

**MANAGING HEALTH
AND SAFETY**

FULL RESPONSIBILITY

THE SECRET CODE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE

**Strategy, Leadership
and Teamwork**

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Marc-André Ferron

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and Teamwork**

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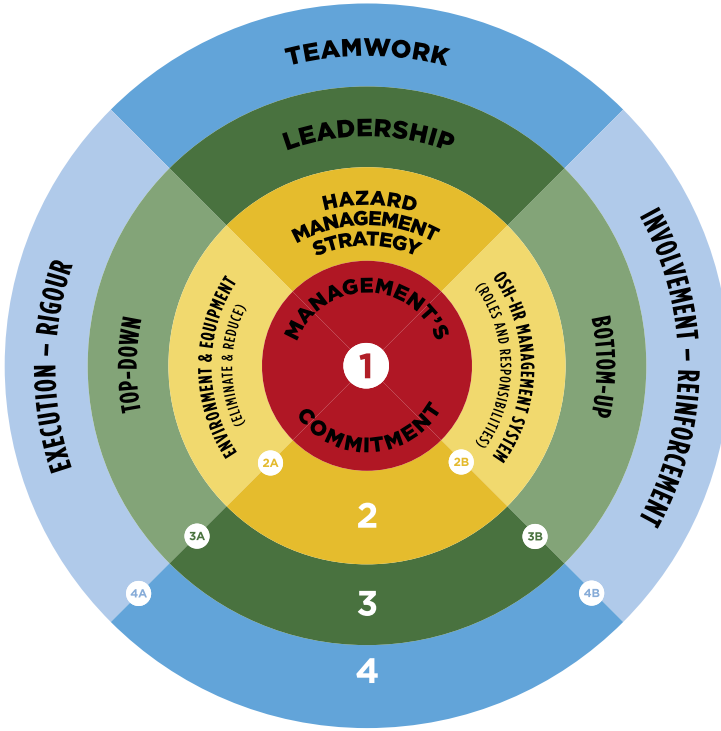
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Marc-André

THE SAFETY CULTURE TARGET

By Marc-André Ferron



1. OSH culture starts with management's commitment to managing hazards as efficiently as possible and providing the necessary resources to do so.

2A. Leaders ensure that they are providing an environment and equipment with as few hazards as possible, which contributes to eliminating and reducing hazards at the source.

2B. When eliminating and reducing hazards at the source is not possible, leaders must set up and deliver programs that define everyone's roles and responsibilities, and ensure their full implementation.

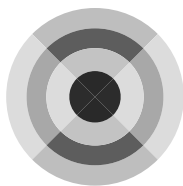
3A. Leaders share the hazard management strategy from the top down so that each person understands precisely his or her role in management.

3B. All team members contribute to the uniform deployment of the hazard management strategy and are supported by the management team.

4A. Execution and rigour must be as perfect as possible. Tolerance and complacency must be eliminated from the organization's culture because the organization is immediately and fully accountable for the OSH of its employees.

4B. For the changes to take effect and the resistance to change to subside, everyone must be involved and the team must be motivated to execute the hazard management strategy.

INTRODUCTION



Having a strong health and safety culture: that's the shared dream of every organization faced with work accident issues.

However, when the time comes to act on this dream, it is not unusual to see this dream quickly transform into a nightmare. The great tragedy is that, all too often, this nightmare can last months, years, decades, even in perpetuity. The good news: there is a secret code to wake up from this nightmare and adopt the highly-coveted OSH culture.

When the topic of good health and safety culture comes up in organizational discussions, the first reflex for most organizations is to turn to their employees and try to instill or develop "health and safety values."

We want employees to adopt safe work habits and behaviour, and first-level supervisors to naturally develop a prevention reflex in health and safety.

Any organization that takes this approach is in for a never-ending nightmare.

Companies caught up in this drama will try any solution to get out of this horrible situation.

They bring in a consultant who will advise the supervisors on how to intervene by playing on their emotions, making everyone cry, motivating them... They buy costly solutions from the consultant who is selling the behavioural miracle with his stage I, stage II and stage III preventive observation program, posters, gross pictures, etc. It's an open bar for miracle solutions to change the OSH culture.

Unfortunately, nothing will pull these organizations from the brink - at least not as long as they continue to use this approach, which costs a great deal in terms of time, effort, resources and energy. **Nothing can save these companies**

from their misery, simply because they have headed in the opposite direction from where they want to be.

You can't reach a destination to the North by heading South. Yet this is often what many organizations try to do in an effort to change health and safety culture.

The word culture comes from the Latin *cultura*, which means **“to care for.”**

In health and safety, if we want a healthy culture, we need to ask ourselves the following questions: **Are employees responsible and accountable for taking care of themselves? Or is it up to the employer to take care of his employees and the employer who is ultimately responsible and accountable for their health and safety?**

On that note, have you ever asked yourself the following question?

When are we responsible for our employees' workplace health and safety?

The answer to this question helps to answer several other questions.

As an employer, you are fully responsible and 100% accountable for the health and safety of your employees from the first day, the first minute, the first second your workers are hired! It is very important that you understand this.

Between you and me, this doesn't leave a lot of time to get employees to change their values, beliefs habits and behaviour to prevent an accident on the first day of work.

If you want a strong health and safety culture and your targets are to make the worker responsible for his own safety and changing his own behaviours and values, you are already living a nightmare.

Here are a few very simple examples that illustrate your **full responsibility and 100% accountability** as employers and managers (the employer's representatives).

- A student employee arrives in your parking lot on the first day of the job. The student employee slips on the ice and gets a concussion: **you are fully responsible and accountable for the accident.**
- You train new employees. On the first day of work, one of your new employees is hit by a forklift and dies: you are **fully responsible and accountable for the accident.**
- There is a labour shortage and you hire immigrant workers who do not speak the local language. You give instructions but the worker does not understand them well and gets killed in X situation: **you are fully responsible and accountable for the accident.**

The list of similar examples could go on forever.

In any scenario, the one thing to remember is that **you have full responsibility for your employees when they are working for you and you are 100% accountable at all times**, from the first second they are hired, no matter how complex or particular your company's situation, whether you like it or not.

Therefore, it is important to know what accountability is.

The New Oxford Dictionary defines accountable as:

“Required or expected to justify actions or decisions; responsible.”

While countless organizations, consultants and specialists in health and safety would tell you that 90% of workplace accidents are attributable to individual behaviours, the reality based on facts and not hearsay is otherwise.

Take any investigative report and analysis conducted by competent authorities on a workplace accident, look back as far as you like and “the employee’s unsafe behaviour” is never the sole cause.

And who do you think the notices of violation are issued to: the employee involved in the accident or the organization? The answer is obvious. In a staggering proportion of cases, if not all of them, **responsibility for the offences** committed was assigned to employers.

Recently, ISO standard 45001, the most widely recognized OSH management standard in the world, was established. It took the best health and safety management specialists on the planet nearly five years to come up with the final result of this standard.

Do you know what they wrote as the first line of this standard?

“An organization is responsible for the occupational health and safety of workers and others who can be affected by its activities.” This looks a lot like full responsibility!

If the reality of a strong health and safety culture relies on the worker taking responsibility for his own safety, how did the leaders of occupational health and safety reach this conclusion after so much reflection. Were they confused?

Certainly not.

Another very interesting question to ask is the following:

Why are behavioural approaches so popular?

The answer is quite simple.

Let's say you're not a specialist in auto mechanics. If you go to the garage and the mechanic says that you need to change the alternator belt, what do you do? You have the alternator belt changed because that's what the specialist recommended.

The behavioural approach to health and safety to sell a strong health and safety culture generated, and still generates, a lot of profit for many consulting firms.

A bit like the friend of a friend, the specialists sell the miracle approach to the organizations to get them out of their behavioural nightmare without understanding the senselessness or consequences of what they are recommending.

This is all because **they are selling what the organizations wants, and not what they need.** There is a big difference between the two! Unfortunately, they are driving them straight into a wall, with their consent.

They use an approach that really hits a nerve with people: **blame.** **"It's someone else's fault, not mine."** And that's the beginning of the end! The transfer of responsibility!

