Executive Leadership Fosters a Strong Safety Culture

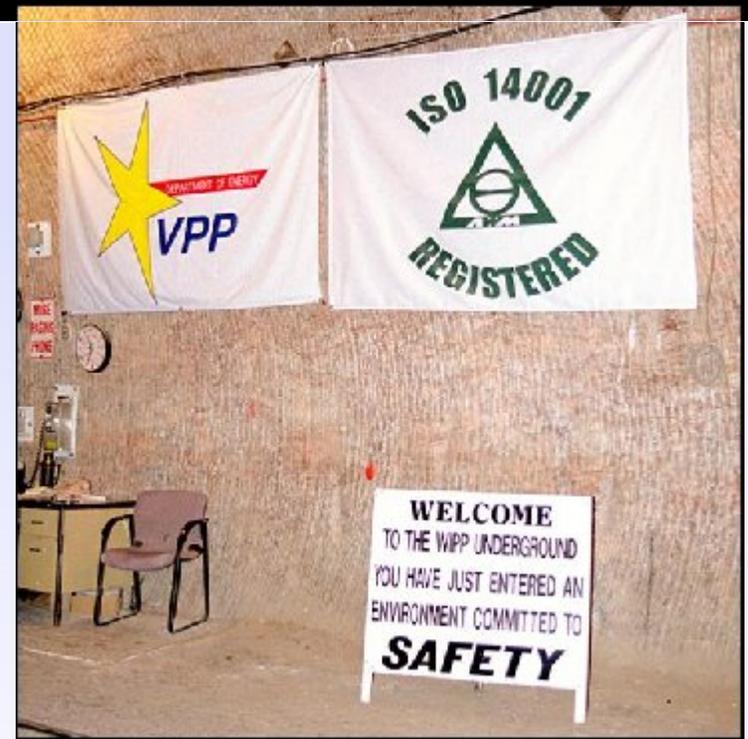*...A Field Office Perspective*

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
Carlsbad Field Office
US Department of Energy

George Basabilvazo
Regulatory
Compliance
Director, CBFO

Presented at the
Waste Management Symposium

March 8, 2010 - Session 21

5 Dimensions to WIPP's Safety Culture

Just Culture:

Learning Culture:
and capable of making major reforms

Flexible Culture:
conventional hierarchy to a flatter structure)

WIPP's Safety Culture

Reporting Culture:
Climate where people are prepared and committed to report errors and near misses

Informed Culture:
Commitment to use data, measurements & knowledge of the safety posture to make changes and praise/reward the workforce for safe behavior
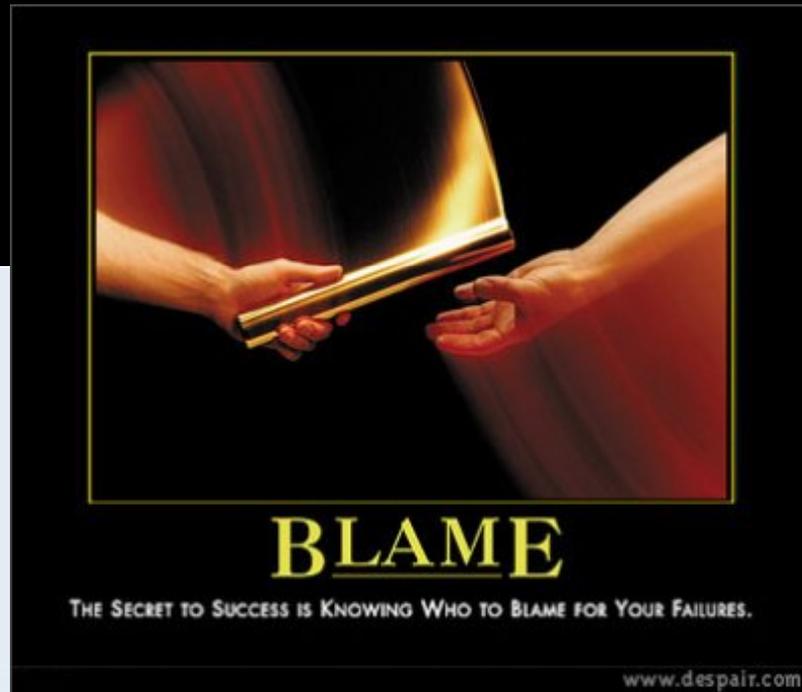
- Does the threat of discipline increase a worker's awareness of risks or at least increase one's interest in assessing risks?
- Does this heightened awareness outweigh learning through punishment?
- By providing safety information and knowledge, are people more interested in assessing the risks?

