



The 5A-Way to Safety

(Management's Role in Safety)

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"The 5A-Way ... The Safe way"



This is a template I devised for my own use in various situations.

It was suggested that it might have application to the safety culture that is being currently promoted in Singapore.

It is my pleasure and privilege to share my thoughts on management's role in safety through this 5A-Way template.

- N. Krishnamurthy

The 5A-Way ... The Safe Way

Attitude
Awareness
Acceptance
Analysis
Action



Prof Krishna's 5A-Way, inspired by many all-time greats!

The 5A-Way ... The Safe Way

Attitude

- Attitude is everything.
- It is the beginning, the foundation for all we want to do.
- In safety, it means that we want all the workers who come in the morning to return home in the evening, safe and sound.
- That we wish to share information and knowledge about incidents and accidents with our cohorts
- And so we can proudly tell ourselves, and others:
"I accept workplace safety as a core value!"



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Why should management be concerned with safety?

Three imperatives to consider safety:

1. The legal imperative
2. The fiscal imperative
3. The social imperative

1. The legal imperative

- ❖ Primary goal is to fulfil the obligation to comply with rules.
- ❖ To stay out of trouble.
- ❖ Do only what has to be done to meet minimum requirements.
- ❖ Safety is not a priority or value.



Main reference for some further slides:

Expanding the Profession of Safety Management in a New Era

The National Safety Management Society



Online Library

2. The fiscal imperative

- Management understands the financial benefits derived from effective application of safety systems.
- The primary reason for "doing safety" shifts to maximizing profits.
- The goal is to fulfil the obligation to stakeholders to operate the business in a fiscally prudent manner.
- The management will do whatever needs to be done reactively and proactively to save on direct and indirect costs of accidents.
- The management will likely go beyond minimum legal requirements if needed.
- Safety is most likely a high priority...
- However, it may be subject to rapid change when the going gets tough.



3. The social imperative : "Core value"

- Management realizes that long-term corporate survival depends on more than maximizing short-term profits.
- It will value and tap into the incredible creative potential of each employee, from janitor to president.
- Management appreciates the inherent value of each employee, not just as a worker, but as a corporate "family" member.
- It also realizes and values the roles its employees fulfil away from work, in the community, as mothers, fathers, coaches, helpers, etc.
- It strives to fulfil its obligation to each employee, local community, and general society to support and protect the welfare of all employees.
- ***Safety is perceived as a core corporate value that does not change when the going gets tough.***

Leadership

- Management must recognise the many opportunities to communicate and act so as to prove safety leadership.
- The inability to perceive leadership opportunities as they arise limits the company's potential to succeed.
- Employees at all levels may be taken to be good people trying to do the best they can with what they have got.
- But they may not have physical resources and psychosocial support to achieve the results expected of them.
- Why? Ultimately, the workplace culture may not support effective safety management and leadership.

Three kinds of leadership models:

1. Tough-coercive
2. Tough-controlling
3. Tough-caring

1. Tough-coercive leadership model

- Management is tough on safety to protect themselves, by controlling performance with the threat of punishment.
- Culture of compliance to imperatives is fear-driven, encourages selfishness.
- Accountability system emphasizes negative impacts.
- Communicates negative messages to employees
- Employees (and managers) behave only to avoid negative consequences.
- Culture is not healthful to employees at all levels of the organization.
- It may be successful in achieving compliance ***...but that's it.***



2. Tough-controlling leadership model

- Management is tough on safety to control losses. This is often the "traditional" management model.
- Sets high standards for behaviour and performance, and it controls all aspects of work to ensure compliance.
- Gradually attitudes and strategies to fulfil its legal and fiscal imperatives improve.
- Safety systems become more effective, reducing injuries and illnesses, thereby cutting production costs.
- Tight control is necessary to achieve numerical goals.
- Relies less on negative reinforcement, more on positive reinforcement.
- Communication is typically top-down and information is used to control.
- A safety "director" is usually appointed to act as a cop...controlling the safety function.



