

Workplace Safety Culture

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Creating healthy and safe workplaces



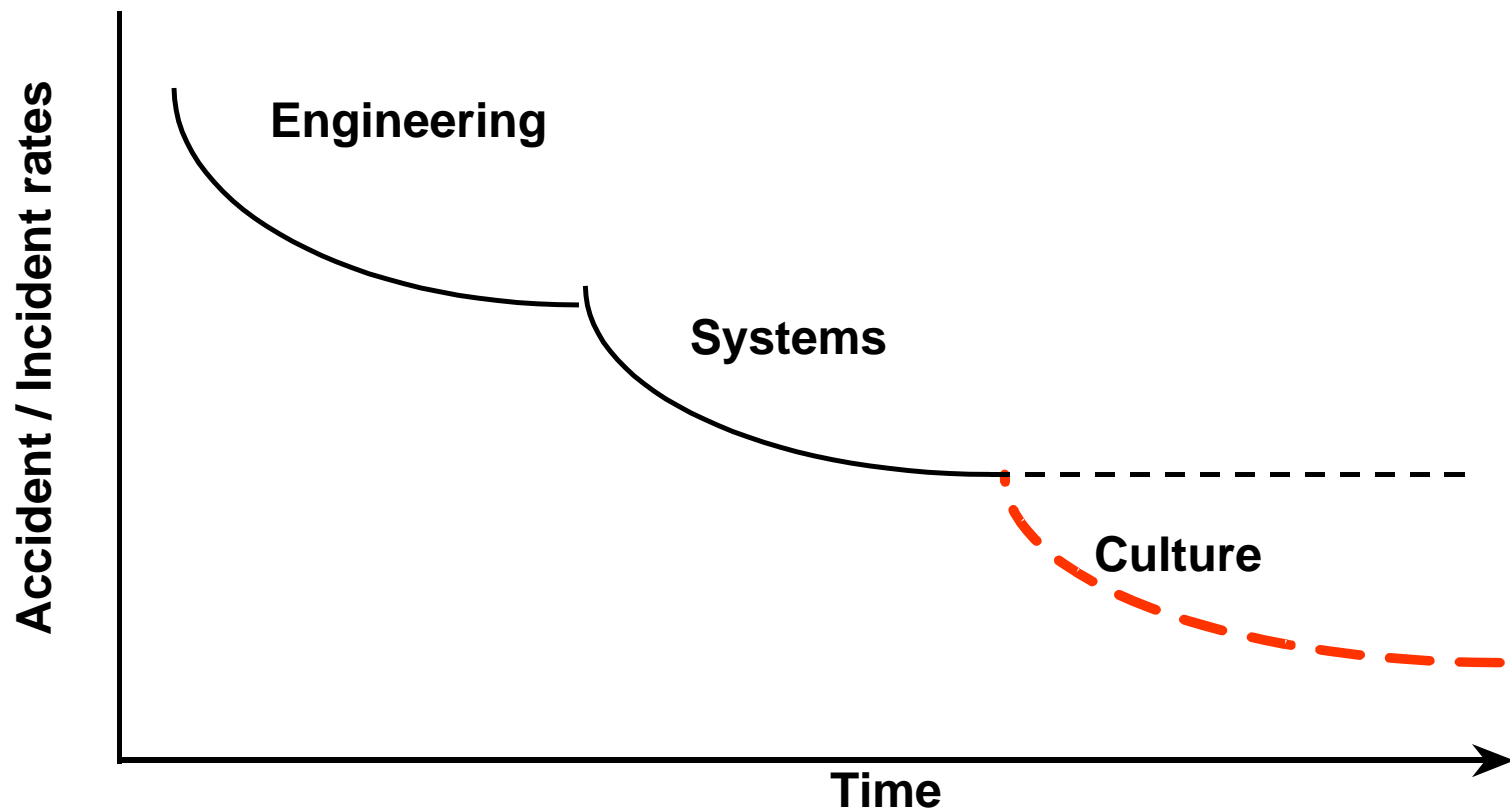
Safety Culture

- Safety culture is the shared beliefs and values of staff working in an organisation that determine the commitment to and quality of the organisation's health and safety systems and practices
- Safety culture is "The way **we do** things around here"
- This definition highlights collective work practices i.e. everyone's behaviours and practices
- Who and what we are. What we find important and how we go about doing things around here (Hudson, 1999)



"A Concept Whose Time Has Come"

