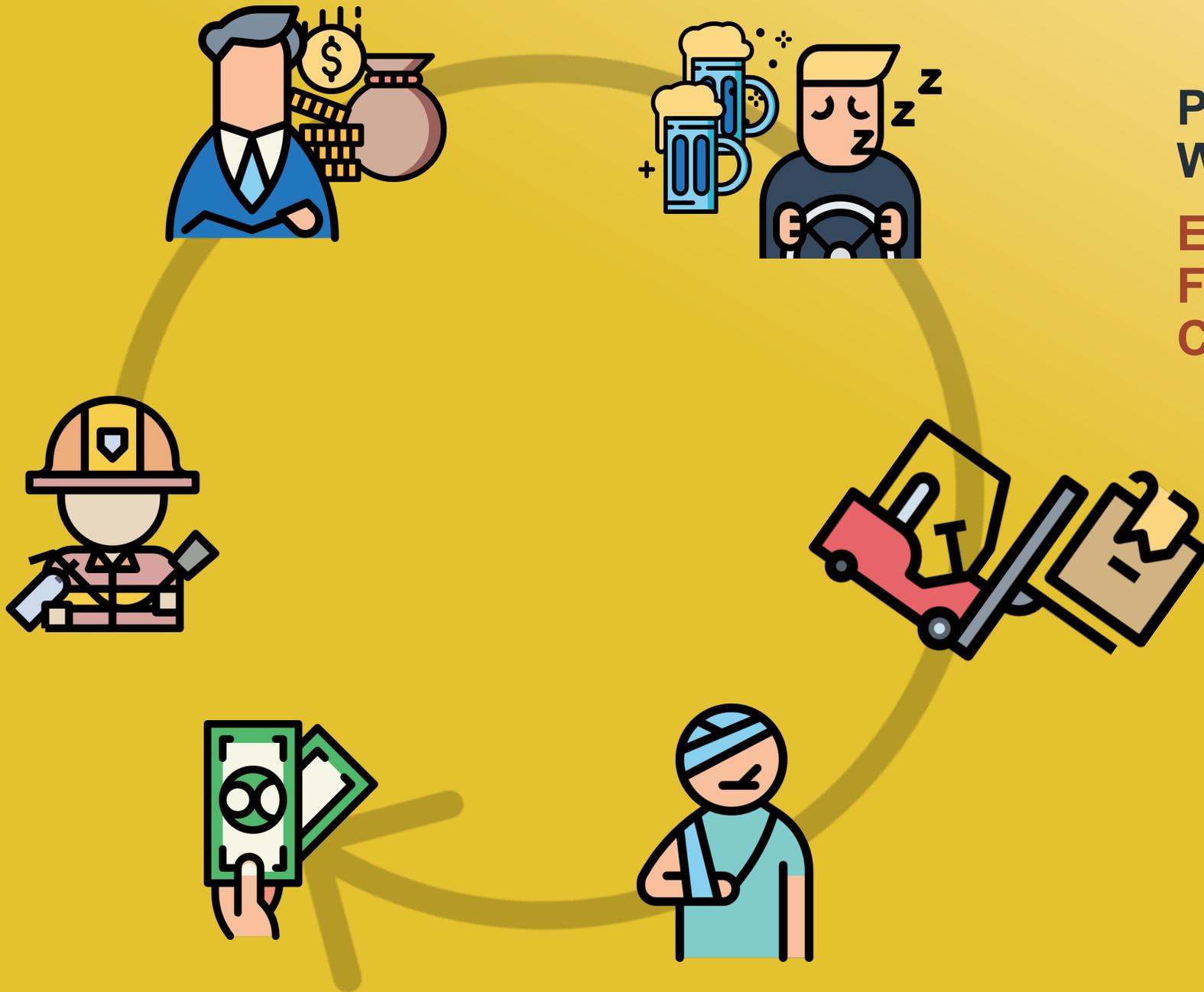


Andrew Weil, MD
Integrative Medicine

“The false belief that a safety net of sophisticated drugs and machines stretches below us, permitting risky or lazy lifestyle choices, has undermined our spirit of self-reliance.”

Meets Three Conditions

- Affects definable parts of the organization
- Results in injuries, illnesses, death; damage to equipment, product, nature
- Progresses if not treated
 - “Normalization”
 - Increased accidents and injuries
 - Business closure



Progression of Unsafe Work Practices

Example: Lack of Forklift Training and Company Policies

Safety Culture

Collection of perceptions, beliefs, values, and business systems that a workforce shares regarding risks to health and safety at work



“The message should be ‘We care about safety because we care about you — doing it right means no one gets hurt.’”

