

ALLIANCE INTERSTATE RISK



# Building Blocks of a Safety Culture

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FEBRUARY 2026

What is the biggest risk we face?



Mindset: It won't happen to me

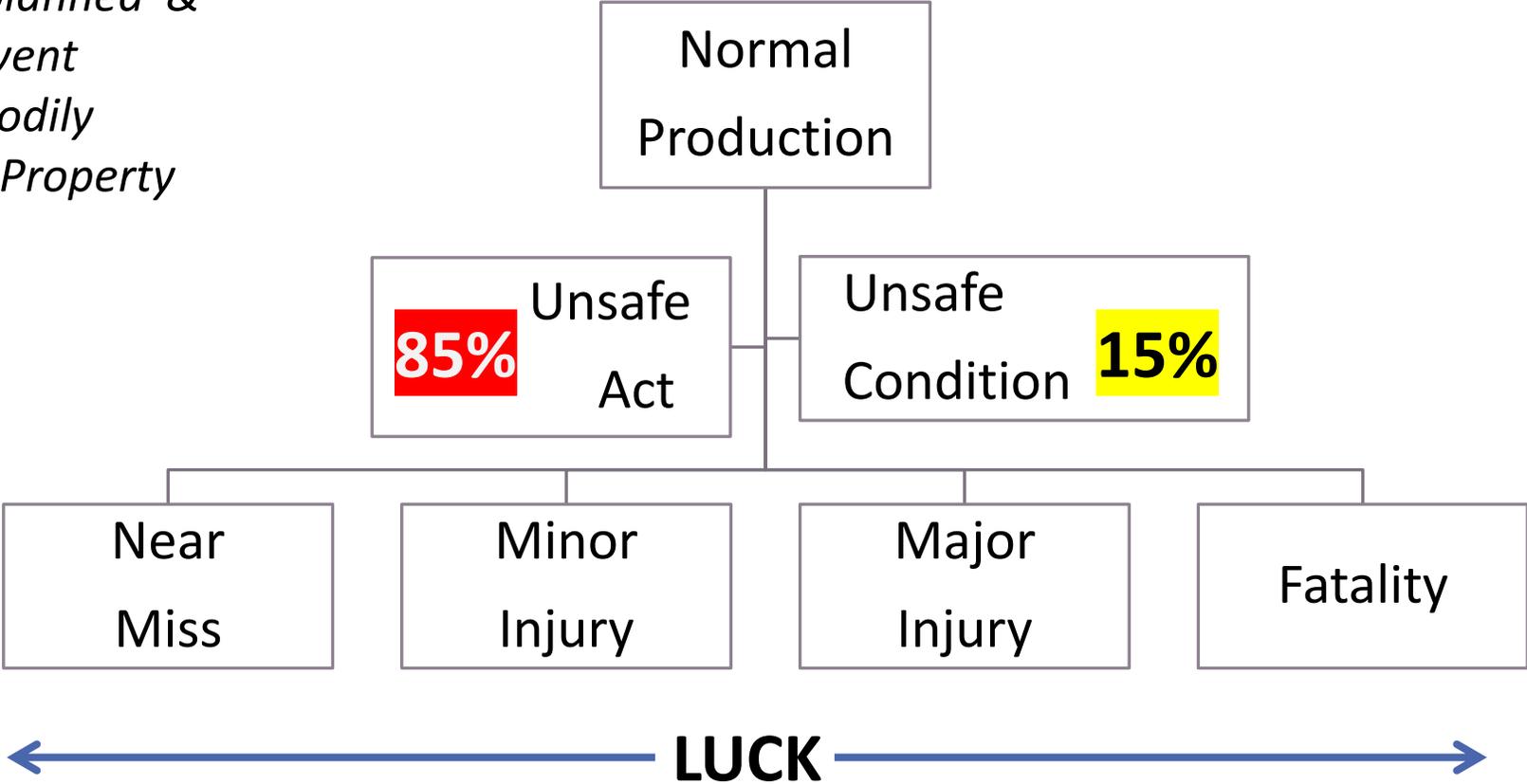
Complacency