- Reason (1998, p. 295) proposed that safety culture "is a concept whose time has come"



A Safety Culture Approach

- The safety cultural approach arises from the recognition of the limitations of the other approaches but does not replace the importance of sound engineering and safety management systems
- A cultural approach is not saying:
“Ignore systems, all we need to do is get the culture right; on the contrary, the right culture is necessary to make safety systems work.”(Andrew Hopkins, 2005, p. 5)



Benefits Of A Strong Safety Culture

International research has found consistently strong evidence of the benefits of a positive Safety Culture, including (in order of magnitude) :

- Decrease in injuries and lost time
- Decrease in accidents
- Increase in safe behaviours of workers
- Increase in psychological well being
- Increase in perceived management commitment
- Increase in job satisfaction
- Decrease in physical symptoms



Other Positive Findings

Although to a lesser extent included:

- Increase in worker safety compliance
- Decrease in near misses
- Increase in safety knowledge
- Increase in risk perception
- Increase in organisational well-being

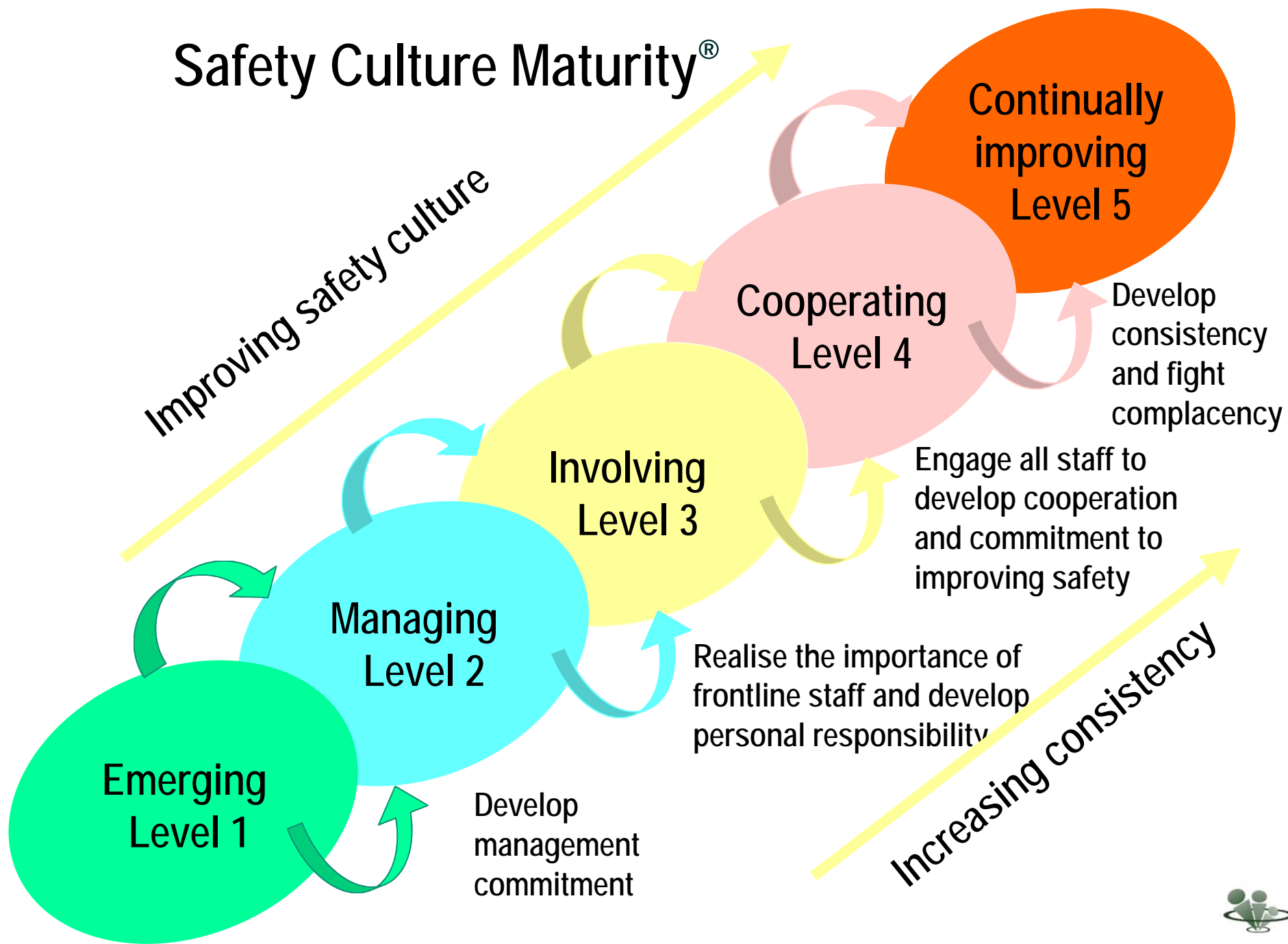


Models of Safety Culture

| Reason HSE Culture Ladder | Keil Centre Safety Culture Maturity Model |
|------------------------------|--|
| Generative | Continually Improving |
| Proactive | Cooperating |
| Calculative | Involving |
| Reactive | Managing |
| Pathological | Emerging |



Safety Culture Maturity[®]



Key Elements Of Safety Culture

- Visible management commitment
- Safety communication
- Productivity versus safety
- Learning organisation
- Supervision
- Participation in safety
- Health & safety resources
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Industrial relations and job satisfaction
- Competency



SCM Process In New Zealand

- The sectors involved in the SCM process in New Zealand have included: -
 - Transport (Road, Rail and Ship)
 - Manufacturing
 - Mining and Quarries
 - Boat Building
 - Construction
 - Waste Management



Some Insights Gathered

- Visible management commitment
 - Need more managers in gumboots