Blame is defined as follows in The New Oxford Dictionary: "The action of assigning responsibility for a fault."

Generally, humans like to blame others, complain and hold other people, circumstances or contexts, even objects, responsible for their misfortune. Do you know what I mean? Like when you stub your toe on a box and shout, "Stupid box!"

Or when we see a guy's car break down on the side of the road and he gives it a good kick. We act as though the box or car is partly to blame for our misfortune when they are inanimate objects.

Imagine how easy that gets when the situations are ambiguous and instead of blaming objects, we're blaming humans, who are also subordinates, in contexts that are more often than not misunderstood.

The very idea of wanting to change employee behaviour and make them responsible and accountable for their own safety rests on this very human trait. This is extremely lucrative for those who sell programs based on such an idea. They say what people want to hear instead of telling the truth, which is rather disturbing...

These kinds of attitudes and beliefs that take the blame away from the management teams can go quite far.

Recently, I received a call from people working for a large multinational company. They asked me if I offered leadership training. I replied that I did, but I also asked them who in their management team would be receiving the training: supervisors, directors, VP?

To my astonishment, they told me they wanted to train their employees to develop leadership "on their own safety!" OMG!

By definition, isn't a leader someone who leads **a team** to achieve an objective? Leading oneself is called self-discipline, not leadership. If, as a manager, we do not succeed in motivating our team and employees, whose fault is that? Is it the fault of the employee who has to lead himself?

"Stupid box!"

What's the point in having leaders if the employee can lead himself? It doesn't make any sense.

In many cases, if it's not the employee's fault, we find other contextual elements to explain why we are unable to perform and achieve this famous and much desired OSH culture.

The usual excuses include:

- There is a labour shortage leading to the hiring of less desirable employees;
- The turnover rate is causing instability;
- The mass retirements are resulting in the loss of decades of experience;
- The projects underway are changing the organization's priorities;
- The new generation is more difficult;
- The older generation has its old habits;
- The crazy directives by head office;
- The OSH coordinator is new and lacks experience or influence;
- The union is uncooperative;
- The factory is old and needs updating;
- The employees are at remote sites;
- The market is in decline;
- The market is growing too quickly;
- Budget cuts;
- And so on... One excuse after another.

Once again: "Stupid box!"

So, how do we extract ourselves from the nightmare of OSH culture?

There is only one way: take full responsibility for everything in your world as a manager and leader, that is, everything under you, above you and around you.

A good leader NEVER blames others or the circumstances for his team's failures. A good leader takes full responsibility for the failures and asks the following question:

“What could I have done that I did not do to make this work?”

A real leader never blames others and takes full responsibility for what he manages. Here is one of the keys to the secret code of OSH culture: **full responsibility!**

The culture of blame is a losing attitude that boosts the ego, but never gets us anywhere. “It’s not my fault, it’s because of...” I regret to inform you that if things aren’t going well in your world, you are responsible.

A strong health and safety culture relies on leaders, managers and teams who accept full responsibility for every element under their control. Blame is a victim mentality that breaks down the team’s trust. It puts management teams and employees in defensive mode instead of getting them to work together. It leads nowhere.

When we blame unsafe employee behaviours for health and safety problems, a whole level of management is shirking responsibility. We’re blaming the visible element of accidents and not resolving the fundamental cause.

I regularly receive calls from companies who want to train their managers on their roles and responsibilities in health and safety.

After a few seconds of discussion, I ask them why they believe that's the answer to their problem. They reply that there is a lack of ownership when it comes to health and safety issues.

Then I ask them the following question: are you working with the principles of the Bradley Curve (a concept that favours the independence and interdependence of workers with respect to their health and safety)? The answer is often yes.

Then I ask them: if your employees are independent with respect to their safety, how are managers responsible for the safety of their employees? The question is usually met with silence.

This book aims to demystify workplace health and safety culture but the principles it presents could be applied to any sphere of management. It addresses concepts such as the importance of having a good hazard management strategy rather than having a strategy that leads us away from the desired target.

Once the notion of strategy has been clarified, we will examine leadership, the responsibility of the leader being to ensure that this strategy is successfully carried out. Without a strategy or plan, the leader cannot lead his team anywhere.

Lastly, we will explore the concept of teamwork, which integrates the notions of execution, involvement, motivation and reinforcement.

In some respects, this book could shake up false beliefs, raise awareness or change your understanding of accountability. In any case, **you are fully responsible for applying the content.**

You have two choices:

- The first is to maintain the culture of blaming others.
- The second is to **take full responsibility for the safety of the people who give you the privilege of their time in exchange for pay so that you can achieve your organization's mission.**

Every manager should consider it a privilege to protect the employees who work for them and give them a safe work environment and the best conditions to preserve their physical integrity. It is our duty and **absolute responsibility** to protect these people who agree to join our teams to achieve our organization's missions.

I hope you will make the second choice because, at the very least, from a legal perspective, whether you like it or not, you have **full responsibility** for the health and safety of these people.

If you make the first choice, I don't blame you... it's your choice.

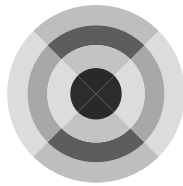
Enjoy your read!

CHAPTER 1

THE RIGHT STRATEGY

*"If you can't explain it to a six year old,
you don't understand it yourself."*

—Albert Einstein



The right strategy

Here is an extremely simple descriptive sequence that I regularly use with my clients to help them understand the basic notions of health and safety management.

1. Health and safety are hazard management.
2. To manage hazards, you need a strategy, otherwise you're improvising. Improvisation is the last thing we want in OSH. Improvising puts the life and physical integrity of our employees in harm's way (luck is a type of strategy but a very poor choice).
3. A strategy, by definition, directs resources toward a desired result. The desired result is zero injuries and the two resources you have to achieve this result are always the same: financial and human resources. The biggest problem with these two resources is that they are limited. To maximize the results, every dollar and every minute needs to go to the right place at the right time.
4. If health and safety are hazard management, someone needs to be in charge of this management in an organization. But who? Managers, because they are the ones who have the power to determine where these finances and human beings will be assigned.

That being said, before I make this presentation to the managers participating in my training sessions, I often ask them the following three questions:

1. What is health and safety?

The answers vary: it's everyone's business, it's getting out in one piece, it's giving training sessions, it's a value, or any response of that nature.

2. What is your organization's strategy for managing health and safety?

For this question, there are usually as many different answers as there are managers in the room.

3. If you had 100 hours and \$10,000 to invest in a priority, where would you invest it?

Oddly enough, once again, there are often as many different priorities within the same organization as there are participants.

If occupational health and safety are hazard management and everyone involved is a manager within the same organization, wouldn't it be logical for everyone to have the same strategy and the same priority?

The reason why nearly all organizations end up with the same jumble of responses is that **they usually don't have a strategy or the managers don't really understand it.**

We then ask managers to be leaders in health and safety. But **what exactly are they to lead if there is no game plan or the game plan is unknown?**

Let's go back to Albert Einstein's quote at the beginning of this chapter: "If you can't explain it to a six year old, you don't understand it yourself." How could a manager lead his teams (or show leadership) toward something that does not exist or that he does not understand?

In such a case, everything becomes impossible:

- It's impossible to share the game plan with subordinates;
- It's impossible to play one's role;
- It's impossible to know whether the plan is efficient;
- It's impossible to improve on it;
- It's impossible to measure it;
- It's impossible to ensure that it is rigorously executed;
- It's impossible to motivate teams and get them interested in its execution;

And so on.

To establish a strong OSH culture, an organization must absolutely have a good hazard management strategy that respects the very simple principles that will be discussed in the following sections.

This hazard management strategy paves the way for your organization's health and safety culture.

How do we create culture?

How do we create health and safety culture?
Another good question.

The answer to this question is one of the most surprising elements of the secret code to many organizations. It is what most often makes organizations realize that they are headed in the opposite direction of where they want to be.

When it comes to health and safety culture, it is almost automatic for people to respond with behaviour in mind. They define OSH culture in the following ways:

- It favours the adoption of safe habits;
- It's a value;
- It's about caring of each other;
- It develops the employee's and manager's reflex to think about safety;
- It encourages employees to have good behaviours;
- Other responses of that nature.