# Essence of Accident Prevention

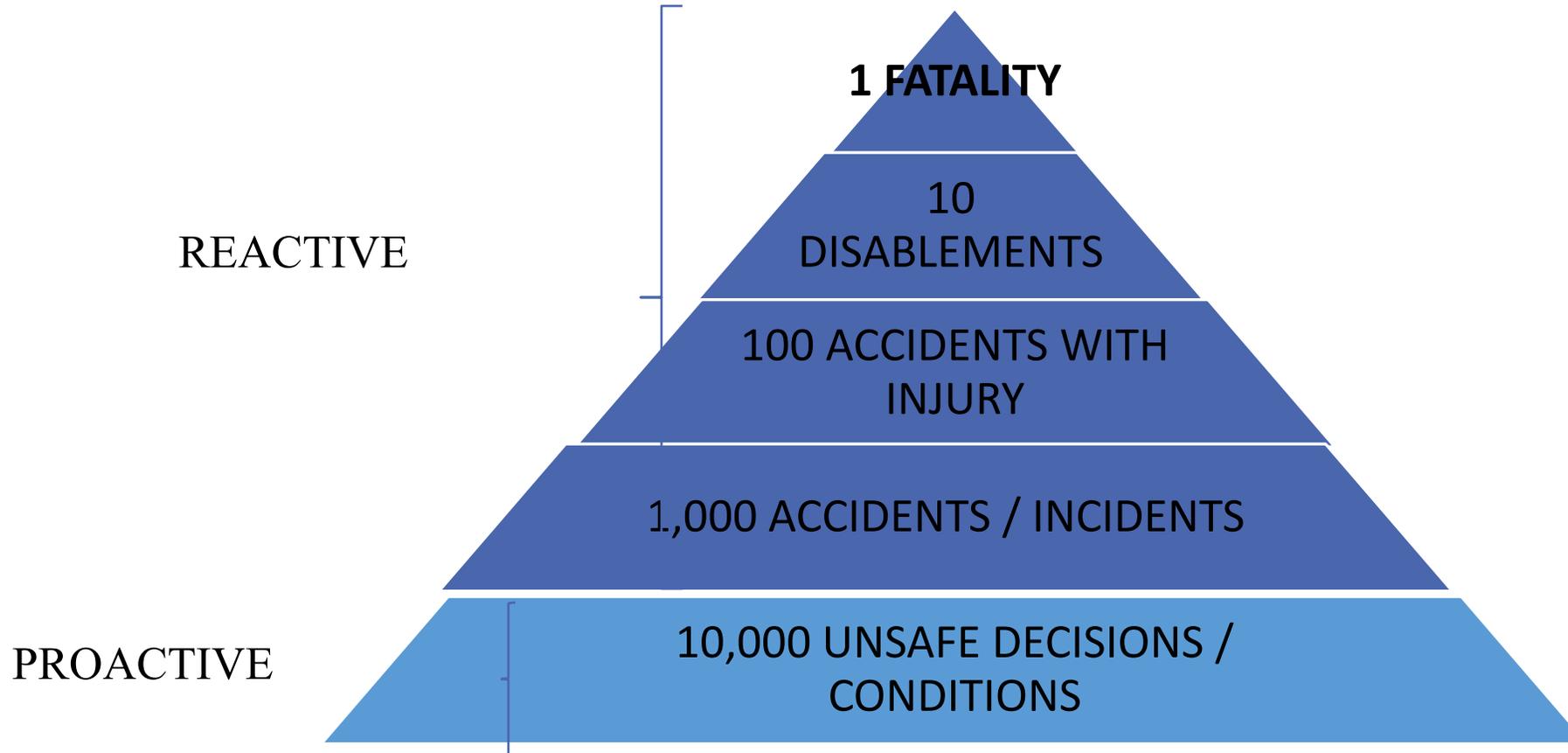
*Accident: Unplanned & Unforeseen Event Resulting in Bodily Injury and/or Property Damage*

*Accidents NEVER Just Happen*



# Accident Pyramid

## Eliminate Unsafe Act/Behaviors



Key to  
Accident  
Prevention:

Elimination of  
**UNSAFE ACTS**  
and  
**UNSAFE**  
**CONDITIONS**



Someone else's unsafe act can become your unsafe condition

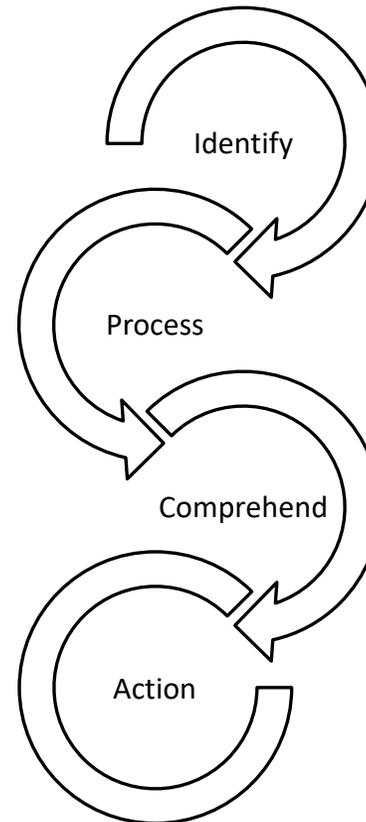


# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

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SITUATIONAL AWARENESS IS THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY, PROCESS, AND COMPREHEND THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE TEAM WITH REGARDS TO THE MISSION. MORE SIMPLY, IT'S KNOWING WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND YOU.

US COAST GUARD SITUATIONAL AWARENESS TRAINING



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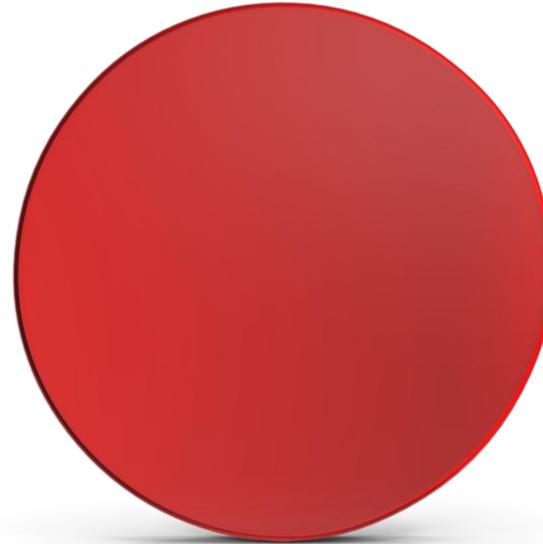
# Situational Awareness



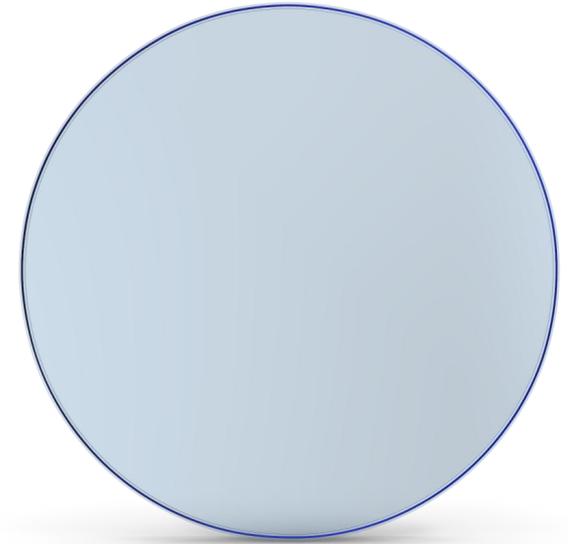
What has happened in the past?

