Safety Culture

A Field Guide by Honeycutt Science

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”
— Benjamin Franklin

“Safety Culture has a positive ROI.”
— Honeycutt Science

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What It Is

Safety culture is the shared values, attitudes, and practices that shape how work gets done safely. It goes beyond compliance to the everyday choices influenced by leadership, training, and communication.

How It's Done

I help organizations see where their safety culture is strong and where it needs support. Using surveys, interviews, and on-site reviews, I uncover risks and the cultural drivers behind them. The goal is not just compliance, but lasting improvement that protects workers and builds trust.

The Difference

My DCBA model makes safety culture clear and actionable. Backed by research yet simple to explain, it shows whether a workplace is at **Hidden Risks, Conversations, Ownership, or Embedded Safety Culture.** Leaders and teams quickly see where they stand — and how to move forward.

The Seven Drivers of Safety Culture

Reporting & Openness

- **A** – Open reporting and psychological safety are the norm.
- **B** – Workers and leaders actively share safety concerns.
- **C** – Reporting happens, but it is inconsistent or reactive.
- **D** – Speaking up leads to belittlement, subtle punishment, or termination.

Leadership Commitment

- **A** – Leaders model safety and resource it without hesitation.
- **B** – Supervisors encourage and correct; buy-in is visible but prompted.
- **C** – Safety is a talking point but not lived out.
- **D** – Safety ignored or dismissed; production and cost override.

Communication Clarity

- **A** – Safety expectations are clear and understood by all.
- **B** – Messages are generally clear; some reminders are needed.
- **C** – Hierarchy messaging is CYA, shifting responsibility or blame.
- **D** – Messaging is confusing or malicious, leading to mistrust.

Training & Learning

- **A** – Training is ongoing, practical, and part of daily work.
- **B** – Training follows OSHA requirements (e.g., HazCom, PPE use, lockout/tagout) with refreshers scheduled.
- **C** – Training is mostly during onboarding; little formal follow-up, seen as a “have to do.”
- **D** – Beyond onboarding, training depends on institutional knowledge; formal training is dismissed as a waste of time.

Employee Participation

- **A** – Safety has a real seat at the table; employees shape planning, decisions, and improvements.
- **B** – Employees are invited to give input; safety is part of discussions but not always decisive.
- **C** – A token representative leads an obligatory safety roundtable where little gets done.
- **D** – Employees are excluded; participation is discouraged or punished.

Accountability & Follow-Through

- **A** – Formal processes track issues & commitments until resolved.
- **B** – Most safety actions are completed; occasional delays or gaps remain.
- **C** – Promises are made but often forgotten; little consequence for inaction.
- **D** – Accountability is absent; problems are ignored or hidden.

Continuous Improvement

- **A** – Systems drive ongoing learning; lessons lead to safer practices.
- **B** – Improvements happen, but mostly after incidents or audits.
- **C** – "We've always done it this way" — change seen as costly or unnecessary.
- **D** – No power to suggest or act on improvements; the same problems repeat.

Closing

The Seven Drivers of Safety Culture are rooted in **NIOSH's framework**, strengthened by other leading models, and supported by published research. When measured through the **DCBA model**, they give organizations a clear path to safer, more productive workplaces.

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