3. Tough-caring leadership model

- Has high expectations, cares about employee success. This is a selfless leadership approach.
- Complying with law, controlling losses, and improving production assured if employee is motivated and safe.
- Commitment to external customers achieved by fulfilling their obligation to employees ...their internal customers.
- Communication is typically all the way across and down; information is used to share so that everyone succeeds.
- Safety coordinator appointed to help in safety functions.
- Positive changes in corporate culture, success-driven.
- Before disciplining employees, managers will evaluate the fulfilment of their own accountabilities first.
- Trust between management and labour promoted thru mutual respect, involvement in and ownership of safety.
- Excellence is promoted, but safety system is designed to produce compliance behaviours.

The 5A-Way ... The Safe Way

Awareness

- Awareness is knowing.
- Knowing what is going on around us
- In safety, it means we must learn what can cause harm, to whom, with what impact.
- It means that we must see the potential dangers, hear, smell, taste, feel them ... and identify them, so that we can avoid or control them.
- To save employees from injury or death, to save our property from damage, our environment and reputation from harm



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BUT...

It all boils down to dollars and cents?

- When management merely communicates their interest in safety, but does not follow-through with action, they are expressing just moral support, not commitment.
- The real test for commitment is the degree to which management seriously invests time and money.
- Real commitment is leadership by example ... by providing a safe, healthful workplace for all employees.
- Employees will demonstrate the important attributes of integrity, character, and discipline when (and only when) they see management exhibiting these values first.

Value for money: *Employees (and risk managers) too must address the question of what management will get in return for the money it is being asked to spend. Safety committees must discuss risk levels of accidents in terms of money, to enable management to take logical decisions.*

Safety pays

Wall Street Journal (Jan. 29, 1991) “A growing number of companies find safety and productivity, once viewed as antagonistic, have become bedfellows. Companies say better safety practices improve morale, boost output, trim worker-compensation costs and strengthen public relations.”

“Safety fits in nicely with the quality leadership process,” says Eastman Kodak safety director James Mitchell.

“DuPont executives open all meetings with safety reports. The company has redesigned its machines for safety, and it fires managers with poor safety records. “

“Alcoa tells workers to hold onto stair rails and don't enter taxis if the cabbies aren't wearing seat belts.”

Workers at a Monsanto factory watch for work habits that could cause accidents, costing the company a lot.

Acceptance



- Acceptance is understanding the need and taking ownership.
- Being proactive, taking initiative, leading the way
- In safety, it means being responsible for the welfare and safety of all the stakeholders.
- It means treating all stakeholders as partners.
- It means we should make RM part of our mission and our vision ... not only say the words but also arrange for funds and personnel to achieve them.

Fix the system ... not the blame!

- It is all about system design.
- If management is not presently demonstrating commitment through action, then it should grab the first opportunity to change the system firmly and fast.
- Management must not hesitate to "educate up" to gain the all-important vision and understanding needed to positively affect attitudes and subsequent behaviours that give workplace safety the emphasis it deserves.
- **Communication:** Never use blue-collar language with managers or white-collar talks with labourers. Learn to speak and write in the language of audience or readers.



Include safety in vision and mission

Vision statement :

- Lets employee and customer know what your company does, defining the role it and what its basic values are.
 - The vision statement reflects the corporate culture, its unique "personality" setting it apart from all others.
-

Mission statement:

- Tells the world what the company does – why it exists, stating its intended purposes.
- The mission statement lets everyone know what your company's products or services are; who its customers are; what its service territory is.
- If your company doesn't have a mission statement, try to develop one and demonstrate the benefits that will result from a written mission statement.