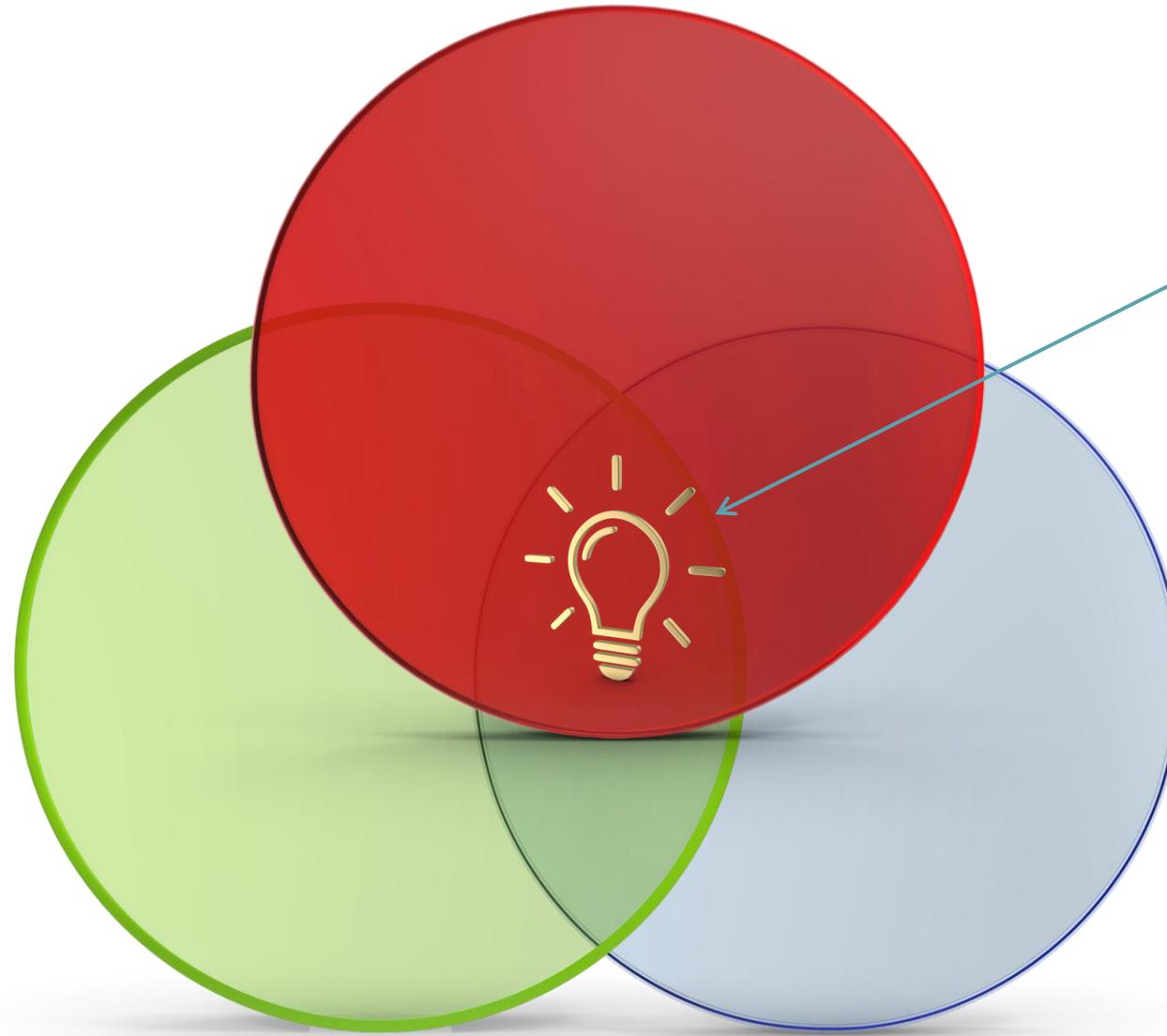


What is happening right now, in this moment in time?



What could happen in the immediate future?





This intersection is situational awareness

# Situational Awareness

The understanding of your environment, it's elements, and how that environment might change with respect to time or other factors...and reacting appropriately.

