

To start, let's agree that compliance with health and safety legislation is a given for any organisation! Apart from the legal and economic reasons to comply, it is morally unacceptable to injure people.

Businesses are usually pretty adept at assuring themselves that the basic building blocks of a safety management system are present.

But as a leader of your business, how often do you ask some of the following questions?:

- Is the business effectively managing risk?
- What is the culture of the organisation, is it content to do 'just enough' to comply?
- Do people tick boxes, are they disengaged and have they stopped thinking for themselves?
- Do I always receive 'good news' audits that tell me the processes and paperwork exist but rarely identify issues to address or lessons to learn?
- When did I last challenge a management report or a set of kpi's that are always positive?!

An organisation that is satisfied with compliance has usually reached a plateau in health and safety performance. Reactive measures no longer provide granularity on performance. The tools and techniques that got it to where it is today are no longer fit for purpose to take it to the next stage.

It is an organisation that is standing still....and we all know what happens to organisations that don't constantly challenge themselves and seek continuous improvement?!

So as a business leader, is compliance enough for you? Or do you want an organisation that is efficient, effective and the supplier of choice with your clients?

For an organisation to move beyond compliance, it must change from policing health and safety (the "watch and tell" approach) to one where the leaders, managers and supervisors of the organisation are safety leaders and safety coaches.

What does this mean?

- The organisation must have a safety strategy, not just goals and objectives.
- It must collect the right proactive data to drive performance and analyse trends.
- Be clear what is expected from people, without restricting their innovation.
- Provide positive reinforcement.
- Be uncompromising and consistent in setting high standards.
- Show empathy, but when required a 'Just' culture must be enacted.
- Listen.
- Facilitate the desirable outcomes so that they are easy to achieve.
- Be passionate and enthusiastic.

These are just some of the characteristics of an organisation with a generative safety culture.

There are no 'quick wins' or 'magic answers'. You'll need to understand what your business 'thinks' and how it 'acts' as an organisation (the current state) before you make the decision to take the next steps.

Results can be achieved through hard work and commitment, leading to the next level in safety performance. Most importantly, the results will be sustainable and you'll understand what works. With this culture in-place, where people are engaged and have the desire to achieve from within, you will see a cross-over to operational performance.

Why wouldn't you want to be part of an organisation like this?

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