Unfortunately, none of these are good answers - far from it.

The following is one of the most important sentences in this book; it is the foundation of the secret code of OSH culture:

“HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE BEGINS WITH THE LEVEL OF RISK THAT A MANAGEMENT TEAM AGREES TO EXPOSE ITS EMPLOYEES TO.”

You will find that's the core target of OSH culture (Figure 1), in 1) Management's Commitment and 2A) Environment and Equipment.

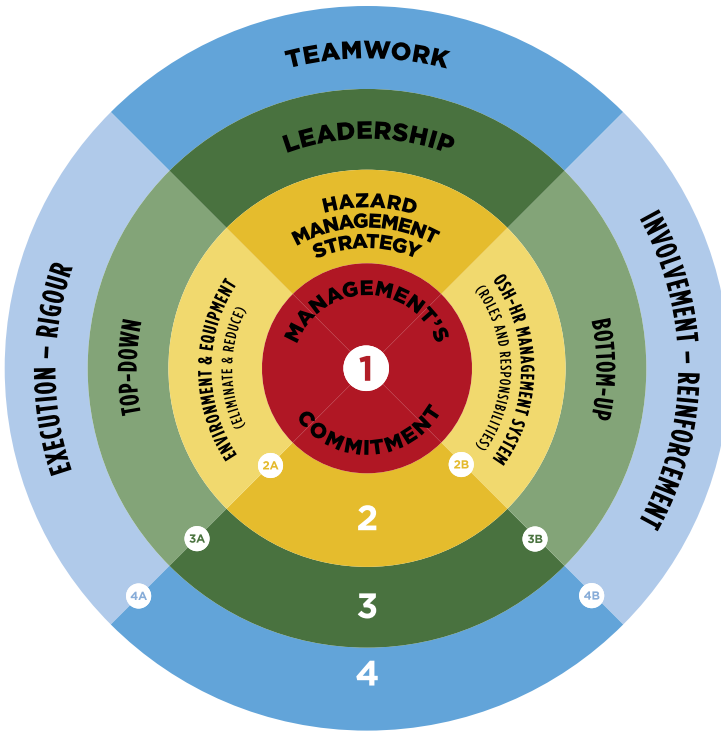


Figure 1. Safety culture target all start with management's commitment to providing a work environment, equipment and supplies that are as risk free as possible. This contributes to eliminating and reducing hazards at the source.

Work environment and equipment

Strange, isn't it? Not the employee, not the behaviour, not the change in values, etc. Nothing of the sort.

When I said before that behavioural approaches lead organizations in the opposite direction of where they want to go, that's exactly what I was alluding to.

Rather than looking at the lower levels, by blaming the employee and the employee's behaviour, we look at ourselves, as leaders, and **we examine the context (the environment and equipment the employee is exposed to) in which the inadequate behaviour occurs, rather than the behaviour itself.**

It's a bit of a paradox but the logic is surprisingly simple.

Let's take an employee who has very strong "safety values" and a lot of experience and make him work in darkness, in the presence of holes. He'll end up falling in a hole.

Conversely, let's take your weakest employee (poor potential, new, little experience, very little interest in safety), and put him to work in a well-lit area with no holes. He'll never fall into a hole.

Most organizations try to address culture by focusing on employee behaviour. **Trying to change the behaviour of individuals by focusing on their behaviour is the start down a long and painful road** over which a manager has very little influence. However, when it's the last resort, it must be done without leaving any room for improvisation. Behaviours are managed.

However, working on the context in which behaviours occur (environment, equipment, supplies and work organization) presents far more concrete opportunities to obtain lasting results. These are tangible actions a manager can take to exert influence with the greatest impact to resolve the fundamental causes of events and obtain lasting effects.

As a manager, you can focus on the symptom, namely the employee's unsafe behaviour, and tell the employee to pay attention to the hole. But you can also choose another option: block the hole and respect the law.

Even though it is obvious, countless businesses have tried to change the person, in an improvised manner (often through preventive observation programs), rather than blocking the hole. Even worse, they'll hire health and safety specialists who encourage them to continue in this direction. It's sad, but true.

As managers, we have the legal and moral responsibility – whether we like it or not – to protect our employees by providing them with an environment with the fewest hazards possible from day one.

It's important to remember that when you eliminate and reduce hazards at the source, you are **taking full responsibility for your employees at all times, from the moment they are hired.**

The law is extremely clear in this regard. Below is one of the first sections of Quebec's Act respecting occupational health and safety (LSST), which addresses the employer's legal obligations and responsibilities to protect the worker by providing an adequate environment and equipment. Pay close attention to the meaning of each word:

51. Every employer must take the necessary measures to protect the health and ensure the safety and physical well-being of his worker. He must, in particular,

(1) see that the establishments under his authority are so equipped and laid out as to ensure the protection of the worker.

Full Responsibility! Carefully reread this section of the Act, paying close attention to the meaning of the words:

- “Every employer must...” (**full responsibility!**)
- “ensure the safety and physical well-being of his worker” (**full responsibility!**)

- “see that the establishments [...] are so equipped and laid out” **(full responsibility!)**
- “to ensure the protection of the worker” **(full responsibility!)**

As mentioned before, **health and safety culture begins with the level of risk that a management team agrees to expose its employees to.** This is what you find in the Ferron Curve in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Ferron Curve illustrating the hierarchy of effectiveness in hazard management. Every organization should always prioritize efforts to eliminate and reduce hazards in the work environment at the source (Elements 1 and 2 in the figure). These are the most effective ways to intervene in hazard management.

Below are two examples of situations that illustrate the basic principles discussed above. I recently participated in an event organized by OSH authorities, at which I was a guest speaker.

When we arrived at the conference, we were given a paper with examples of organizations who had done a good job of applying the principles of the Act in their hazard management strategy. One of those organizations was an institution that hired blind people at a centre that sorted, shredded and pressed paper.

The institution's management initially held a meeting with employees and supervisors to identify the hazards associated with the work stations. After these risk analyses, it installed guardrails around equipment that presented risks during operation, foam protectors anywhere that blind people might bump into, control panels in braille, etc. It designed a “**full responsibility**” work environment.

Remember:

“Health and safety culture begins with the level of risk that a management team agrees to expose its employees to.”

In the case above, the management team started its approach to implementing a strong OSH culture in the right place, by eliminating and reducing hazards at the source for 100% of the staff, 100% of the time. It **assumed full responsibility** for reducing the risk level present in the work environment from the start.

Imagine what the result would have been if management had started its hazard management strategy by making blind people aware that they should adopt safe behaviour in the presence of inside corners and by informing them about the risk of injuries on objects present in the work environment.

It would be a catastrophe!

The institution offered a work environment as hazard free as possible, that is, an environment designed for human beings, and the results speak for themselves.

This is a wonderful example of how to start building a strong OSH culture.

Along the same lines, in recent months, a person with an intellectual disability died in another sorting centre for recyclable materials. Hiring a labourer with an intellectual disability in this type of industry is not uncommon, and it's perfect because these people are able to do this type of work well.

A person with an intellectual disability is a full member of society and has the right to work according to his or her abilities. However, you can imagine that there may be important limitations.

It might take several months or even years just to show one of these people how to take the bus to get to work with the help of a specialized social worker.

Therefore, it is impossible to think, for example, of showing this group of employees how to follow lockout processes with complex steps.

In this particular case, the employee died when he went to unblock a cardboard baler and it started running. If the machinery had been designed properly and had the appropriate safety devices (Element 1 – Macro Design/Work Environment on the Ferron Curve), this person would still be alive.

Ask yourself if the principles of OSH culture on the Bradley Curve apply in this type of situation. Can we ask employees with an intellectual disability to be independent with regard to their safety and, ultimately, be interdependent by watching over each other? It makes no sense!

Does that mean it's impossible to have a strong OSH culture in a sorting centre that hires people with an intellectual disability? Not at all. But we have to start in the right place.