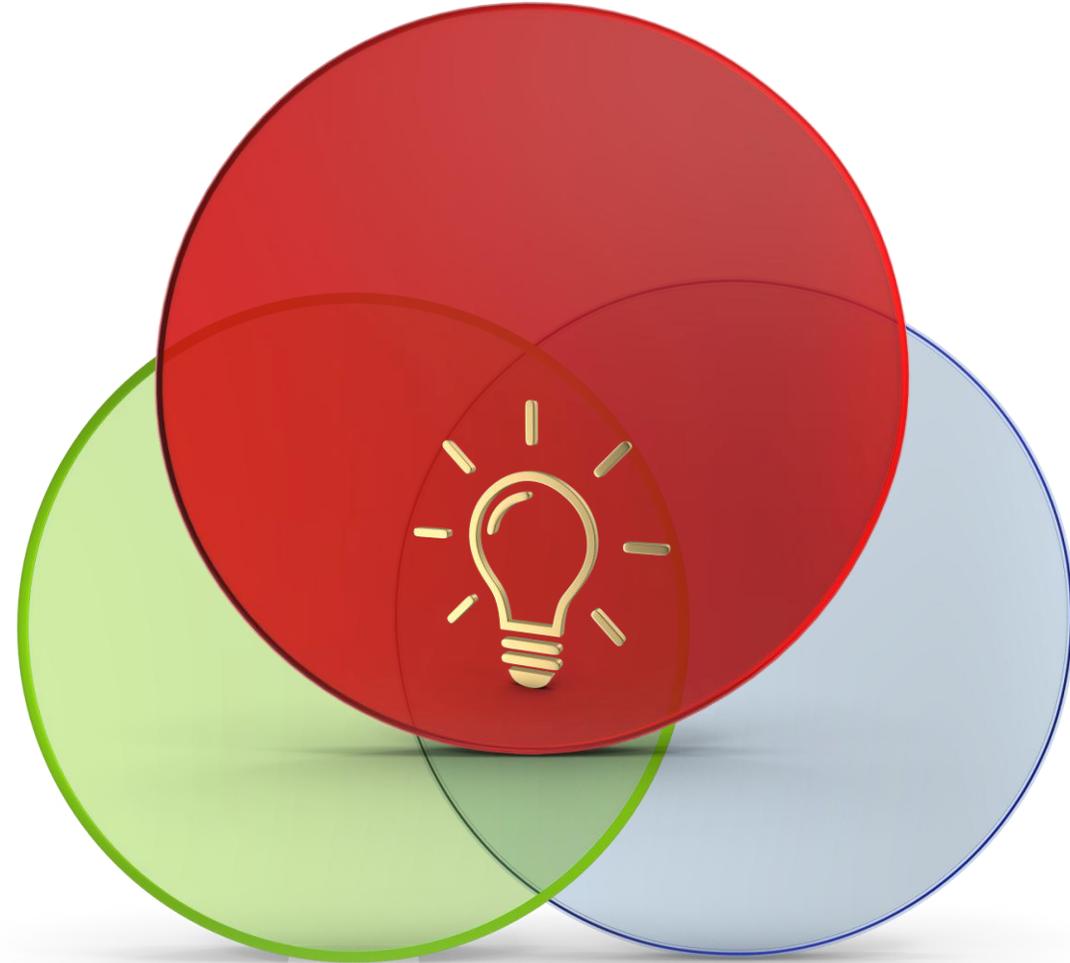
## Think about Y.O.U.R. Safety

**Y**ield to your situation

**O**bserve your surroundings

**U**nderstand what's happening around you

**R**eact accordingly



# What is Culture?

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**Merriam-Webster:** The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization

**AI what is culture?**

**Social behaviors:** How people interact with each other, including customs, manners, and dress codes

**Knowledge:** The information and capabilities that are passed down through generations

**Values:** The shared attitudes and goals that characterize a group

**Beliefs:** The ideas and convictions that are part of a group's culture

Culture is important because it helps define who we are and how we see the world. It's expressed in the ways we celebrate, remember the past, and imagine the future.

**Verb:** culture can also refer to the growth of microorganisms in a laboratory.



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# SAFETY CULTURE

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- Safety **is not** about more rules and regulations.
- Safety **is** about being able to change the behavior of an employee in order to create a culture of prevention.
- Safety **is** a strategic choice that owners make that produces profound bottom line profits.
- Is safety your Top Priority?
  - Priorities change
- Safety is a Core Value



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# SAFETY CULTURE

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## WHAT IS THE BASIS OF A SAFETY MINDED CULTURE?

- Risk Awareness
- Involvement
- Commitment
- Intention
- Mindset
- **“The way we do things around here”... “the \_\_\_\_\_ way”**
- People + Process = Safety Culture
- This doesn't mean that you will never again have a work-related accident in your area, it's a personal belief system that says accidents are **NOT** a part of our production or logistics process.