The 5A-Way ... The Safe Way

- Analysis is the bridge leading from concept to implementation.
- Applying the right theories, using the right tools
- In safety, it means identifying the hazards, estimating if and when accidents may happen, evaluating how bad they may be when they do, and what their combined risk level would become.
- It means we decide which risks are acceptable, which are unacceptable, and which are manageable.
- And also what and who can control them, and when

Analysis



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Reactive vs. proactive safety strategy

Reactive approach:

- Assumes that accidents just happen, cannot be avoided.
 - Company only reacts to accidents after they occur, and usually only to minimize the costs associated.
 - Reactive safety programs cost more than proactive ones.
 - Reactive programs say in effect: *“(1) We don't care about you,”* and *“(2) “It is all about money, not your safety.”*”
-

Proactive approach:

- Doing whatever it takes to ensure accidents never happen.
- By emphasizing accident prevention, management sends a message of caring to all employees.
- Proactive strategies are always less expensive.
- Remember to work with the safety committee to share the goals and objectives with everyone in the company.

Risk assessment – The New Imperative

Now, according to the new WSH Act, management must take the initiative, and support all the way down along the chain of command, risk assessment (RA) and risk management (RM) for all existing and proposed projects.

What does it involve?

1. Form a RA team with continuing responsibility
2. Evaluate and accept team's findings, recommendations
3. Set policies to reflect the RA and risk controls (RC)
4. Assign, distribute, and transfer risk by clear contracts
5. Support the RA team consistently and continuously
6. Administrative control component of risk management
7. Delegate not just responsibility but also authority
8. Encourage and require incident and violation reporting
9. Maintain proper records on long-term basis
10. Provide adequate funds for safety on a priority basis

The 5A-Way ... The Safe Way

- ✿ Action is achievement.
- ✿ Putting our money and our effort where our mouth is
- ✿ In safety, it means getting all stakeholders to participate.
- ✿ It means documenting background and facts, implementing our decisions, re-doing our assessment as required ... getting on with the business of safety, the safety of our business.
- ✿ Communicating with all concerned, reviewing progress, continuing to advocate and promote safety first and safety last

Action



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Effective management leadership

- Ideally, concern for every aspect of the safety and health of all workers must be demonstrated.:
- Visible management involvement,
 - Getting out where you can be seen, informally or through formal inspections.
 - Being accessible.
 - Being an example, by knowing and following the rules employees are expected to follow.
 - Being involved by participating on the workplace Safety and Health Committee.
- Assigning and communicating responsibility, authority and resources to responsible parties and holding those parties accountable,
- Encouraging workers to report hazards, symptoms, injuries and illnesses, and avoid discouraging policies.

Management of safety in practice

The fourth item in the hierarchy of risk controls – but the first in terms of policy and funding – is “Administrative Controls”. These include, but are not limited to:

- Broad policy covering all aspects of safety
- Adequate funding for credible worst case scenarios
- Cooperation with and coordination of RA team
- Prompt and fair evaluation of RA recommendations
- Prompt implementation and follow-up of decisions
- Detailed contractual allocation/transfer of risk
- Delegation of responsibility to competent staff
- Delegation of proper authority to stop work, to suspend dangerous worker, to rotate tough tasks, etc.
- Contingency funds for emergencies, for minor repairs and replacements, PPE, small rewards, etc.

Management of safety in practice (Contd.)

“We are already doing tunnelling work. Now our RA shows the risk to be high. According to rules (= proper procedure), we should stop! **What do we do?**”

