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## Breaking the Safety Plateau and Achieving Zero incident across industries: Is this Achievable?

Across industries and across organizations and work places around the world, we have seen great efforts implemented to prevent accidents and incidents. Several work place safety rules, safe work procedures and other safe systems of work are being enforced. However, regardless of these efforts, accidents and incidents still occur. People still get injured and fatalities are still happening. The big questions therefore are: Breaking the Safety Plateau and Achieving Zero incident across industries: Is this Achievable?

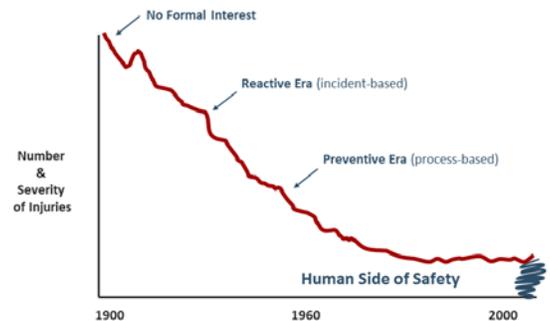
What else can we do? What other solution can we bring? How can we make a difference? How best can we break the safety plateau? Is this vision achievable in reality?

In this edition, through research and case study analysis, several authors share and exchange knowledge on best proactive approaches to prevent incidents across industries and workplaces around the globe. Papers have been written by authors presenting facts drawn from values and dividends from HSE-management systems implementation, Life Saving rules, safety rules violation, complacency and people-based safety leadership. Dr. E. Scott Geller leads this edition of SHE Culture as distinguished author with his work on *"People-Based Leadership: How to Cultivate a Total Safety Culture"*.

Enjoy your reading.

Editorial Board.

## Evolution of Safety Management & the Need for Behaviour-based Safety Concepts



History shows that the huge effort in eliminating accidents and incidents in the workplace needs a human approach, where additional processes and procedures will have limited effect. Our focus is now on behavioural safety

Above graph which was taken from Performance Consultants International "Linde Case study on safety culture and skills development" draws our attention that in our contemporary times, we need to focus attention on behaviours. These behaviours could range from personal to organizational. Which in turn will aggregate into the observable safety cultures within systems and organizations. In order words, we must trace the link between positive safety culture and incident prevention across organizations. Behaviours are exhibited by both individual persons and by management cadre within organizational hierarchy. Therefore, to what extent do organizational leadership show commitment to health and safety initiatives? How much time and energy do they put to ensure that health and safety awareness and information are cascaded or disseminated across all levels of the organization? What set of safety leadership qualities do they propagate? How do we deal with complacent attitudes and how much are workers engaged in the health and safety decision making? Effective and impact making solutions to incident prevention requires clear understanding about the reasons behind several at-risk behaviours observed in the workplace. Dealing with identified reasons are the subject of many authors in this edition of SHE Culture journal.

## People-Based Leadership: *How to Cultivate a Total Safety Culture*

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### Background

This article illustrates critical distinctions between two terms used interchangeably in public discourse—management and leadership. While the achievement of an injury-free workplace requires effective managers and leaders, their roles are quite different. Managers are assigned their positions in order to hold people accountable to perform designated other-directed behavior.

In contrast, leaders inspire people to be self-motivated to perform self-directed behavior. Effective leaders practice particular behaviors revealed in this article that can be practiced by anyone, including managers, in order to inspire self-motivation and authentic empowerment in another individual. The qualities of effective interpersonal leadership are organized with an acronym to facilitate learning, remembering, and teaching— LEAD. For example, leaders Listen with Empathy to promote self-Accountability for obtaining and learning from behavior-based and outcome-based Data that reflect progress and inform directions for continuous improvement.

People-based safety (Geller, 2005) is an extension and evolution of behavior-based safety (Geller, 2001; Krause, Hidley, & Hodson, 1996; McSween, 2003) which has been found to significantly reduce industrial injuries (Sulzer-Azaroff & Austin, 2000). The components of people-based safety are reflected by the acronym: ACTS. The ACTS vision for a Total Safety Culture, TSC is easier said than done. Specific leadership principles and strategies are needed to empower a work force to become self-accountable for injury prevention and actively care for the safety and health of others.

This is “people-based leadership” (PBL) and is the theme of this article. The author’s first article on PBL (Geller 1999) distinguished between managers who hold people accountable and leaders who inspire people to be responsible or self-accountable. While managers are assigned their supervisory position, leaders earn their role through interpersonal interaction. Everyone can be a leader, including managers. That article on PBL described ten leadership qualities needed to achieve and sustain an injury-free workplace. While these principles are only listed here, many will resurface later in this PBL article. Specifically, Geller (1999) proposed that effective leaders:

1. Focus on process or the behaviors needed to achieve an injury-free workplace.
2. Accompany training with education in order to provide a reasonable rationale for safety instructions or directions.
3. Use conditional statements that allow for relevant refinement to fit a particular context
4. Listen first to learn the other person’s perspective before offering direction, advice, or support.
5. Promote ownership by giving conditional directives that allow others to customize safety-related procedure for their work culture.
6. Encourage personal choice to increase participation and self-accountability.
7. Set expectations rather than mandates in order to increase self-direction and self-accountability for safety-relevant behaviors.
8. Are confident but uncertain of process details, realizing that the process-relevant workers know best the hazards that need to be eliminated or avoided and the safety-related behaviors that need improvement.
9. Look beyond the numbers, acknowledging that management requires measurement but realizing unmeasured human dimensions like self-esteem, optimism, and belongingness also need attention.
10. Make more distinctions between people, thereby disabling stereotyping and appreciating the unique interests, talents, and attributes of individuals.



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- **Compliance with Safety Rules and Procedures, a Panacea for Incident Prevention in Upstream Petroleum Industry in Nigeria**
- **Dealing with Complacency: A researchers prototype guide to design a questionnaire survey tool for data gathering.**

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