

Leadership and Safety

A good leader has the best interest of his followers in mind.

I once took a business owner to task about work place safety at his engineering shop, he reminded me that he was a good leader because his men produced and the business made money. After talking with some employees during their lunch break, I found out this business owner was almost a tyrant, never listened to concerns about safety from the men, only purchased the most rudimentary PPE and equipment, just sufficient for the employees to do their work.

Meeting again with the owner, I advised him that he was a good business man, but a bad leader, because he only achieved productivity through threats and intimidation, and that morale for the employees did not exist, I advised him to attend a leadership course, which he did, and sometime later rang me to apologize, I told him the apology needed to go to his employees. I returned some months later, and it was a different work shop, the employees seemed happier, and the owner said since he put changes into place for them, production increased, time off decreased and they had very few injuries. The moral to the story, do not assume you are a good leader because you think so, challenge yourself, get some leadership training,

Leaders are not born, they are made!

And good leaders produce a more productive and safer work force and environment.

What Type Of Supervisor/Manager Are You?

Can You Use Your Supervisory/Management Position To Influence Employee Safe Work Behaviors, Attitude and Morale?

As A Supervisor/Manager Can You Make A Difference To Safety And Maintain Productivity?

Where does Safety Start?

Safety starts with you!

As a Supervisor/Manager **YOU** are responsible for the safety of the employees under your care! (WHS Act 2011)

How will this ensure that production is maintained?

By providing a safe workplace you achieve many benefits.

Benefits of a safe workplace.

- 1 Employees feel safer doing their jobs
- 2 Employees morale is strengthened
- 3 1+2= A More productive and stable work force.

Question: That's all fine, but how do I achieve this?

Answer: By being a good Supervisor/Manager!

Overview of S.T.A.R.S

The context of being a Supervisor/Manager.

S.T.A.R.S.

Using the STARS methodology do you support or are you engaged in the following....

S = Supervision – Overseeing work activities to ensure employees are safe.

T = Training – Conducting safety education and training.

A = Accountability – Insisting everyone complies with company policies and rules.

R = Resources – Providing physical resources – Tools, Equipment, Materials so that employees can work safely.

S = Support – Creating a psychological environment – schedules, workloads, recognition so employees do not work under undue stress.

Supervisors/Managers can demonstrate leadership by directly providing employees the resources, motivation, priorities and accountability for ensuring their safety and health.

Enlightened Supervisors/Managers understand the value in creating and fostering a strong safety culture within their departments. Safety is elevated so that it is a value as opposed to something that must be done or accomplished in order to be compliant. Integrating safety and health concerns into the everyday supervision of employees, allows for a proactive approach to accident prevention, and demonstrates the importance of working safely.

So what type of Supervisor/Manager are you?

Supervisors/Managers are in the forefront of the business, the attitude and leadership capacity of a Supervisor/Manager can make or break a business, either financially or through bad leadership where the morale of employees is low and the staff turnover is high, losing valuable time and costs in retraining new staff, and a low level of productivity is present due to the cause.

Supervisors/Managers are categorized into four categories.

1. Controlling
2. Tough but Caring
3. Tough and Controlling
4. Warm fuzzy natured

So what category are you? Self perception is self delusion – No one sees who you really are better than your peers!

These four categories can be further divided into two major groups,

1. Reactive
2. Pro-Active

So what type of Supervisor/Manager is best suited for safety, morale and achieving productivity?

The Tough but caring and pro-active Supervisor /Manager,

They achieve their goals in a manner that ensures discipline, safety, morale and productivity is maintained at a high level, seek always to improve safety, training and morale of their employees, in return the employees give the Supervisor/Manager, a happier, safer more motivated work force able to reach maximum productivity.

Symptoms of a bad system or leadership.

Symptoms indicating personal weakness.

- A unique hazardous condition or unsafe/inappropriate behavior performed by one person.
- May occur at any level of the organization.
- May indicate a “Special” problem that requires a unique solution.
- Attributing error to personal weakness should never be the initial assumption.

Symptoms indicating system weakness.

- Number of similar conditions or behaviors common to a number of locations.
- May occur at any level of the organization.
- May contribute to, or produce a specific hazardous condition and unsafe behavior.
- Indicates a “Common” problem that requires a system solution.

- The scope of the condition or behavior, indicates the management level at which the cause exists.
- Attributing error to system weaknesses should usually be the initial assumption.

Symptoms indicating weakness in Organizational structure.

- Formulated by upper management.
- Inadequate design of vision, mission, strategies and objectives.
- Inadequate design of policies, plans, processes, programs and procedures.
- May exist in any program and in any department.
- The natural result of a non-supportive leadership style.

Symptoms indicating weakness in leadership style.

- Non-supporting corporate vision.
- Unreasonable expectations of senior management.
- External forces: stakeholders, materials, industry, community, society and government.
- The natural result of inappropriate values creating a fear based culture.

The fear based culture.

No man can inspire more fear than a harsh master.

- Where employees are afraid to raise issues concerning their safety, morale and personal productivity, because they are threatened with dismissal, loss of rights or self esteem by a Supervisor/Manager.

In this type of culture, employees are afraid to report safety issues and personal injuries because they may lose their jobs or raise the Incident/Accident rate of the business and lose bonuses or gifts as reward for low Lost Time Injury's

The progressive safety culture.

Working together for a common good.

- Where Supervisors/Managers work together with the employees to create and foster a safe, high morale and highly productive environment.
 - Where ideas and a continuous improvement to safety is encouraged and rewarded.
 - Where employees are NOT afraid to point out safety issues or concerns.
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- 1. Safety Info**
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