BUILDING AN ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE

BCSP MISSION

We inspire and develop leaders in safety, health, and environmental practice through globally accredited certification; enhancing careers, advancing the profession, protecting people.

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INTRODUCTION

Building an organizational safety culture is a critical component of organizational health. It is the starting point of a well-balanced, knowledgeable, and healthy workforce. Safety begins with leadership at the top and permeates throughout every employee in the organization. Leaders must earn buy-in from their employees. But how do you do that? Where do you begin?

In this eBook, we outline the ways in which you can start, implement, and sustain an encompassing safety culture in your organization. With input from industry leaders from Sunbelt Rentals, Eldeco Inc., Cummins, and others, you will learn the best practices for instating a safety culture that keeps your employees safe, reduces incidents, improves your bottom line, and provides you with a reputation for being a leader in the profession.

The most effective safety cultures are ones embraced by the entire organization and are built on a foundation of continued education. We will help you avoid stagnation and the "way it's always been done" mentality to create a culture that continues to evolve and grow with industry trends.

Our mission is to inspire and develop leaders in safety, health, and environmental practice through globally accredited certification; enhancing careers, advancing the profession, protecting people. With the information provided in this book, we hope you will join us on our mission of protecting people by establishing a safety culture that works.

WHAT IS ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE?

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE CAN BE DESCRIBED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

INFORMAL

"the way we do things around here"

FORMAL

"A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems."

— C.E.B. Bergersen, Tool to Be Used to Survey and Improve Safety Culture in the European Railway Industry

This definition touches on several ideas, such as:

- Ways of thinking
- Ways of behaving
- Integrating new employees

Both the formal and informal definitions highlight the importance of behavior at the individual level and collectively at the group level.

DIFFICULT TO MEASURE:

- Cannot be measured in a direct manner ("soft" social science rather than a standardized quantitative measure).
- Workplace safety is important to organizational culture because it affects virtually all other elements of an organization, including:
  - Production
  - Quality
  - Job satisfaction
  - Expenses

SAFETY CULTURE

When we talk about safety, we're really talking about the organization as a whole. Thus, changes/improvements to workplace safety outcomes, from the approach of changing/improving culture, requires a holistic approach to culture at the organizational level.

This eBook provides information you can use to build safety leadership at every level, creating and maintaining an organization whose members share a strong safety culture.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AS A *SUBCULTURE* OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE:

- "Researchers believe that safety culture is a subcomponent of corporate culture that affects the safety and health of group members and others outside of the group as well."

  — C.E.B. Bergersen, Tool to Be Used to Survey and Improve Safety Culture in the European Railway Industry

- Safety culture affects and is affected by other operational processes and systems. It is inherently coupled to the overall corporate culture.

- "Thus, any dominant subcomponent such as productivity, turnover or quality will influence safety processes and vice versa."