David Michaels, PhD, Epidemiologist
OSHA Asst. Secy. of Labor, 2009-17

Safety is the Desired Outcome

Freedom from Situations that Cause

- Accidents and Near-Misses
- Injuries, Illness, Death
- Equipment or Product Damage
- Damage to Environment

Effective Culture Prevents and Protects

- Prevention/Avoidance
 - Substitution, Elimination, Safe Work Practices
- Protection/Reduction
 - Engineering Controls, PPE

Shifting Paradigms

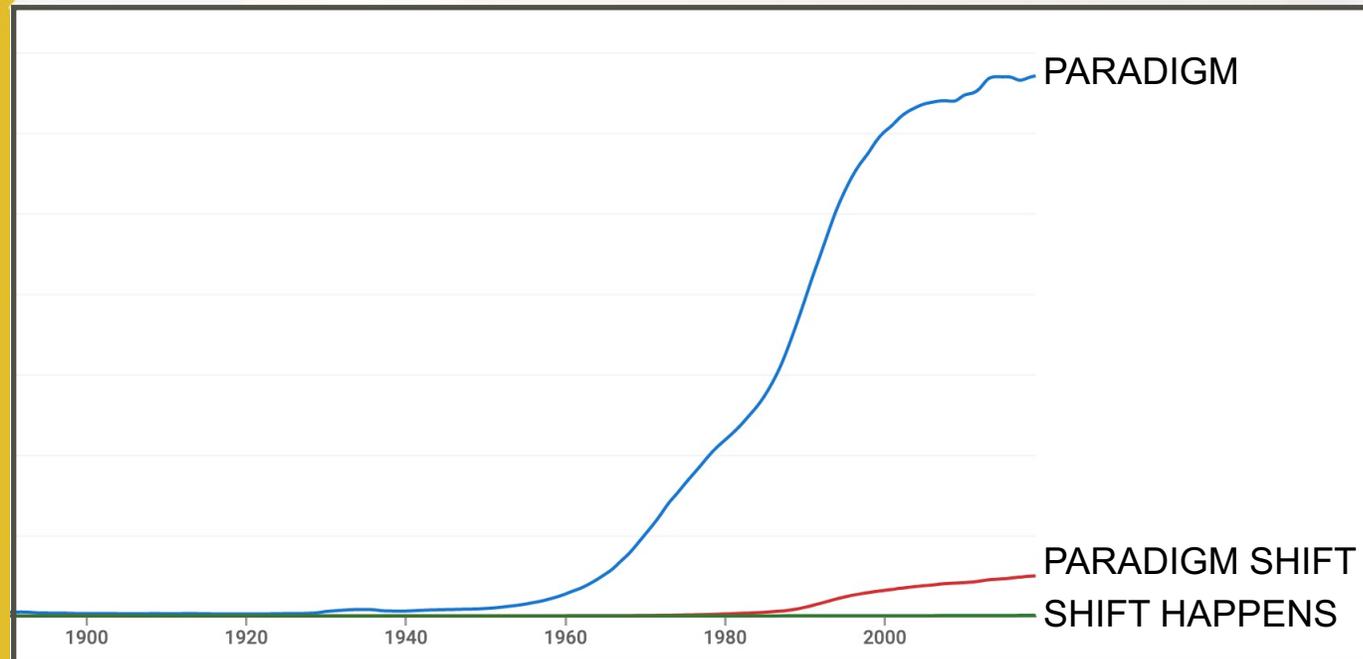
Paradigm

a set of theories that explain the way a particular subject is understood at a particular time

“Normal science often suppresses fundamental novelties because they are necessarily subversive of its basic commitments.”