You might be thinking that your organization doesn't hire blind people or people with an intellectual disability. However, the principles behind the above examples speak for themselves and apply everywhere, to all human beings, including:

- A new and inexperienced employee;
- A difficult Generation Y or millennial employee;
- A baby boomer with old habits;
- An intellectually disadvantaged employee;
- An employee with attention deficit disorder (ADD);
- A temperamental or distracted employee;
- A hurried employee;
- A lackadaisical employee who looks sleepy;
- An employee back from a night of drinking;
- An employee who prefers high-risk activities (ex., climbing, parachuting, motorbike racing, etc.);
- Or any other human trait.

As long as your strategy aims to eliminate hazards everywhere at the source, you are assuming **full responsibility** for the health and safety of your employees. **You are therefore protecting 100% of the people, 100% of the time**, from the first second they work for you until they leave your organization – no matter who they are.

In addition to ensuring 100% safety of your employees, you will also be exercising due diligence under sections 2 and 3 of the Act. Once again, pay close attention to the meaning of each word:

2. The object of this Act is the elimination, at the source, of dangers to the health, safety and physical well-being of workers.

3. The fact that collective or individual means of protection or safety equipment are put at the disposal of workers where necessary to meet their special needs, must in no way reduce the effort expended to eliminate, at the source, dangers to the health, safety and physical well-being of workers.

As you see, the legal requirements are very clear with regard to the employer's **full responsibility for ensuring the physical integrity of the worker by eliminating hazards at the source** and providing a safe work environment.

The day that every management team within our organizations ensures a work environment and equipment that offer a safety factor equivalent to the safety factor required to ensure the safety of people with an intellectual disability, blind people or even five-year-old children, the number of accidents will dramatically decrease. I promise you that.

OSH management system or prevention program

Let's continue our analysis of what a good hazard management strategy is because that is what leaders will use to guide and mobilize their teams.

Thus far, we have learned how to start a strong health and safety culture: we need to provide a work environment and equipment with as little exposure to hazards as possible. **That's the easiest part of hazard management.**

Why is it the easiest part?

Simply because, up to this point, there are very few human components in the equation. These are physical and material conditions, which are usually not very resistant to change, at least compared to human beings.

However, it is perfectly legitimate to wonder how we will strategically manage hazards that cannot be eliminated or reduced at the source. For example, an employee who does welding must work with hazardous energy, enter enclosed spaces, work at heights, etc.

In response, I often ask the following question at conferences:

Who has a prevention program at their company?

Most participants raise their hand.

The second question is much more painful:

Who knows what is written in their prevention program?

Usually only one or two people raise their hands, often the health and safety coordinators who wrote the program.

Remember that health and safety are hazard management and that you need a strategy to manage hazards, otherwise you're improvising. A prevention program means "programming prevention," which means defining your organization's strategy to ensure safety management.

**YOUR STRATEGY IS YOUR PREVENTION PROGRAM
OR YOUR SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM!**

It is this other element of the secret code of OSH culture that you will find in Element 2B of the safety culture target (Figure 3).

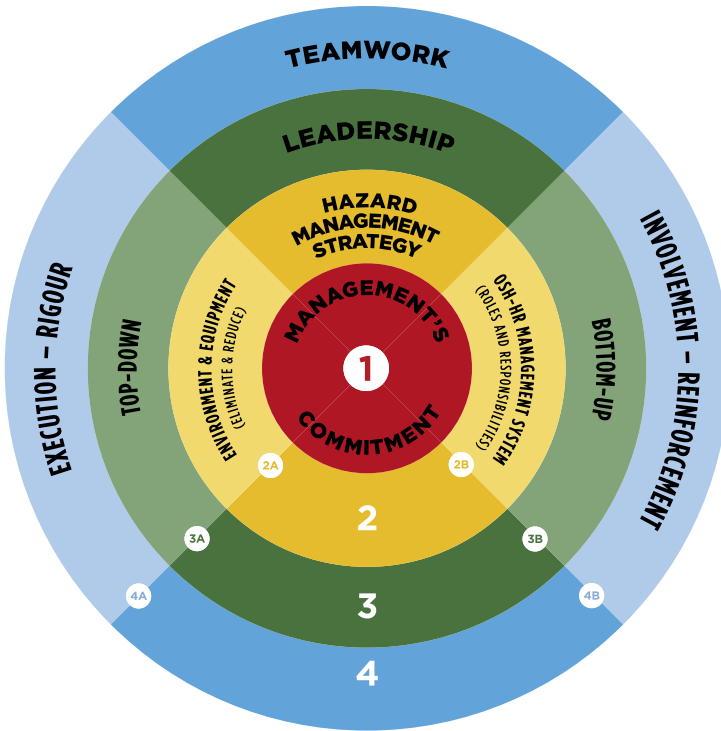


Figure 3. The safety culture target: management starts with management's commitment to providing a work environment and equipment that are as risk free as possible. When hazard management is necessary, it must be defined in the organization's management systems, which are comprised of different programs and procedures that define the roles and responsibilities. Leadership (3A and 3B) is then based on these roles and responsibilities.

Obviously, managers are responsible for management within an organization. But how can managers apply and enforce application of the organization's strategy if they don't first know it themselves?

On its website, CNESST (the health and safety authority in Quebec) defines a prevention program as follows. Once again, pay close attention to the meaning of each word:

“A prevention program is the main prevention tool provided for in the Act respecting occupational health and safety (LSST). It aims **to eliminate or control hazards** at work and includes concrete measures to meet that target. **It is developed by the employer, with the participation of workers. It allows employers to ensure the health and safety of their employees.**”

Full responsibility, once again!

If I were to ask you how many lockout programs there should be in your organization, you would probably answer just one. If I were to ask you how many different ways this program should be applied, the answer would surely also be just one way.

The same goes for all of your programs: enclosed spaces, working at heights, wearing protective equipment, safety regulations, contractor management, site inspection, and so on. Just one program. Just one way to apply it. Just one way to manage hazards permitted.

The LSST states this in section 59.1 regarding the employer's responsibilities for prevention programs:

59. The object of a prevention program is to eliminate, at the source, risks to the health, safety and physical well-being of workers.

1) Such a program [...] must contain, in particular, (1) programs for the adaptation of the establishment to the standards prescribed by the regulations respecting the layout of workplaces, work organization, equipment, material, contaminants, dangerous substances, processes and collective safety measures and equipment.

The LSST also indicates the following elements in section 58:

58. Every employer [...] must see that a prevention program for each establishment is implemented [...].

This leads us back to all the elements present in the Ferron Curve above, or the Ferron Pyramid illustrated in Figure 4 (for further explanation, read Managing Health and Safety / Back to Basics), but also the notion of the employer's **full responsibility** for defining the hazard management strategy and its application to **ensure the physical integrity of workers under the employer's responsibility**.

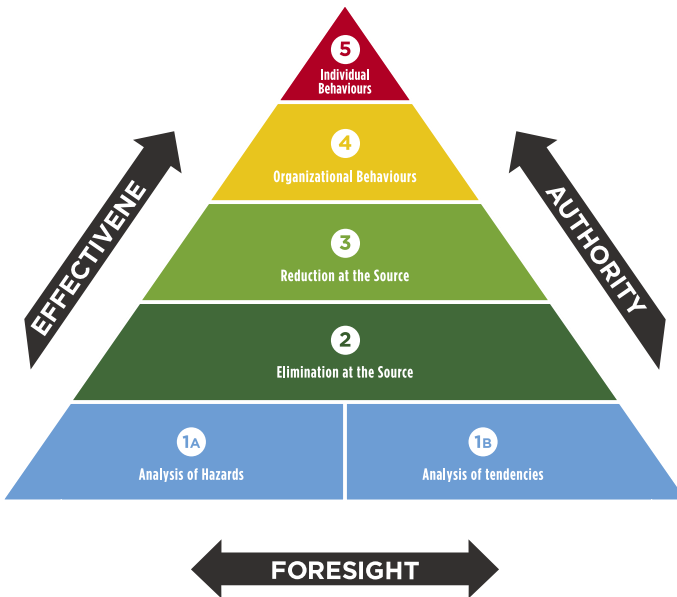


Figure 4. Ferron Pyramid. After analyzing the hazards present in the organization and the trends in work accidents, the organization must manage those hazards by first ensuring elimination and reduction at the source. If that is not possible, it must define in its programs (organizational behaviours), the behaviours it expects from individuals (individual behaviours) and ensure that those behaviours are fully applied with its duty of authority.