  — J.C. Williams, Safety cultures: Their impact on quality, reliability, competitiveness and profitability
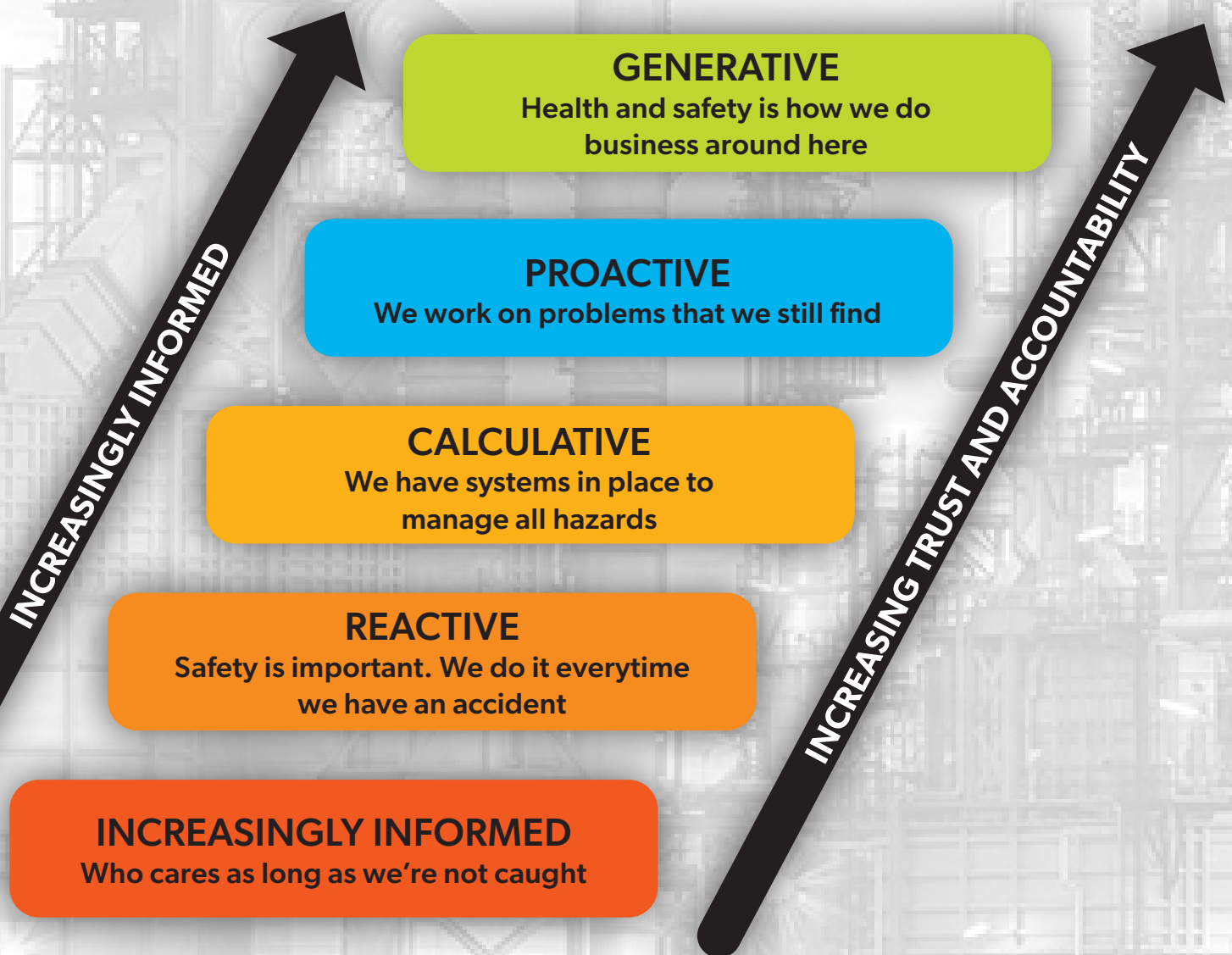
STRONG CULTURE: GOOD OR BAD?

GOAL: MATURE SAFETY CULTURE

- Let's explore the notion of a "strong" culture, as if that is the most desirable outcome that all organizations should seek to attain.

- "While one would think that a strong organizational culture would be good for an organization"…The characteristics that define a "strong" culture- the establishment of shared ways of thinking, ways of behaving, and how we integrate new people into our culture- may not actually serve the organizational well over time.

- A strong safety culture creates a unified sense of purpose. It motivates an organization's members to accomplish goals and feel proud of their accomplishments.

- However, a strong culture can also create conformity and discourage new ideas.