Zero tolerance for reckless conduct (bad acts)

Confidence that unintended unsafe acts will go unpunished (honest errors)

Getting the balance right

Latent organizational weaknesses persist

Reduced trust

Management less aware of jobsite conditions

Less willingness to report

Latent organizational weaknesses identified

Increased trust

**Management more aware of jobsite conditions**

Workers freely report safety issues

➤ **Any safety event, especially human or organizational error, is an opportunity to improve via experience feedback and lessons learned**

➤ **Failures and 'incidents' at WIPP are considered as lessons which can be used to avoid more serious events**

➤ **<u>All</u> events must be reported and investigated to <u>discover root causes</u>, and timely feedback given on findings and remedial actions, both to work groups involved <u>and</u> others in the organization.**
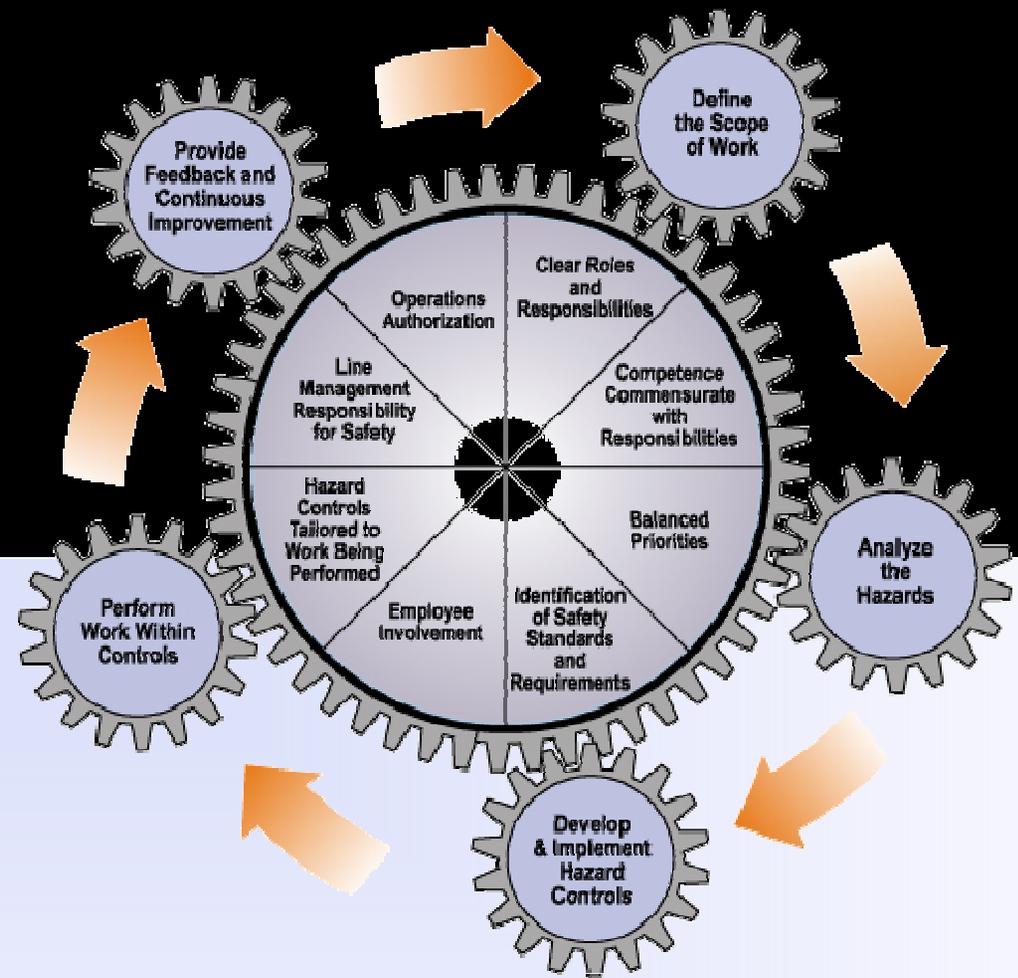
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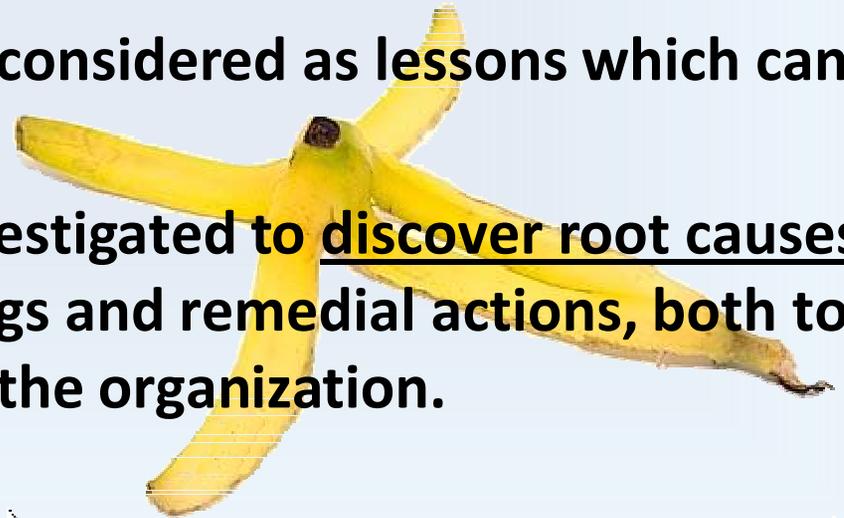
➤ Takes time and effort – "Not worth it!"