This is yet another rather painful process when the time comes to analyze organizations' hazard management strategies.

The various hazard management programs primarily serve one purpose, which is to define the roles and responsibilities of the different players within the organization when hazards could not be eliminated or reduced at the source.

We then see various situations within our organizations. For example, the programs:

- are not written down (absence of roles and responsibilities). It is difficult to apply what does not exist;
- are written, but do not represent the reality of the organization's management and instead deserve an A+ as a Master's thesis (roles and responsibilities inapplicable or unrealistic);
- are written, but outdated and not systematically revised (roles and responsibilities obsolete);
- are written and up to date but not taught in orientation and job training programs (roles and responsibilities unknown);
- are not systematically controlled by audit programs (it is taken for granted that the roles and responsibilities are effective);
- they are not applied, as a result of the management team's lack of rigour or managerial courage (roles and responsibilities not applied).

If any of these scenarios applies to your organization, one thing is for sure, you have not taken full responsibility for ensuring the safety and physical integrity of the workers under your responsibility and you are hoping, to some extent, that the employees will take responsibility for themselves.

In any case, how can a manager exercise adequate leadership if he does not fully understand the roles and responsibilities that his team must perform. Moreover, how could program execution be better than what is defined in the program?

One day, I published an article in a magazine on the fact that health and safety depend on management and not individual behaviour.

One individual sent me an angry letter, in which he stated, among other things, that he knew many organizations with big OSH management systems, several of which were even certified under the OHSAS 18001 international standard and that it did not get them results, that health and safety relied on individual values, employee safety initiatives, etc.

Obviously, a management system or prevention program is not a miracle in itself. It's not just procedures and programs that define everyone's responsibilities **on paper**. Leaders are essential in leading team members to carry out their roles and responsibilities (which is impossible when there are no defined roles and responsibilities). They're like the transmission belt.

A management system is exactly like a toolbox. If you don't use it, it doesn't build anything. If you don't put the right tools in it for the job you want to do, you probably won't get the best results either.

I am always surprised when I see companies apply these principles perfectly to certain aspects of management (such as in quality management, operations, the environment or finances) and choose a completely different approach to health and safety, when they are exactly the same principles.

Take aviation. Airline companies make flying machines that transport hundreds of passengers. Do you think they would consider managing the safety of passengers by trying to develop “air safety values” in their employees and that they worked to develop airplane construction “safe behaviours?” Or did they implement quality management systems that leave no room for error by ensuring that passenger safety is nearly 100%?

However, many of these same companies have been hammering home the principles of the Bradley Curve, which promote the independence and interdependence of workers in health and safety, to managers and employees for years.

But the principles of hazard management associated with health and safety are exactly the same as those regarding air safety. All you have to do is remove any form of improvisation.

Undoubtedly the last thing they want in aviation is for each person to be “independent” in how they choose to build an airplane!

The same is true for companies in the food sector. Hazard management systems for bacterial contamination and hygiene are usually very structured and rigorous.

To manage the risk of contamination, we apply as many principles of elimination and reduction at the source as possible, and then we rigorously apply programs and procedures.

For example:

- the equipment is made from stainless steel;
- the equipment is designed so that food doesn't get stuck in hard-to-clean openings and cracks;

- cleaning solutions are carefully chosen and calibrated;
- cleaning procedures are rigorously applied;
- the temperature and humidity are adjusted very precisely, measured and monitored;
- entries and exits are all controlled;
- internal and external auditors measure the effectiveness of programs;
- very strict rules (on hand washing, wearing hairnets, beard nets and coats, removing jewellery, etc.) are applied, under threat of disciplinary sanctions.

In doing so, most companies in the food industry are able to secure their future and ensure that virtually all their products will not poison their clients. Once again, they leave nothing to chance and manage the risks simply by eliminating improvisation.

When managing such practices, companies do not try to develop “employee hygiene values,” but they do implement extremely rigorous hygiene management systems that start with managing contamination risks in the working environment design (Macro Design).

However, in health and safety, it is once again common to see these types of organizations apply behavioural programs to change the values, habits, beliefs and behaviours of employees when health and safety programs do not exist and are not controlled, taught or executed.

Programs and procedures (ex., lockout, hot work, enclosed spaces, etc.) aim to streamline or standardize the action across the organization. We define roles and responsibilities, then we teach them, oversee them, fully

apply them and improve them. **No preventive observation program can ever replace these health and safety programs and their full implementation.**

The more you have clearly defined the roles and responsibilities in your programs wherever it is necessary to manage the risks, **the more you can decentralize management.** Your leaders will be able to streamline their management across your organization, while managing the risks separately in each of their branches or units of operation or in each of their departments. Without these procedures, you would be managing chaos and confusion.

Many managers believe that defining how we do things in procedures and programs weighs down the organization and reduces flexibility and speed. This presumption is also false.

On the contrary, each time you document your procedures and your hazard management programs, you gain flexibility and speed. In so doing, you lower confusion, ensure the continuity of your practices from the outset (retirement, dismissal, illness, promotions, etc.) and do not have to start over each time a new situation presents itself.

Procedures are not documents carved in stone. They are simply the standards that define the roles and responsibilities of each person. They must evolve along with your organization's reality. It's what we call continuous improvement.

If your procedures are too cumbersome, complex, restrictive or ill adapted to the reality of the situation, simply adjust them. Have your employees participate in the designs, audits, revisions and so on, and you will have countless opportunities to improve your system and their constituent programs. However, always keep in mind

that your procedures and programs must always respect your legal obligations.

The role of a leader is to ensure that the roles and responsibilities exist and that they are taught, measured, revised and applied. Regarding the rigour with which you execute your game plan, **always remember that each time you tolerate a deviation from what is defined in the organization's programs, you are unintentionally defining a new standard that has not been approved by the organization.**

For example, if you have a lockout program that requires the completion of start tests before using equipment and you accept that the employees do not complete these tests all the time, you are redefining your organization's lockout standards with your tolerance.

If all team members were to act this way for each of the programs, you would quickly find yourself with hundreds of different ways of managing the risks, rather than with one single strategy applied by all managers and employees in a comprehensive, consistent and compliant manner to your programs.

Regarding the rigour with which you execute your programs and procedures, always remember when you, as a manager, become responsible for the safety of your employees: from the very first second!

Once again, the legislation couldn't be clearer in this regard.

The Criminal Code of Canada stipulates the following regarding the duty of persons directing work in section 217.1:

217.1 Every one who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task.

You have **full responsibility** for the safety of others and you are accountable from the moment a person sets foot on your property. Therefore, you must take reasonable steps to protect that person (eliminate, reduce, manage).

When you are asked to take reasonable steps, that means reasonable steps to manage the risks. In other words, could you have eliminated or reduced the risk at the source or, if elimination or reduction were **not possible**, did you define roles and responsibilities in programs, teach them and ensure that **they were fully applied from the moment the employee was hired?**

In terms of due diligence, we often speak of the three duties of managers, which are to be farsighted, efficient and authoritarian.

Your duty of authority is the power conferred to you combined with your full responsibility for the employees under your supervision. If you did not have the power to discipline recalcitrant employees, you could never be held accountable for the safety of others.

Full responsibility for the employee

At this point, you are probably telling yourself that there is not enough discussion regarding the employee's responsibility and the employee must be responsible for something.

You're right.

There is little question of the employee's responsibilities because, in most cases, employees rely on the environment and equipment at their disposition, the roles and responsibilities assigned to them, the training and supervision provided, etc.

We cannot hold responsible someone who does not have the power that comes with these responsibilities. For example, an employee does not have the power to install safety systems worth tens of thousands of dollars. He does not have the budget for that.

However, what power do we give the employee when an employer exposes him to risks that could compromise his health or safety? The right of refusal, which is the legal right to refuse to perform work, as stipulated in section 12 of the LSST. The employee's duty of authority is to himself.