- To remain great, companies must "change culture over the lifecycle of the organization"

  —K.A. Baker, Organizational Culture

- Thus, the goal is not so much "Strong" culture (which can lead to stagnation); but rather a mature culture

- Workplace safety, like the culture it operates within, starts at the top- requires the buy in and active involvement of management (ownership)

- The components that make safety happen must exist throughout the organization (not just at the top, not just from the safety staff)

- Overall organizational risk

CULTURAL MATURITY MODEL

By "maturity", we're really talking about a model that is progressive, adaptable, iterative, proactive, and generative. To remain great, companies must "change culture over the lifecycle of the organization"

—K.A. Baker, Organizational Culture

GENERATIVE
Health and safety is how we do business around here

PROACTIVE
We work on problems that we still find

CALCULATIVE
We have systems in place to manage all hazards

REACTIVE
Safety is important. We do it everytime we have an accident

INCREASINGLY INFORMED
Who cares as long as we're not caught

INCREASINGLY INFORMED

INCREASING TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Safety Culture Maturity Model, adapted by Hudson and van der Graaf

ELEMENTS OF A MATURE SAFETY CULTURE

Culture and organizational performance strongly depend on involvement and leadership from the highest levels.

Employers/senior leadership within companies are responsible for creating the policies, procedures, and encouragement that foster an environment of:

OPENNESS (how they deal with information)

■ The manifestation of this support must cascade down to each successive level of the organization

Examples:
- "I don't want to know" (what's going on) vs. actively seeking information
- Messengers are shot vs. messengers are listened to
- New ideas are actively crushed vs. new ideas are encouraged

ACCOUNTABILITY

■ Responsibility is shirked vs. responsibility is shared

■ Failure is punished or covered up vs. failure is viewed as an opportunity for improvement

■ Subject to the obligation to report, explain, or justify something; responsible; answerable

INVOLVEMENT & LEADERSHIP

■ Must come from the *highest* levels of the organization.

■ Cascade down to each successive level of the organization.

■ Providing the tools, training, and competency development necessary to do the job safely and effectively.

■ Acting without care vs. acting with integrity and support

EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

■ Involvement and engagement in processes

■ Providing the tools, training, authority, and competency development necessary to do the job safely and effectively

"Our big emphasis over the last seven years has been leadership development and helping leaders understand their roles. We began putting this information in their hands so that they could have a true understanding of company, family, moral and community impacts. By gaining their engagement we now have a great number of safety professionals in the field that are able to see more, and do more, than any one safety professional can do anywhere."

Corey Arledge, CHST, STSC
Executive Director of Safety
Eldeco, Inc.

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BEST PRACTICE: INVESTING IN EMPLOYEE SAFETY COMPETENCE

CHARACTERISTICS

- Employee empowerment and leadership involvement

MATURE SAFETY CULTURE

- Making safety common knowledge, ensuring safety competency in an environment where leadership involvement and employee engagement are working together towards risk elimination, reduction, or effective mitigation

BEST PRACTICES

- Growing/refreshing knowledge on specific topics (training, certificate programs)
- Validating safety knowledge (certification/professional credentials)
- Continuous professional development in safety throughout the organization

WHAT IS CERTIFICATION?

- Assessment process
- Third-party validation of an individual's qualifications against a standard
- Voluntary process
- Requires continuing education and professional development
- Professional credential, awards use of mark

WHAT CERTIFICATION IS NOT

- License to practice
- Permanent
- Membership
- Certificate of completion
- Separate from training

Certified SH&E practitioners have met rigorous educational, experience, and examination requirements, as defined by a qualified and independent certification body, necessary for the protection of worker safety and health.

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT = RESULTS FROM AN ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Standard, or 4 "E"s: Education, Experience, Examination (validating knowledge and capacity), Ethics (adherence to the certification bodies' Code of Professional Ethics)

NOT the same as a certificate= a document declaring that one has fulfilled requirements and was in attendance, i.e.: snapshot in time.

Example: at the end of a seminar or class, a participant receives a certificate which verifies you attended this event.