"Without a Reporting Culture, an organization will not possess the ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate the lessons to be learned."
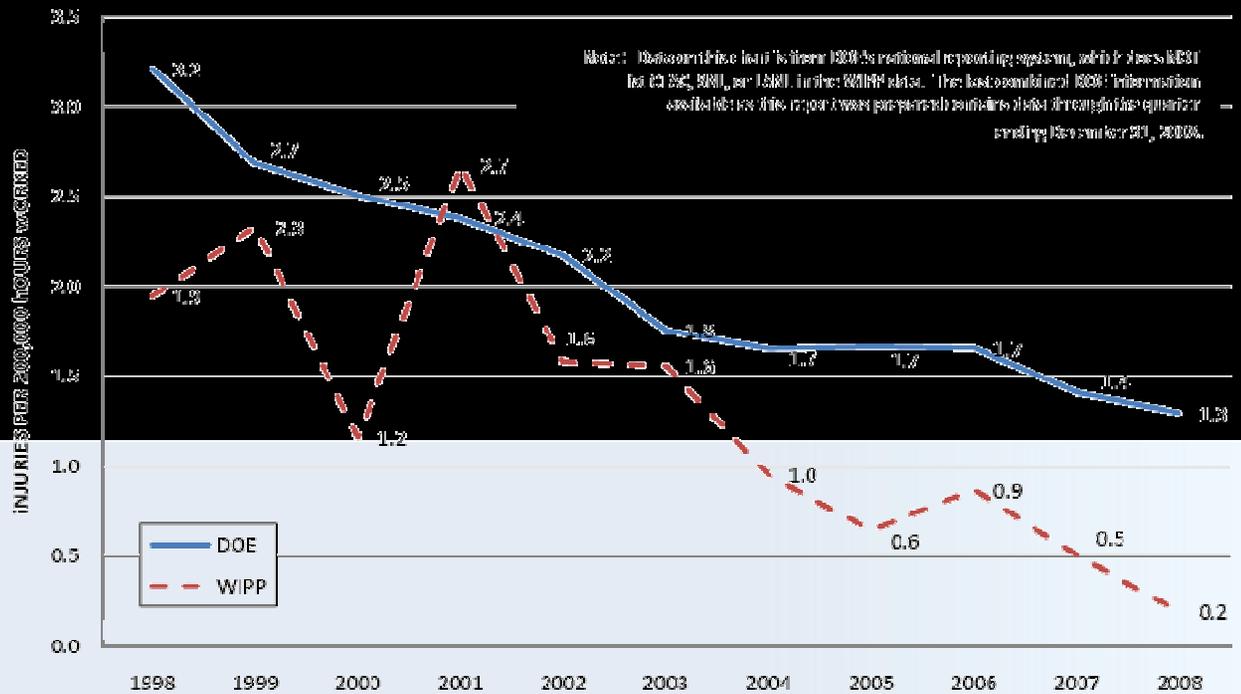
- James Reason

What workers expect   vs.   Continuous leadership reinforcement

Total Recordable Case Rate
Annual Rate for WIPP vs. All DOE

...culture" and can help make changes before safety performance declines:

- ➤ How many "self" reports
- ➤ How many near miss reports
- ➤ How many ORPS reports
- ➤ Lessons learned quality

- ➤ WIPP Forms (quality suggestions)
- ➤ Number of safety committees
- ➤ Level of participation
- ➤ How many improvements/good ideas adopted

coaching
- Criteria used to select, promote, or terminate employees
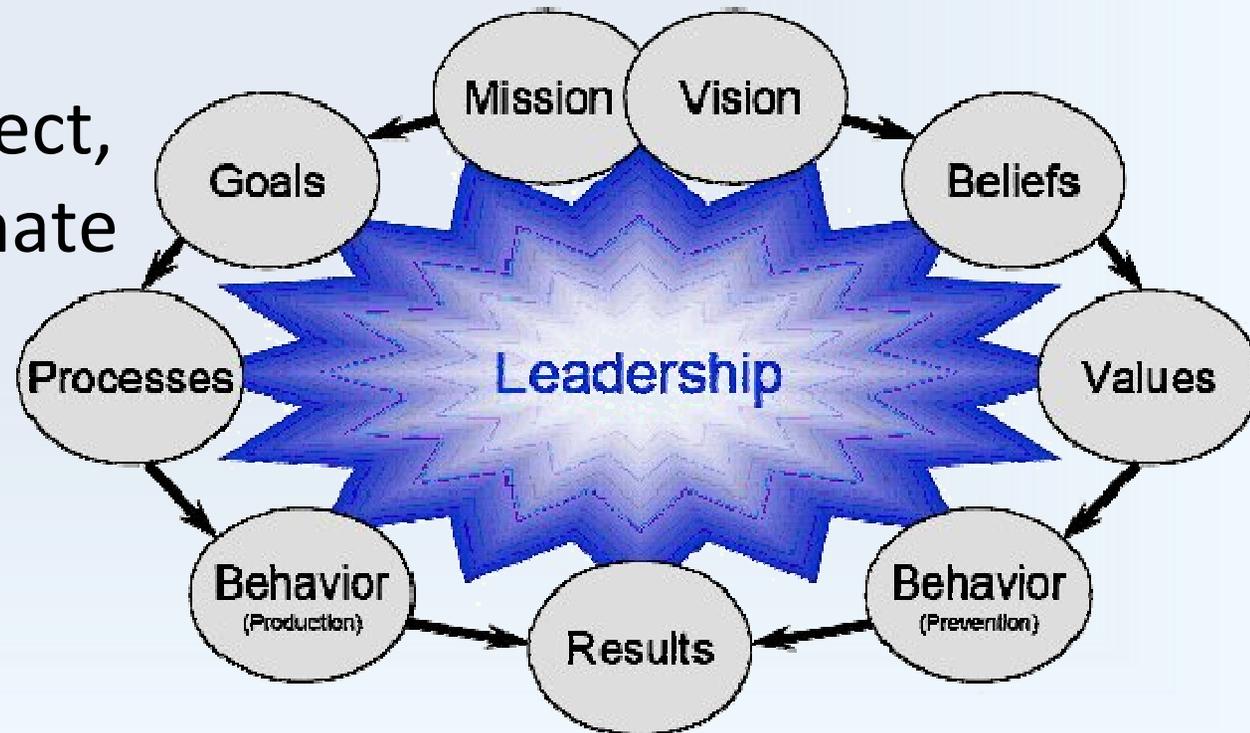
He that's secure is not safe
…Benjamin Franklin

To be safe is never to feel secure
…Ralph Waldo Emerson

Security is the chief enemy of mortals
…William Shakespeare

1. All injuries are preventable.
2. Management is responsible and accountable for preventing injuries.
3. Everyone must continuously improve and excel in safety performance.
4. Operating exposures that could result in injuries or illnesses can be controlled.
5. Management must audit the workplace to assess safety program success.
6. Deficiencies discovered by an audit or any other means must be corrected promptly.
7. Off-the-job safety is an important part of the overall safety effort.
8. Safety must be integrated as a core business and personal value.
9. Employees must be trained to work safely.
10. Safety is a condition of employment.

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➤ ...ng.

➤ Trust exists between management and workforce.

Walking the walk <u>with</u> the contractor management does two things:

➤ Makes sure contractor management is walking the walk.

➤ Workers see partnering with contractor's management as symbol that DOE supports the safety culture.