Right of refusal

12. A worker has a right to refuse to perform particular work if he has reasonable grounds to believe that the performance of that work would expose him to danger to his health, safety or physical well-being [...].

However, the employee also has responsibilities that he must fully apply. He must **fully** perform the roles and responsibilities assigned to him in the prevention program, or he must face the possible consequences of non-compliance. This is one of the employee's main **responsibilities**.

This is why, in section 49 of the LSST on the employee's obligations, he is asked to become familiar with the prevention program applicable to him and take the necessary steps to ensure his health and safety (**the necessary measures being those defined in the prevention program or his right to refuse to perform work**) and ensure that he does not endanger others by applying these measures.

49. Worker's obligations

A worker must:

1. become familiar with the prevention program applicable to him;
2. take the necessary measures to ensure his health, safety or physical well-being;
3. see that he does not endanger the health, safety or physical well-being of other persons at or near his workplace; [...]
5. participate in the identification and elimination of risks of work accidents or occupational diseases at his workplace.

Therefore, the worker is also responsible for participating in the identification of risks, but we will also see many other opportunities to have the employee participate in chapter 3, on teamwork in executing the hazard management strategy.

Summary

- A sound health and safety culture starts with the level of risk a management team agrees to expose its employees to, and not with the adoption of safe behaviours.
- The best ways to fully manage risks to your employees starts with eliminating and reducing them at the source (Elements 1 – Macro Design/

Work Environment and 2 – Micro Design/Materials and Equipment of the Ferron Curve).

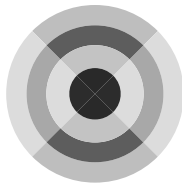
- Before even thinking about exercising your leadership, you must define your hazard management strategy. This is your prevention program or management system.
- Establishing roles and responsibilities in different programs defines the organization's standards. These standards allow you to manage hazards in a decentralized but consistent manner across the organization, and must lead to maximum efficiency.
- The roles and responsibilities must be 100% applied by 100% of the employees, 100% of the time. Any tolerance of another way of applying the roles and responsibilities defines unauthorized standards.
- Blaming others for what they do wrong is a losing attitude that absolves you of responsibility for the safety of others, when you have **full responsibility for the safety of others**. Instead, think about what you could have done differently to obtain different results.
- If you accept full responsibility as manager and leader, your subordinates will do the same.

CHAPTER 2

LEADERSHIP

*“Good leaders don’t make excuses.
Instead, they figure out a way to get things done.”*

— Jocko Willink, Navy SEALs Officer during
the war in Iraq, author and speaker on leadership



Top-down leadership

In recent years, I have had the opportunity to participate in a number of excellent training sessions on leadership. One of the most interesting sessions was with the Navy SEALs (US Navy special forces unit).

Its main speaker was a man named Jocko Willink, an officer who led the most perilous Navy SEALs interventions during the war in Iraq. The Navy SEALs are one of the divisions of the US military best known for their leadership practices and team unity in the most dangerous situations.

One of the principles that came up most often in his presentations was how important it was for an officer to never blame his team. Facing failure, an officer must always blame himself first and ask himself what he could have done differently to get a different outcome.

So, why should we never blame others for our team's failures? It's simply a matter of trust. When a leader accepts the blame for his failures with his subordinates, he increases the trust that other team members have in him.

Conversely, when a leader blames his team members for his failings, he breaches the trust that the others have in him.

Your health and safety policy

One concept that I like to explain regarding leadership and the execution of hazard management strategies is the importance of the health and safety policy.

For many organizations, the policy is merely a poster on the company's walls – but it is so much more than that! This document is the summary of your comprehensive hazard management strategy, approved by the highest competent level. It is the master health and safety document.

What does such a document normally contain?

In simple terms, it is a commitment from the highest level of the organization to provide a safe working environment and meet the organization's applicable legal requirements and a few other related elements that vary according to the company. Have a look at your policy and I'll bet that's what you'll find.

If each organization fully applied the principles found in their OSH, you can bet there wouldn't be any more accidents. Why? Because if all we did was respect the minimum health and safety requirements, namely by following the laws and regulations at all times, the risk of accidents would be next to zero.

OSH laws and regulations are based on elimination and reduction at the source, and there is no better way to reduce the risk (100% hazard management). If elimination and reduction are not possible, programs, procedures and regulations must be defined and applied to offer a safety level of 100%.

So, what's happening in our organizations? **An OSH policy is in fact a commitment from the organization's highest level to respect the laws and regulations and manage hazards;** however, in many cases, even if the written guidelines are very clear, the reality on the ground is completely different.

It often happens, as we go down an organization's various levels, that the principles we initially defined and had approved by the highest level dissolve. Once on the ground, the employee's daily reality no longer resembles the commitment initially written and approved by the head of the organization. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

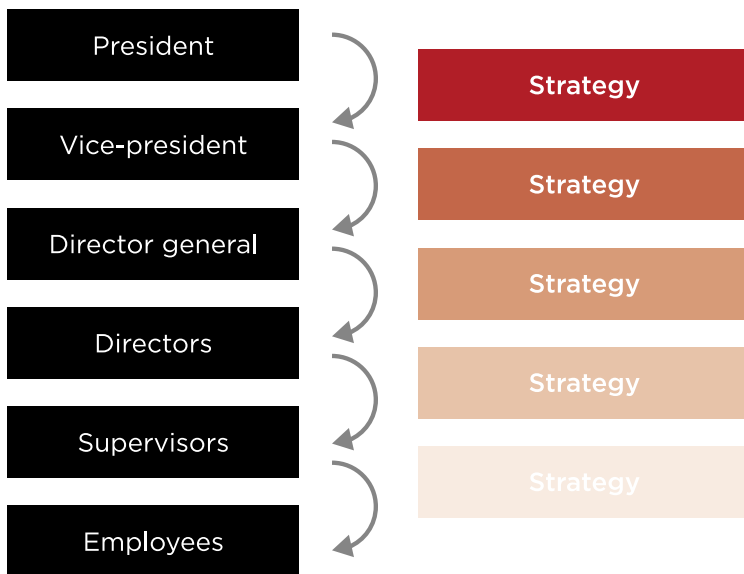


Figure 5 – Top-down leadership. The OSH policy is a commitment to managing hazards according to the laws and regulations that should normally apply uniformly across all levels of the organization. Too often, this strategy dissolves down the hierarchical levels.

The phenomenon is quite common and easy to explain. The organization makes a commitment, which gradually dissolves as it is applied in the company's various hierarchical levels. The further down the hierarchy, the more vague and dissipated the commitment.

If you want to perform a test, ask members from each hierarchical level of your organization to summarize your company's OSH policy. You will probably be surprised by your managers' level of understanding of the commitment made by the highest level of your organization.

It is not unusual to see a perfect OSH policy on the walls and encounter an employee on the ground in a state of disarray who tells you: "It doesn't make sense! This place is

hell!” He’s alluding to the dangerous machine he’s been given to work on or the incoherence of the procedures he is asked to follow. Therefore, there is a significant discrepancy between what is written and the reality on the ground.

Why? Simply because the leaders have not succeeded in exerting their influence and applying the organization’s strategy. They have not accepted and assumed their **full responsibility** for protecting the employees and respecting the principles of the legislation.

The following step is therefore quite logical. People judge the leaders.

When they judge them, they don’t focus on what the managers say and write on their policies, but rather on what they see on the ground. Moreover, we must never forget that the reality of health and safety is, and always will be, the reality on the ground.

Therefore, from the moment there is a discrepancy between the requirements and actions of the leaders, there is a loss of credibility. When there is a loss of credibility, there is a loss of leadership. Why? If I asked you if you would follow a leader who is not credible, you would likely refuse. The same is true for your employees.

Your programs, procedures and regulations

If we were to create a hierarchy of the types of health and safety documents available in an organization, we would come up with something resembling Figure 6.