CERTIFICATION = CREDENTIAL OF THE SAFETY PROFESSIONAL

- To get a certification, you must pass a test that validates your knowledge
- BCSP exams are developed BY safety professionals, FOR safety professionals
- Is ongoing; requires continuing education (recertification requirements)

> "
> We did a gap analysis through a perception survey, and we identified a need to engage our frontline supervisors more. Frontline supervisors play an integral role in our day-to-day safety culture. We have spent the last year developing additional resources and training for this specific group. The training development wouldn't have been successful with a top-down approach. We brought the stakeholders together and involved supervisors in the training development. And as a result, it has been well received.
>
> *Stacy R. Workman-Wyatt*
> *SMSHSE Culture Leader*
> *Cummins*
> "

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THE VALUE OF CERTIFICATION

There are a lot of benefits of holding a professional certification, both intrinsic and extrinsic.

Individuals who achieve certification report increased recognition, responsibility, and compensation.

Companies and other organizations find certification increases public confidence in the employer's safety program and enhances profitability and quality by reducing accidents, illnesses, and insurance claims.

Organizations that sponsor employees' safety certification achieve results:

PCL CONSTRUCTION ENTERPRISES, INC.

- Enhanced supervisor involvement in all aspects of the PCL safety process
- Improved hazard identification skills when conducting safety inspections
- Clients have stated that they have more confidence in our ability to manage safety

ELDECO, INC.

- 31% reduction in injuries
- Accident severity rating reduced by 32%
- 50% decrease in overall workers' compensation claims costs
- Work hours have increased by 15% while incidents per hour worked have decreased
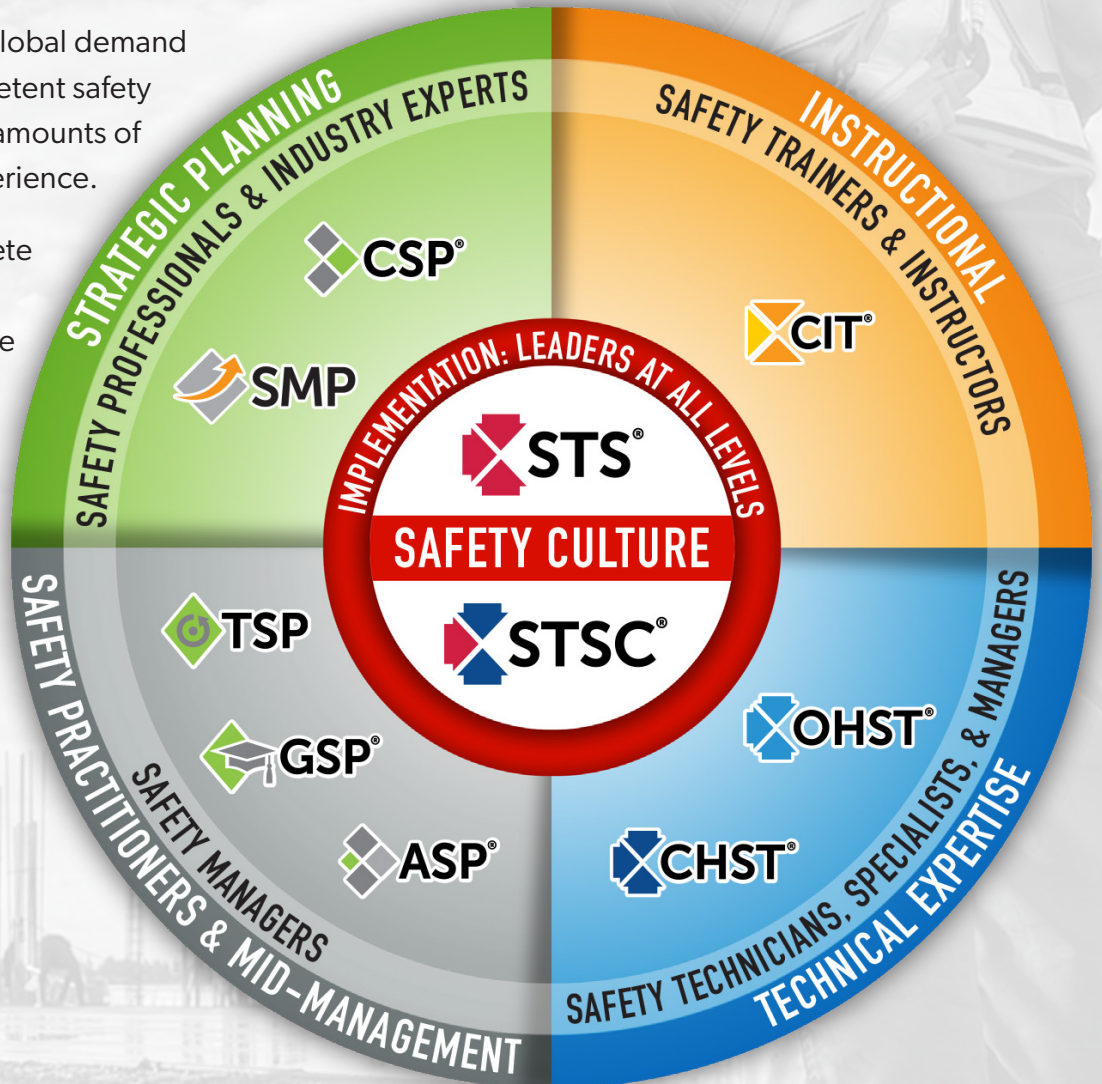
SAFETY CULTURE