 - Need less drive-by management
- Safety communication
 - Need more real two communication; genuine commitment to listen and follow through
- Productivity versus safety
 - A priority that often shifts; less turning of a blind eye to unsafe practises when it suits
- Learning organisation
 - Reporting patchy; little follow up – so why bother; need more trending
- Supervision
 - Very little development



Some Insights Gathered

- Participation in safety
 - H&S Committees and Representatives but not always very active
- Health & safety resources
 - Time and people more than equipment and PPE
- Risk-taking behaviour
 - Much risk taking and few consistent consequences
 - We are consistent with our inconsistency
 - Very little recognition of positive safe practices
- Industrial relations and
 - Varied but in many organisations still a strong sense of 'us and them'
- Competency
 - Not always against clear standards, little ongoing assessment of competency



Safety Culture: Interlocking Elements

- What does an organisational culture that values safety look like? It has:
 - An informed culture
 - A reporting culture
 - A just culture
 - A flexible culture
 - A learning culture

(Reason, 1997)



Developing A Mature And *Just* Culture

- A Just Culture is an atmosphere of trust in which people are encouraged, even rewarded for providing essential safety-related information but in which they are clear about where the line must be drawn between *acceptable and unacceptable behaviour*
- A 'No blame' culture is neither feasible or desirable; some unsafe actions deserve sanctions but some do not.
- The Behavioral Range
 - 10% of behaviours are culpable (sabotage, substance abuse, reckless) and 90% blameless (system-induced violations, 'honest errors' and system-induced errors) (Reason, 2007)



Unsafe Actions: Intentional or Unintentional

■ Intentional behaviours

- A deliberate disregard of rules and procedures
- Violations e.g. knowingly not wearing correct PPE
- Violations can be routine or exceptional
- Consequence of individual personality e.g risk taking and/ or performance shaping factors e.g. communication, expectations