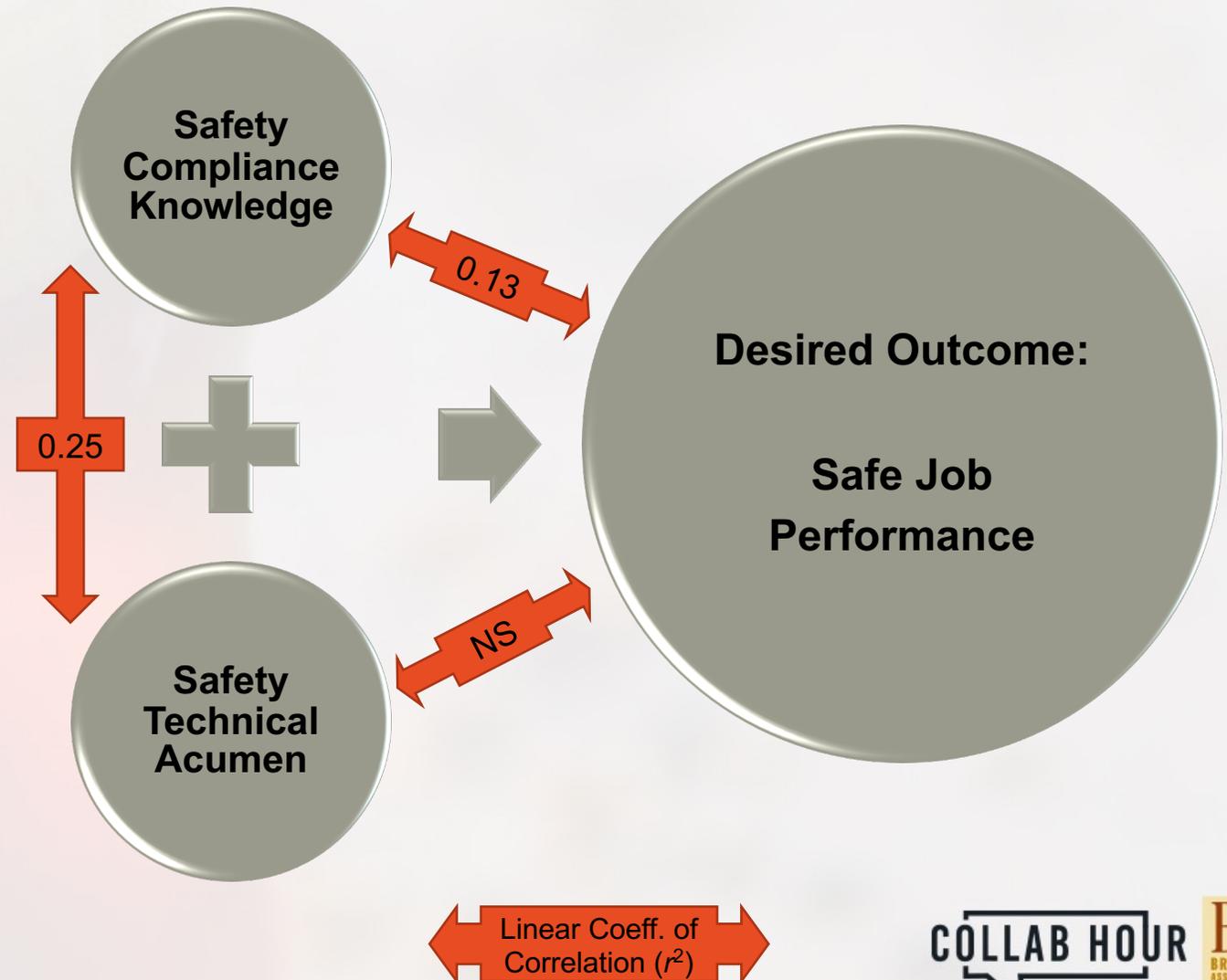


Thomas Samuel Kuhn,
Physicist/Philosopher



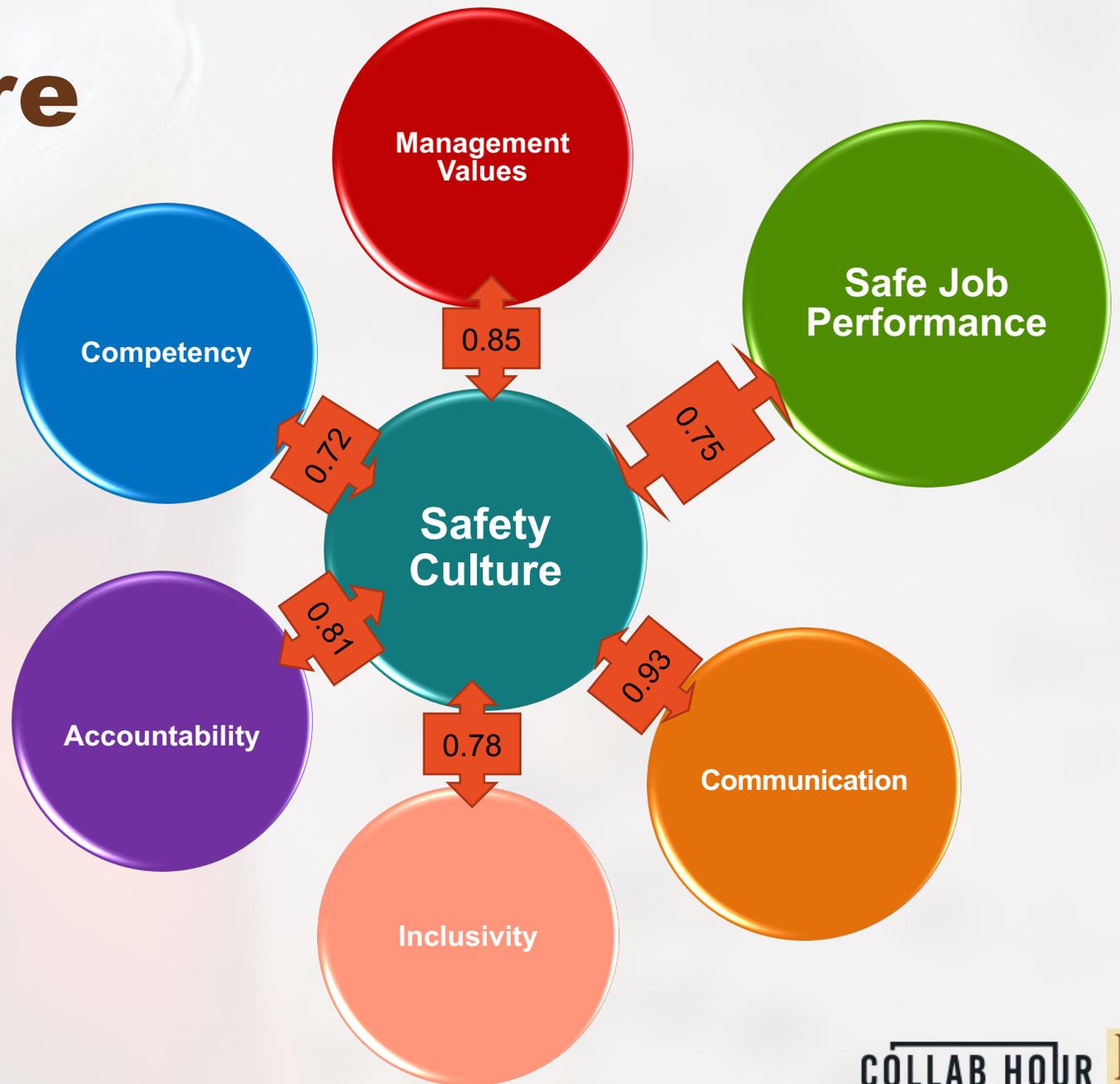
Traditional Workplace Safety Paradigm

- Main drivers (thought to be) compliance and safety knowledge
- Collection of (somewhat) isolated specialists
- Cons
 - Not supported by data
 - Vulnerable to change
 - Hierarchical, gamesmanship
 - Possible deficiencies
 - Communication, Training, Accountability, Workforce Confidence, Blame, etc.
- Pros
 - Accepted, common, known
 - Works when no outliers
 - Lower attention span



Dynamic Culture Paradigm

- Culture of the Organization
- Successful cultural drivers
 - Unify operations, people
 - Begin inside, grow outside
- System Pros
 - Validated improvement
 - Transferable, e.g., to: quality, profitability, DEI, etc.
- System Cons
 - You have to want to do this



Management

Coordination and administration of operations to achieve a goal



“A great leader takes people where they don’t necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

Roslyn Carter,
Former First Lady

Coordination of All Drivers