BCSP has developed 10 credentials that identify the baseline safety competencies appropriate to different roles within an organization.

These credentials reflect the needs for safety competence at key touchpoints within a company or organization.

- Can be used by employers as a guideline or tool for ensuring safety is a shared value at all levels of an organization—remember the importance of "cascading down"?
- AND that employees have the knowledge needed to work safely
- Certification is an investment in your employees, your company, your environment, and certainly your organizational safety culture.

BCSP fulfills industry and global demand for validating highly competent safety practitioners with varying amounts of formal education and experience.

BCSP certifications complete the continuum of those impacting the safety culture of their organizations.

STRATEGIC PLANNING
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS & INDUSTRY EXPERTS

INSTRUCTIONAL
SAFETY TRAINERS & INSTRUCTORS

CSP

SMP

CIT

IMPLEMENTATION: LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS

STS

SAFETY CULTURE

STSC

TSP

GSP

ASP

OHST

CHST

SAFETY PRACTITIONERS & MID-MANAGEMENT
SAFETY MANAGERS

SAFETY TECHNICIANS, SPECIALISTS, & MANAGERS
TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

EASY WAYS TO GET YOUR SAFETY PROGRAM STARTED

There are many factors to keep in mind when beginning a safety and health program. The process can be overwhelming; you may not know where to begin, who to contact, what practices are appropriate for your organization or business, or how far-reaching your safety program should extend.

Regardless of the size of your company, instituting a safety program is important to keep your workforce safe and send them home happy and healthy every night.

One of the easiest ways to start a safety program is to establish safety and health as a core value and communicate its importance to your workforce. Make sure your workforce knows you take safety seriously and sending them home safe every day is a top priority. Remind them that you will work with them to correct any hazardous behavior.

Training and education are also vitally important, specifically on safety techniques and controls. You can **pursue professional certification to expand your own knowledge** or **seek professionally certified individuals that hold continuing education as a value.**

Leading by example and implementing a reporting system is also an effective way to start a safety program. Simple procedures workers can use to report any injuries, illnesses, incidents, hazards, etc. without fear of being reprimanded is key to an effective program. Using these tools yourself as a way to lead by example is also an important way to communicate with your workforce that safety is important.

Communication is of utmost importance. Seeking input from your employees is a great way to receive specific information on what needs to be changed. Addressing emergency scenarios and setting aside regular time to discuss safety and health issues and procedures allows your workforce to feel heard. Some may even be interested in **achieving safety certification, further engaging them in ensuring safety**.