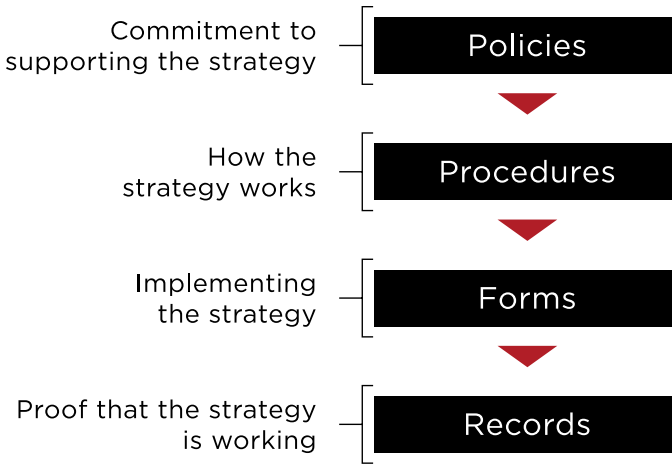


Figure 6 – Hierarchy of the types of health and safety documents available.

The OSH policy is the commitment from the highest level of the organization to supporting a hazard management strategy. This commitment is manifested by explaining how this strategy works in the organization's various hazard management programs and procedures, which must be fully applied. These programs and procedures are then converted into forms that are used daily by the supervisors and employees on the ground. The forms, once completed, are called records and prove that we have fully applied the organization's hazard management strategy.

As mentioned in the first chapter of this book and as illustrated in Figure 6, **the procedures, programs and rules that make up your prevention program or hazard management system serve to define your hazard management strategy. In other words, they define who does what, when, where and how, and allow you to decentralize the action while maintaining consistency when it is not possible to eliminate and reduce hazards at the source.**

The following is a good example of leadership that explains this principle. This happened to one of my best-performing clients in the last few years.

A manager had just been named vice-president of operations in a multinational company that uses high-risk sites. The division under the manager's responsibility had over thirty sites in different Canadian provinces and US states.

The hazards present included equipment exposing employees to 35,000 to 120,000 Volts, turbines that needed to be locked in over twenty remote sites, risks of falls from a height of 300 feet, H_2S concentrations 20 times higher than the dose that presents an immediate danger to life and health, and so on.

As soon as he started the position, he visited most of the new sites under his responsibility. Even though he is not a health and safety specialist, he did not like what he saw.

So he asked me to diagnose the OSH management on some of the sites in question. His intuition was good. There were a few programs here and there but they did not address the reality at the site; many programs were lacking, almost none of it was taught, no programs were audited, and all were applied as each person understood or saw fit, with no accountability.

In short, it was simply chaos – and that's an understatement for an organization that presents risks that could cause death on a daily basis. While the company had a (theoretically perfect) OSH policy approved by a higher level than this manager, the reality on the site could not be any more different than what was written in the policy.

The biggest problem was that, historically, the game plan largely stopped being applied at the levels below the manager's level.

However, this manager did not start blaming the large area he had to cover, the number of different types of facilities, the differences in legislation or culture, the incompetence of managers on duty, that of his predecessor, the small budget or anything else.

In the days following my diagnosis, he took steps to develop clear company requirements (programs) for the divisions under his responsibility. Programs to manage hazardous energy, high-voltage work, enclosed-space entry, risk analysis, workplace inspection, accident investigation and analyses, emergency measures, orientation, training, contractor management and so on were gradually introduced.

He then made sure that each standard was applied in order of priority by the directors of areas under his supervision. They were required to at least respect the company's requirements and adapt them to the local legal requirements and the reality of their activity.

Then each of the area directors had to ensure that the local programs they had defined in accordance with the company's requirements were applied by all supervisors and employees consistently at all sites.

Lastly, the different types of audit programs were established to ensure the effectiveness of the written requirements on the ground. Finally, accountability for failures related to the application of various roles and responsibilities was introduced.

This division's performance in health and safety went from average to nearly perfect. Moreover, it has consistently maintained this level of performance for a few years now.

But, you ask, did this vice-president have a large budget at his disposal to successfully change the culture? In fact, initially, he didn't have a penny more than his predecessor.

However, he immediately took **full responsibility** and convinced his superiors to get what he needed to properly manage the activities under his responsibility. We will get back to that point in the section on influencing from the bottom up.

So now you're thinking that surely this change in culture must have taken years. Not so! In less than six months, the major risks were prioritized and handled appropriately and, in the next six months, the rest was structured.

The procedures were rewritten, the training sessions given, the missing equipment purchased, the work organization changed, the management of corrective measures by prioritizing established, the follow-ups reviewed by management, etc.

The reason these changes were made so quickly is in part due to the requirements of each of the programs that this VP defined for the company. Defining these requirements made it possible to consistently decentralize management across his entire management team in all areas.

Moreover, delegating the responsibility of personalizing the application of each of the programs to the area directors significantly contributed to developing in the area directors a strong sense of ownership and an excellent understanding of the programs.

Clearly, decentralizing management does not mean that each person is independent and does as he or she sees fit. What it means is that each of the leaders has a clear understanding of the organization's plan and **implements it in a controlled manner in coordination with the alignments given, based on the local reality.**

In short, each area manager supported the global strategy by applying local orientations consistent with the company's requirements.

By approving each of the company's programs, this vice-president clarified the requirements for each of his subordinates. However, by asking each of them to clarify these requirements based on their reality, he did something fundamental: he put his trust in them. He delegated responsibilities to them and then took a step back to avoid micromanaging and interfering in his subordinates' business. Therefore, he made a significant deposit in the trust bank.

Once again, I'm sure you're telling yourself that this VP must have had a very strong team of directors and that is probably why the changes were made so quickly.. Not exactly.

When he arrived, the area directors were all the same directors as in previous years. There was a great deal of resistance to change initially but, after stating his demands, this VP quickly asked his subordinates what they needed to follow the requirements and succeed.

In other words, he made one more deposit in the trust bank: credibility and consistency!

Instead of asking why the managers had not delivered an extraordinary performance in previous years or why they would be unable to do so in the future, **he asked himself what he could do to help them achieve the expected results.**

Of course, he was questioned by his subordinates on many occasions, but he always saw that as a good thing. **A good leader would rather guide lions than lead sheep.** However, it's a bigger challenge and takes a strong person.

That also explains why a lot of managers don't like being questioned or avoid discussions about their game plan. They often do not fully understand it.

However, when we know our strategy perfectly and we believe in it, it is much easier to respond to our lions' concerns. A good leader must be able to communicate well and explain his game plan, and must be able to respond to his subordinates' questions. This is true regardless of the leader's hierarchical level.

Don't forget Albert Einstein's principle: if you can't explain it to a six year old, you don't understand it yourself. No matter what message you want to promote in your organization, remember that if it is not understood, it will not get through.

You are completely responsible for understanding your hazard management strategy and making it accessible to others. Of course, you have to believe in your game plan, otherwise you will not succeed in convincing your front-line managers of its relevance...unless they are sheep.

The company you work for may not be facing the same issues as those above, but the principles applied by this VP are valid in all organizations, whether they have multiple sites, a factory with different divisions, whether they are in the public or private sector and whether they are a manufacturing, service or construction company.

Moreover, remember that as a leader, you always have leadership. Even if you do nothing, you have it. However, there are two types of leadership: good and bad. In both cases, your leadership style will be contagious.

A good leader who assumes **full responsibility** will influence other leaders who will assume **full responsibility**. A leader who blames others and the circumstances and tries to explain why things are not working rather than trying to find out what he can do to make them work will also result in similar leaders.

Bottom-up leadership

When we think of leadership, the first reflex is to think of the leader who must influence and motivate a team usually comprised of subordinates. We discussed this approach in the previous section.

However, when it comes to health and safety, we agreed that a leader has full responsibility for influencing his or her environment. That includes influencing the hierarchical level above him when necessary.

The first type of leadership, top-down leadership, is much easier to apply. Why? Simply because you are higher in the hierarchy than those people you need to influence.

If you need to influence your superiors, the situation is quite different. **You are not in a position of authority over them; therefore, all you have is your power of influence.**

The influence you will have over your immediate supervisors will depend on several aptitudes that you must develop as a leader, such as your communication skills, your ability to put together well-structured cases based on facts, your mastery of your organizational strategy, your knowledge of the reality at the site and the needs of your teams, etc.