# Foundation of a Safety Culture: Three T's



**Treatment:** Know more beyond the job they do



**Transparency:** Give them the respect to tell them the “why”



**Trust:** This is the core of any relationship



# A Different Kind of String Theory

## Why this resonates:

- People respond to **example**, not force.
- Leaders go **first**, not behind.
- **Influence** beats authority.

*“You do not lead by hitting people over the head — that’s assault, not leadership. You simply pull them along with you.”*

-Dwight D. Eisenhower



# What kind of leader do you want to be?

## BOSS (PUSH)

- Drives team members
- Depends on Authority
- Inspires Fear
- Says "I"
- Assigns the Task
- Knows How It Is Done
- Places Blame
- Makes Work Drudgery
- Says "Go"

Vs.

## LEADER (PULL)

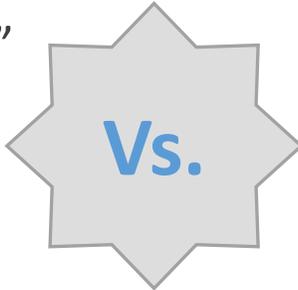
- Coaches Team Members
- Relies on Good Will
- Inspires Enthusiasm
- Says "We"
- Sets the Pace
- Shows How It Is Done
- Accepts Blame
- Makes Work a Game
- Says "Let's Go"

# Safety Minded Culture: What is the Mindset?

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## TRADITIONAL RESPONSES | OLD SCHOOL

“I’m not in the Safety Department”  
“Accidents are a part of doing business”  
“Accidents will happen”  
“You can’t prevent all accidents”  
“See, I knew that was going to happen”



Vs.

## SAFETY MINDED RESPONSES | NEW SCHOOL

“Safety is a part of everyone’s job” - No Silos  
“Accidents are unacceptable”  
“We can predict and prevent all accidents”  
“All accidents are preventable”  
“Ok, so we’ve had an accident: what are we going to do to prevent a reoccurrence?”



# Where do Policies & Procedures fit in?

- Demonstrate that management is serious about the adherence to expected safety standards
- Explaining what is expected regarding safety-related behavior & actions
- Ensuring employees are treated fairly regarding safety-related issues & incidents
- Fostering trust between management & employees, which can further encourage adherence to the safety-management system
- Stating clearly that bias & favoritism is unacceptable in the workplace



# Culture Tools & Considerations

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- Training: Orientation/Onboarding/Review
- Look for teaching/coaching opportunities
- Peer Mentors - identify your leaders & use this resource
- Dress for success & safety
- **Employee Survey**
- **Family involvement**
- Promote Professional Pride
- Make it a BIG Deal!
- Post-Injury Call
- President / Mentor Call
- Cost of an Accident exercise
- Create an internal “safety brand”
- **Incentives/Recognition**: Production/Culture/Safety
- **Culture Contract/Safety Contract/Pledge**
- Eliminate Culture Killers
- Listen/Ask
- Make the hard decisions



# What can you do?

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Consistently interact with employees on safe working behaviors.

Look & Listen for unsafe conditions and improper work practices.

Report accidents/injuries promptly – no matter how minor it seems.

Respond quickly to safety issues, take safety very seriously.

Be willing to take **responsibility** for your employees and yourself!

Coach – provide leadership, walk the walk.

Work with your employees. You are a TEAM.

Make others aware of potential problems.

## LISTEN



# Claims Management – Best Practices

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- Make EVERY claim a big deal - this impacts Safety Culture
- Report claims as soon as possible
- Investigate incident carefully
- Caring and Non-judgement
- Provide quick post injury response
- Communicate with the injured employee AND your adjuster
- Coach drivers to obtain photos (not just for MVAs)
- Supervisor Training
- Build strong relationships

# FINAL THOUGHTS

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- A “SAFETY MINDED CULTURE” will never exist without top management’s commitment. Employees have the right to a safe workplace and injuries should not be a part of the job.
- EVERYONE at the company is responsible for safety!
- Safety is an INVESTMENT not an EXPENSE!
- Focus on unsafe behaviors, not just DOT/OSHA violations and implementing RM techniques. This will better ensure a culture of safety, lead to lower accidents/injuries, increase driver retention, as well as company profits.

It’s a WIN - WIN