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You have to figure out what the 'why' is, and it starts with caring. You have to figure out why you're wanting to do this in the organization and you got to build on that. You have to start with a commonality that everybody can get around and you also have to not make it about policies or procedures, or safety professionals or safety cops, or those type of things—You have to really make it personal. You really have to figure out a way that it's relevant and personal to the individuals that are out in the field.

You've got to get credentialed individuals on board because, first and foremost, they have the knowledge…. You [also] have to have someone who is willing to step back to hear operations side of the problem or the situation and then work with them…. The safety -team- is part of building a culture. You have to have [the] safety team.

Anthony Miller, CSP
Executive Vice President
Safety, Health & Environmental
Sunbelt Rentals & Ashtead Group PLC

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CONTACT BCSP ABOUT USING SAFETY CERTIFICATIONS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION BY VISITING THE "WORKPLACE SAFETY AND CERTIFICATION" WEB PAGE, LINKED TO AT **BCSP.ORG**
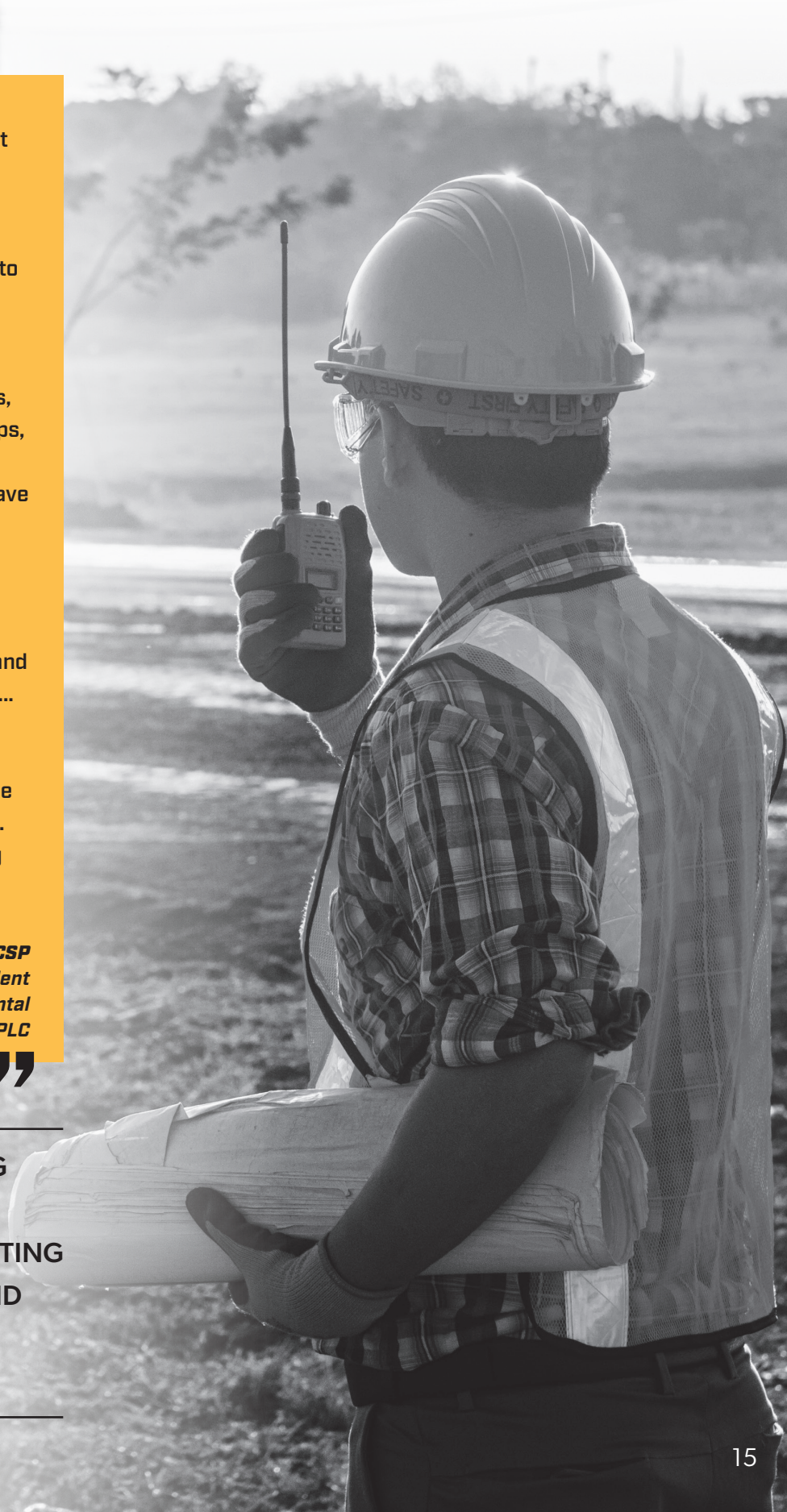
CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY CULTURE THROUGH CERTIFICATION