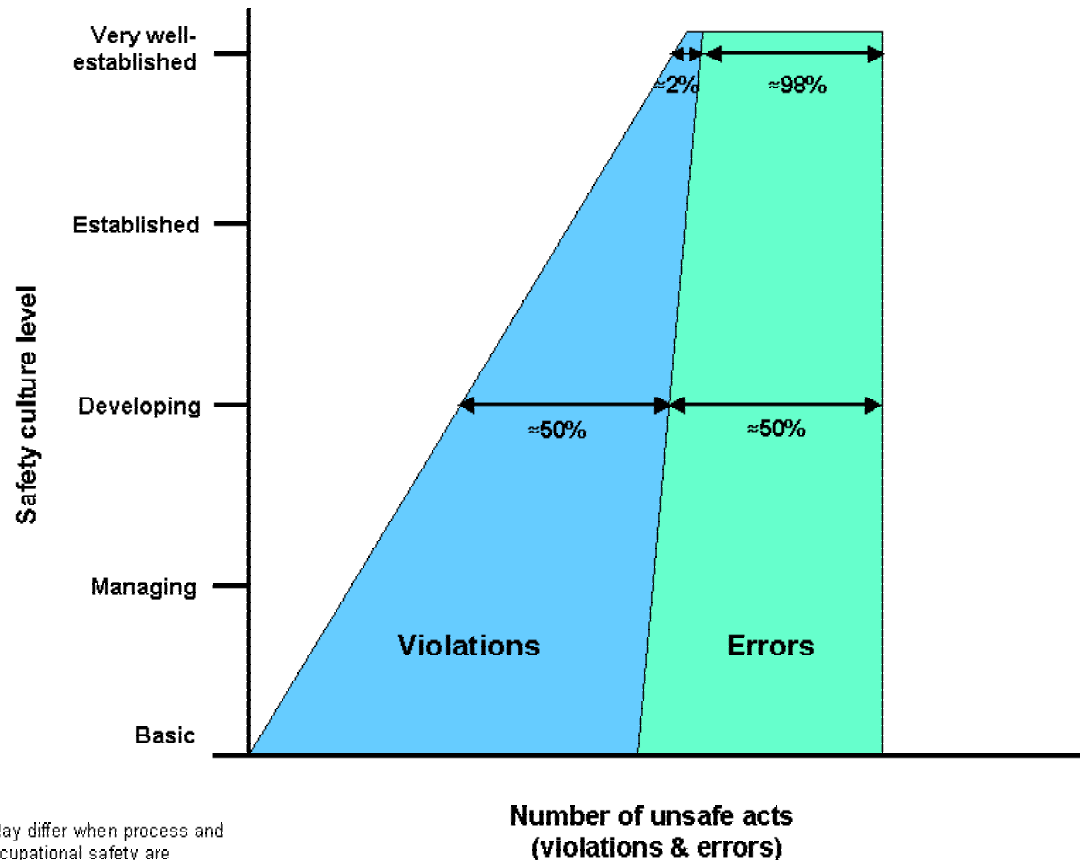
■ Unintentional behaviours

- A *human error* e.g. a slip (wrong action), a lapse (memory failure), a mistake (wrong decision)
- Consequence of poor information processing and/or influenced by performance shaping factors e.g. training, processes



Safety Culture and Unsafe Actions

Figure 2: Safety culture level* vs. unsafe behaviour



*May differ when process and occupational safety are considered separately



Two Approaches to Human Error

■ The Person Approach

- Focuses on errors of individuals, blaming them for forgetfulness, and poor attitude and risk taking
- Controls focus on reducing unwanted variability in human behaviour
- Errors seen as a human failure

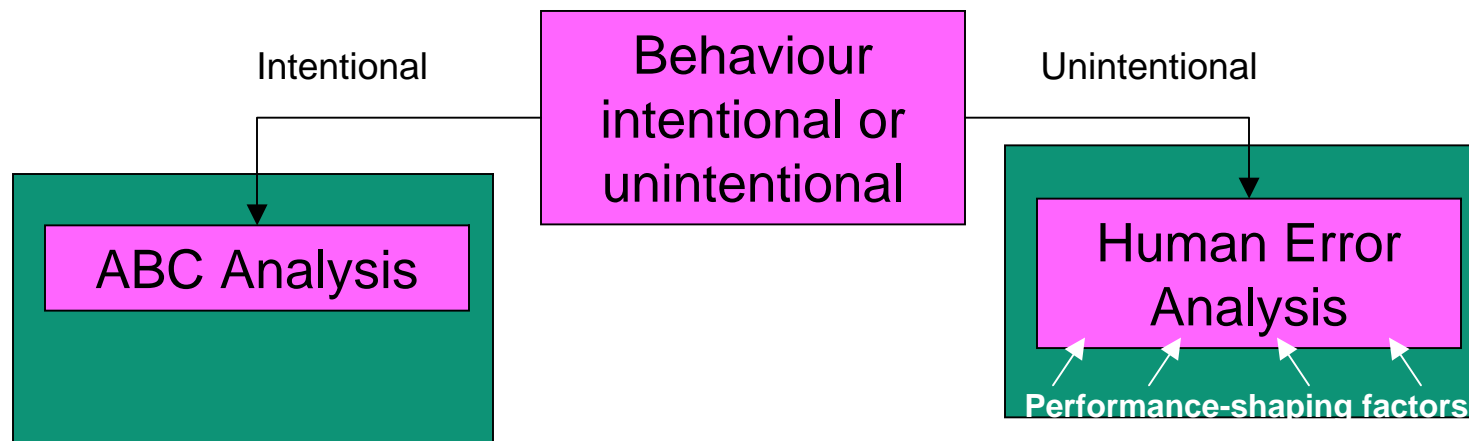
■ The Systems Approach

- Focuses on conditions under which individuals work and tries to build defenses to prevent errors or to moderate their effects
- Controls focus on ensuring adequate lines of defense are in place and removing error provoking factors
- Error seen as an organisational / system failure