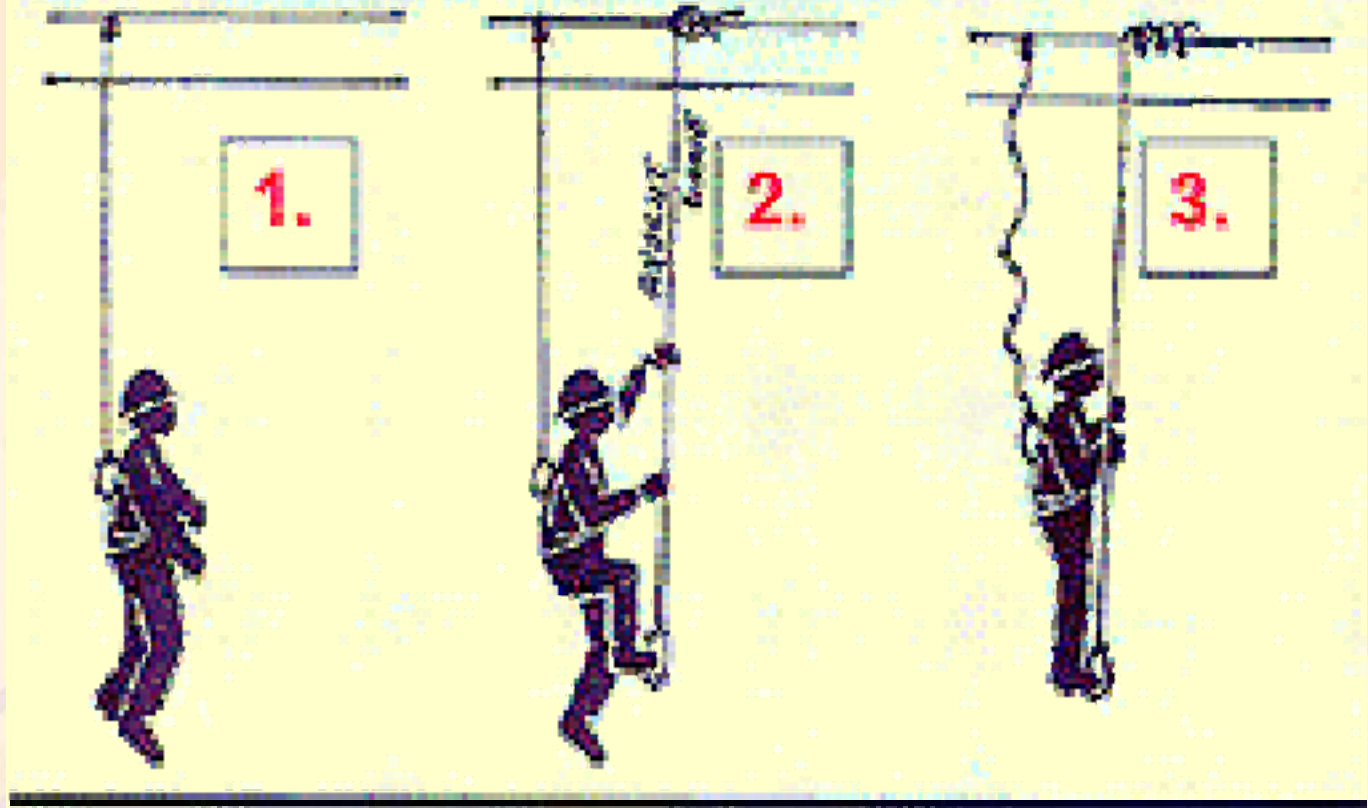
Of course you stop immediately! It is unwise (= foolish) to continue when your RA shows risk to be high.

Action

- ❖ Then gather a team to decide what to do to bring down the risk from high to medium.
- ❖ Get a consultant, if no in-house expertise is available.
- ❖ Check with the designer and contractor if some risky process can be eliminated or substituted.
- ❖ Get better equipment, more skilled operators.
- ❖ Add extra and stronger supports.
- ❖ Install more warning devices.
- ❖ Insist on more frequent checking, more stringent follow up.
- ❖ Now re-assess severity and likelihood.
- ❖ **Hopefully, risk would have come down to medium!**



Fall rescue – A simple life-saving trick!



1.

2.

3.

PERSON HAS
FALLEN AND HAS
NO MEANS OF
RESCUE WITHIN
10 MINUTES.

RESCUE ROPE IS DROPPED
TO PERSON (LOOP END) TO
ALLOW THEM TO STEP UP
INTO LOOP AND RELIEVE
PRESSURE.

PERSON CAN SAFELY
WAIT FOR RESCUE
WITHOUT CUTTING
OFF CIRCULATION TO
LEGS.



Not The End but :

Attitude
Awareness
Acceptance
Analysis
Action



The beginning of a new safety culture!