In the peer-reviewed "Leadership's Effect on Safety Culture" published in Professional Safety's November 2018 issue, Lundell and Marcham find safety culture and leadership linked as critical components of organizational health. The authors go on to underscore the advantages of a certified and professional safety perspective in business and operational planning.

WHERE DOES THIS CERTIFIED AND PROFESSIONAL SAFETY PERSPECTIVE COME FROM?

The Board of Certified Safety Professionals began as a professional development project formed by an executive committee of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE—now ASSP) in 1963. This beginning would shape the future of safety as a profession, beginning with the Certified Safety Professional (CSP) certification, which was first offered in 1970. Over the next 49 years, BCSP would go on to introduce seven additional certifications and two designations.

In addition to the CSP, BCSP now offers the Associate Safety Professional (ASP), Safety Management Professional (SMP), Occupational Hygiene and Safety Technician (OHST), Construction Health and Safety Technician (CHST), Safety Trained Supervisor (STS), Safety Trained Supervisor Construction (STSC), and the Certified Instructional Trainer (CIT) certifications.

While the CSP is considered by professional leaders to be the "gold standard" of safety certification, each BCSP certification plays an important role in creating a robust, all-encompassing safety culture. Each was specifically designed to serve an organizational niche, with varying degrees of focus — some focused on a narrower part of safety, while others encompass additional elements of safety.

For example, the CSP and SMP are geared more towards strategic planning, with safety experts and professionals focusing on the company-wide prevention of harm and loss. A CSP may institute safety management systems, emergency response and preparedness, occupational health and ergonomics, etc. Likewise, an SMP typically supervises employees and defines an organization's safety management systems, risk management, incident investigation, etc. A CSP is more education-based, requiring a bachelor's degree, while an SMP requires 10 years of experience.

The ASP is a mid-level certification that fulfills the credential requirement leading to the CSP. An ASP may also supervise employees and typically holds positions at the technical level or program management level. An ASP can serve as a key member of projects or design teams and may be asked to coordinate safety activities, conduct safety analyses, etc. A bachelor's degree in any field or an associate's in SH&E are prerequisites for the ASP. The Transitional Safety Practitioner (TSP) and Graduate Safety Practitioner (GSP) designations also fall in this category and serve as a path to obtain the CSP.

The CHST and OHST both fall under the technician level, meeting the needs of professionals with narrower foci on safety and leadership with expertise in the certifications' specific areas of concentration. The OHST, as its name implies, focuses more on occupational hygiene; the CHST focuses on the building construction or general contracting sector. Experience requirements for both are three years and there are no academic nor training requirements.

The STS and STSC are supervisory certifications focused on employees at all levels of organizations, from the CEO to the front-line supervisor, who may not have safety as a primary duty but who, by possessing the safety baseline knowledge afforded them by obtaining these certifications, are able to ensure safer and healthier work sites.