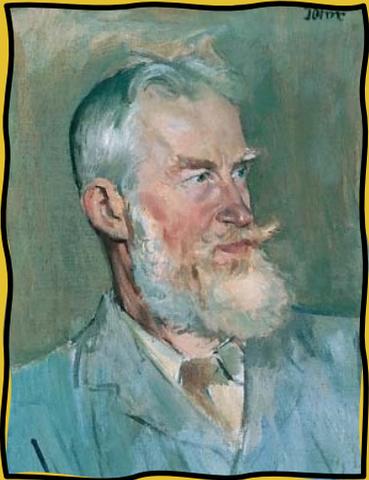
- **Setting objectives (Management)**
- **Motivating the team (Communication)**
- **Developing people (Competence)**
- **Devising systems of measurement (Accountability)**
- **Organizing resources (Inclusivity)**

Management in a Safer Brewery

- **Dedicated to high value of safety**
- **Measurable processes and progress**
- **Involves employees at all levels**
- **Training and equipment provided**

Communication

Process of sharing information between people within and outside a company



“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

George Bernard Shaw
Playwright, Co-founder London School of Economics

Frequent, Consistent Messaging

- What is known, expected, required
- What is unknown; asking
- Expected performance with publicized reward/consequence mini-outcomes
- Dynamic, through all organization levels
- In Person, written, digital

Communication Regarding Safety

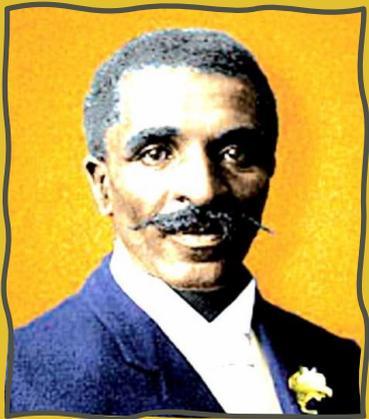
- Policies, procedures (SOPs), schedules
- Concerns, near-misses, suggestions
- Checking in for well-being

Very Important!

