

2019-08 - Safety Culture (Article From ICSI - Institute For An Industrial Safety Culture)

Hello Everyone,

Thank you for the efforts you are making to ensure everyone goes home alive and healthy each day. Year to Date through July, we have observed a 44% reduction in MTA's and a 31% reduction in LTA's compared to the same period last year, but more importantly, twelve (12) fewer co-workers have been injured (MTA) and ten (10) fewer co-workers have needed time off to heal from their injuries.

The other day, Eric Bouihot, the HSE Manager at Tavaux, shared an excellent document about Safety Culture (attached) that was issued by ICSI (Institute for an Industrial Safety Culture). The document shares ideas that are very consistent to those proposed by Andrew Sharman (From Accidents to Zero). In one section, they introduce the concepts of "Rule Based Safety" and "Managed Safety." Rule Based Safety safety relies on expertise, technical barriers, and rules/procedures; whereas, Managed Safety relies on skills, learning ability, and adaptation. Rule Based Safety is more about compliance and Managed Safety is more about knowledge and skills of the people performing the work.

The ICSI document postulates that different industries need a different approach based on the nature of the risks and consequences. For example, industries in which accidents are infrequent but can have huge consequences if they occur, like the nuclear industry, tend to be more Rules Based; whereas, industries with a high accident rate and unpredictability, like extreme sports, use a Managed Safety approach. I was watching the movie "Free Solo," a documentary about Alex Honnold and his free solo climb (over 3000 ft with no ropes) of El Capitan in Yosemite National Park. Whether or not he survived relied totally on his skill level, his preparation, and his ability to recognize and adjust when there was a problem. On his first attempt, he stopped (something just wasn't right). He had to wait for another year before he could attempt it again – the second time he was successful. He Managed his Safety – there wasn't a rule book for what he was attempting.

ICSI suggests that for the petrochemical industry a more balanced approach is needed. While we need to manage and mitigate our risks in a consistent way (Rules Based), we also need to recognize that there can be variations in conditions (not always foreseen) within our plants that must be handled by the team on the ground at that moment, like Alex.

In order to achieve the safety performance we desire, we need the knowledge of our technical experts and safety specialists, as well as, the individual and collective experience based knowledge of our front-line workers and managers. As we have just issued the remaining procedures, I encourage you to explain the "Intent & Why" of the procedures to your teams and then seek their help and encourage them to work with you to define your processes to fulfill the requirements. Working together, I am confident that you will not only create better processes but more importantly you will create a sense of engagement, increase the competencies of your team, and have a safer plant.

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Thanks and Be Safe,

James

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