And finally, the CIT is designed for safety trainers and instructors. A CIT usually holds positions at the manager, director, technician, or supervisory level and designs a corporation's SH&E training. They may also hold other duties outside safety.

A profound safety culture, one with certified and professional safety leadership, requires competency across the organization and requires leaders to value and model safety at all levels. By utilizing the varying focuses of the ensemble of BCSP certifications, an organization ensures their safety culture encompasses all aspects of safety, health, and environment.

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ENGAGE YOUR TEAM, IMPROVE YOUR CULTURE

COLIN BROWN, PHD, CSP, CIH, CIT ON STRATEGIES FOR INVOLVING ALL LEVELS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION IN SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Engaging your workforce in safety is a key strategy for improving the culture within your organization. Your team's engagement is not only crucial to your safety management system, but also to your overall culture.

Here are four ways to build safety into your culture by engaging the workforce.

1 PROVIDE SAFETY AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

Organizations make safer decisions and reduce risk when the workforce has access to relevant safety and health information and education. Create a competent workforce with the knowledge and skills to implement and manage safety programs, identify and control safety and health hazards, prepare for emergencies, and lead within the organization.

Providing training and relevant information, including risk assessment results, injury/illness information, and safety/health hazards and controls, fosters safer and healthier workplaces. In addition, it strengthens the foundation for safety and engagement within an organization.

2 ENCOURAGE COMMUNICATION AND CRITICAL THINKING

Promote an open, supportive environment and encourage the team to solve problems and raise safety and health concerns. Communicate hazard reporting processes clearly, invite suggestions, and provide feedback and updates on issues that must be resolved. Encourage the team to think critically by asking questions when dealing with safety and health issues.

For example: What is the most critical issue? How can we verify if our assumptions are true? What other perspectives or viewpoints do we need to consider? What are the consequences of each decision?

3 INVOLVE THE TEAM IN DECISION-MAKING

Ensure safety is built into all decision-making processes by involving the team. Ask for ideas and input from all levels and areas of the workforce on integrating safety into critical business decisions.

For example, seek input on how to build and improve safety in processes such as procurement, facility design, contractor selection, human resources, and planning. Involve members from other areas or departments to gain new perspectives.

4 BUILD SAFETY LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS

Do you want to build leadership and safety engagement across your entire organization? Equip your team with an accredited safety certification such as Safety Trained Supervisor (STS) or Safety Trained Supervisor in Construction (STSC) in order to ensure that they have the necessary safety knowledge and skills for the job.

These certifications are intended for executives, directors, managers, supervisors, superintendents, and employees at all levels. These individuals may not have safety as a primary duty, but their knowledge of safety practices ensures safer and healthier worksites. In addition, their competency strengthens the foundation of safety in the organization. The STS and STSC establish standard baseline knowledge across the organization and engage the workforce in a meaningful and measurable way.

In Summary

Engage your entire team in safety to enhance the performance of your business and improve your culture. Provide education, resources, and opportunities for certification to foster competence. Communicate, encourage critical thinking, and involve the team members in safety decision-making to empower them in leadership. Focus on building safety leadership at all levels to create and maintain a strong safety culture.

Colin Brown, Director of Business Advancement at BCSP

STRENGHTEN YOUR SAFETY CULTURE TODAY!

- Download and review relevant documents from the Workplace Safety and Certification web page at BCSP.ORG

- Talk with a member of our team at **bcsp@bcsp.org**.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) is a not-for-profit corporation recognized as a leader in high-quality, accredited credentialing for safety, health, and environmental (SH&E) practitioners. BCSP establishes standards and certifies competency criteria in professional safety practice.

It is our mission to inspire and develop leaders in safety, health, and environmental practice through globally accredited certification; enhancing careers, advancing the profession, protecting people.

Since 1969, over 100,000 of BCSP's credentials have been achieved.

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