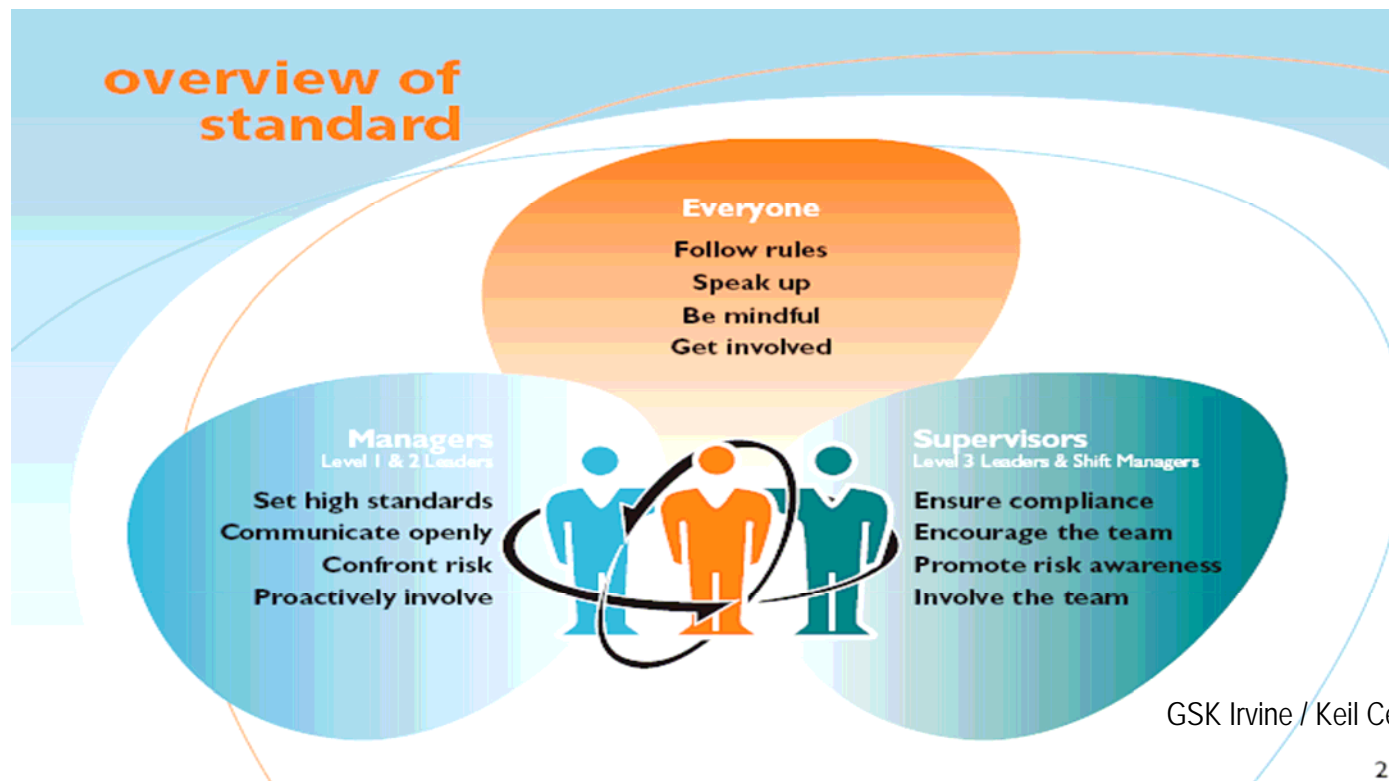


Building A Just Safety Culture

Needs a focus on both intentional and unintentional unsafe behaviors and performance shaping factors that influence the behaviours



Clarify Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours



Some Concluding Thoughts

- Developing a mature and just safety culture requires
 - Genuine, visible commitment from management
 - A systems approach that focuses on both human and organisational factors
 - An understanding of the different types unsafe actions
 - Clarity on what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour and the courage to consistently address both
- Safety culture is about having understanding and the will to do something - not the money