- Mis-Comms Inevitable, Try Again
- Don't read minds

Competence

Sufficiency of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors to successfully perform defined tasks



“Learn to do the common things uncommonly well.”

George Washington Carver
Agricultural Scientist and Inventor

Empowered Learning, Experience, Skills

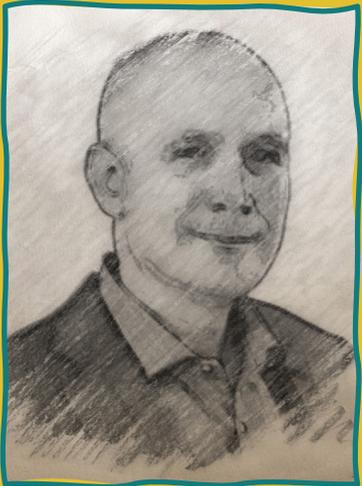
- Orientation, training, cross-training
- Internship, mentoring
- Committee involvement, trade assoc.
- Learning measurement, evaluations, certifications
- ***Plus, Whatever You brought with you***

Competence in Safe Job Performance

- Know hazards and control procedures
- Share what you know with others
- Don't normalize shortcuts
- Be accountable for your competence
- Put aside turf wars

Accountability

Obligation to explain, justify, and take responsibility for one's actions



“When accountability is present... people know what they are working toward and how they are going to get there.”

Henry Evans, Author of *Winning with Accountability*

Responsibility and Follow-Through

- Workforce and Management held to same level of accountability
- Goal setting, supporting goal pursuit, assured achievement of goals
- System of praise and discipline exists, applied consistently
- Forward-looking KPIs

Accountability in a Safe Workplace

- Management lives up to stated safety values, importance, underwriting
- Safety improvements are prioritized, measurable, time-specified
- Follow-through, completion are recognized

Inclusivity

Providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized



“The minute we become an integrated whole, we look through the same eyes and we see a whole different world together.”

Azizah al-Hibri, PhD, JD
Philosopher, Scholar

Equal Access, Opportunities, Involvement

- “To be in the room” and “Have a voice”
(Dr. J Jackson-Beckham)
- Learning and training opportunities
- Cross-training and task rotation

Inclusivity in Safe Job Performance

- Represented on Safety Team or Safety Committee
- Parity in job assignment, risk, PPE
- Contributing to hazard recognition/assessment, SOP development, safety policies, near-miss reporting, etc.

Happiness

An emotional state characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment



“The best predictor of happiness is the quality of relationships.”

Catherine Sanderson, PhD
Chair of Psychology, Amherst College

Happiness Traits

- More helpful, less hostile
- More productive, safer
- Healthier – improved cold resistance, recovery from surgery, longevity

Workplace and Individual Benefits

- Life satisfaction in work, achievements, relationships
- Laughter boosts immune system, lowers stress hormones, massages heart and diaphragm
- Meaning, engagement, pleasure

Safety Culture Driver Review



M.B. Sutherland
Safety Matters Express
Magid Glove & Safety Mfg.

“Effective safety culture is one that involves everyone – it’s hard to call it a culture if only a few people are committed to safety!”

Safety Culture Drivers

- Management Values
- Communication
- Accountability
- Competence
- Inclusivity

Key Take-Aways

IMPROVEMENTS / BENEFITS

- 5 Drivers Yield Better Outcomes
 - Numerical and Empirical Evidence
 - More Holistic, Prevention-oriented
- Already Have Some Version of Each Driver, Make them Better, Tie them Together
- Start Cultural Revolution with Safety Culture then Adopt the Process for All Endeavors

REQUIRED OF ORGANIZATION

- Management Wants It
 - Put Above All Else, e.g., Production
 - Coordinates, Enables All Drivers
- Create/Use Measurement Systems
 - Forward-looking KPIs
 - Use data to manage improvements
- Trust the Process
 - Short-Term Awkwardness
 - Deal with Entrenchment
 - Dispel Myths



Shift Happens!



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