Once again, you want to avoid the losing attitude of blaming others. Unfortunately, it is not unusual to see many managers adopt this victim and defeatist mentality when

they receive demands that they consider inappropriate from their immediate supervisor or head office.

Don't forget that as a leader, you have **full responsibility** for what is going on in your world, at both the upper and lower levels.

Let's take, for example, the present situation in which your division is issued a company directive and you think it is unfounded. The first question to ask yourself is the following: **Is our head office trying to cause us grief?** The answer is clearly no, although it might seem that way.

Now that you have reminded yourself that your head office is not there to cause you grief but rather to help you, you will understand that the directive in question is intended to help you improve your performance. So you have to ask yourself if you fully understand the directive and its purpose.

At that moment, one of the main roles of a leader who accepts **full responsibility** for health and safety is to ask questions. Too often, leaders don't try to ask questions and prefer to express their discontent once the directive has been issued.

Asking questions of our superiors may seem simple but constitutes a fundamental aspect of a leader's role that is too often ignored. Managers are usually unwilling to ask questions because they don't want to look silly in front of their boss.

However, asking questions will give you a much better understanding of what you need to communicate, implement and subsequently enforce. **If you don't stop worrying about looking foolish in front of your boss, you risk looking incompetent to your subordinates** when the time comes to communicate the alignments received.

A leader who does not understand why the alignments have been given will never be able to explain them. You can never communicate a message clearly if your own understanding is deficient, and a vague message will only be diluted as it goes down the different hierarchical levels of the organization.

Therefore, if you do not understand something as a leader, who is to blame? You are. You have full responsibility for asking questions about the alignments to be communicated so that you fully understand them. If your role is to explain something to your subordinates, it is also your role to ask your superiors questions.

Furthermore, don't forget **you can never be more convincing than you are convinced yourself – in other words, a leader who isn't motivated can never motivate others!**

If you find that the alignments required make no sense at all, the most important question to ask yourself is the following: "Why?" Why do we have to do this? Why do we have to comply with this? And so on. Why? The answer to this question will give you the information you may be able to use to exert your influence.

It is not unusual for head offices to be out of touch with reality or for senior managers to be too distant from the reality on the ground. Unfortunately, the reality of health and safety happens in the work environment, in the employee's day to day.

This is when you have full responsibility to reconnect these influential people with reality. This is done through good management of your health and safety issues.

To accomplish this, you must simply **transform perceptions into facts.**

Recently, I coached a first-level supervisor in a sawmill. She told me she had been talking to her supervisors about a high-risk situation involving an inadequately protected planer for at least five years.

She said that she had told them at least twenty times that the situation didn't make any sense and that they needed to intervene before someone was seriously hurt.

This manager was close to her employees and they had reported the risk associated with this dangerous machine to her many times. Since she was not responsible for the budget to correct the situation and faced with her immediate supervisors' inaction regarding the situation, which had been reported many times, she gave up and set the issue aside.

She did not take her **full responsibility** for protecting her employees, nor did she take **full responsibility** for influencing her superiors.

I asked her the following question: "You discussed the situation at least twenty times in the past five years, but how many times did you document it with concrete facts?" You probably know the answer: none.

So I asked her to get out the company's OSH policy, which was, in this case, signed by the president. Naturally, the policy included a commitment to respect the legal requirements applicable to the organization. We looked at some of these legal requirements together.

Once again, I ask you to pay particular attention to the meaning of the words in these sections. They are as follows:

Quebec's Act respecting occupational health and safety

51. Employer's obligations

Every employer must take the necessary measures to protect the health and ensure the safety and physical well-being of his worker. He must, in particular,

51.5 use methods and techniques intended for the identification, control and elimination of risks to the safety or health of the worker.

2. The object of this Act is the elimination, at the source, of dangers to the health, safety and physical well-being of workers.

3. The fact that collective or individual means of protection or safety equipment are put at the disposal of workers [...] must in no way reduce the effort expended to eliminate, at the source, dangers to the health, safety and physical well-being of workers.

Criminal Code of Canada

219 Every one is criminally negligent who a) in doing anything, or b) in omitting to do anything that it is his duty to do, shows wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of other persons.

Definition of *duty*: For the purposes of this section, *duty* means a duty imposed by law.

With those four sections, she already had everything she needed to exercise her **full responsibility and power of influence over her immediate supervisors**.

The first thing to do in such a case was to conduct a documented risk analysis. Why? **To transform perceptions into facts!** We can manage facts, not perceptions. This is why the law requires employers to use methods to identify the risks (section 51.5 and the base of the Ferron Pyramid illustrated in Figure 4 of Chapter 1).

Once the risks have been evaluated according to a well-defined method (for example, multiply the severity x the probability x the frequency), we have the first fact: the

risk level. In this case, the risk could be very high, with a high probability of occurrence and a very high frequency of repetition.

The second fact comes from the answer to the following question: does the machine in question meet the legal requirements to eliminate or reduce dangers at the source? The answer was no. And yet there was a commitment signed by the company's president to respect all the applicable legal requirements. That requirement was not respected.

The *Criminal Code of Canada* clearly states that in omitting to do our duty (legal obligations) and endangering the safety of other persons, we can be charged with criminal negligence.

So I recommended that this supervisor manage her OSH cases in this way and exert her influence over her superiors by properly documenting her OSH cases according to the risk level, legal requirements and the costs of the corrective measures to be taken.

Always remember that when it comes to health and safety:

- what is not written down does not exist;
- words fly away, but writing remains.

The day after this meeting, while I was with another supervisor in the same mill, this manager came to see me to say she was completely shocked. After our coaching session, she took **full responsibility** and documented her case as recommended. She then presented everything to her immediate supervisor (director of operations), who had immediately sent the case to the mill director.

Within hours, temporary corrective measures had been put in place and, within days, the permanent protective measures required were all installed. That's what taking full

responsibility for influencing from the bottom up looks like, as illustrated in Figure 7.



Figure 7 – Bottom-up leadership. When you communicate with your subordinates, they pass on information about the dangers they are exposed to (in the case of employees) or about what they need to manage the dangers (in the case of managers). It is up to you, as their leader, to transform perceptions into facts, to document these cases and exert your influence at the top to influence your superiors and obtain the support needed to protect your employees and execute your organizational strategy.

Senior management does not always have the information you have. Furthermore, in your day-to-day routine, remember that it is impossible to manage what we don't know. You, as a leader, have the responsibility to help these decision makers understand the reality on the ground with your influence as a manager and by communicating your cases effectively.

If they don't understand, don't blame them. Blame yourself and ask yourself what you could have done differently to get them to understand the situation you are facing. You have **full responsibility** for reconnecting those who are disconnected from the reality of the operations you manage.

Your superiors are not psychic and cannot read your thoughts. The more clear, precise and factual information they have, the easier it will be for them to understand your reality and that of your subordinates.

Do you need a meeting or teleconference, or do you need to write a report, an e-mail, etc.? That's up to you. Don't give up until you have succeeded in exerting your influence.

In the section on top-down leadership, we briefly discussed the budget that the VP who made a radical change to OSH culture had to have.

When this VP realized that he was managing facilities that exposed employees to 120,000 Volts and that there was an inadequate lockout system, he was not content with providing training or changing the colour of the locks used.

He decided to resolve the problem once and for all and take full responsibility by implementing a system that would 100% guarantee employee safety at 100% of the sites, 100% of the time.

That required:

- a risk analysis of hazardous energy present on the sites;
- the codification of thousands of pieces of equipment with a unique numbering system;
- the creation of hundreds of lockout placards;

- the purchase of thousands of dollars of supplies and equipment (boxes, locks and so on);
- the purchase of record management software, which would ensure their integrity in case of a change in equipment;
- the training of tens of employees and managers;
- the training of contractors;
- the establishment of audit programs, etc.

In short, hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This manager could have been content to say that the project was too costly and let the issue be forgotten over time, as many organizations do in such a position, but that is not the road he chose.

To take **full responsibility** for protecting his employees, he needed to influence a boss who had to give him hundreds of thousands of dollars to do his job.

You can imagine the magnitude of the task at that moment, knowing that the division had already existed for many years and that they did not see the relevance of such investments. However, the VP was totally convinced of his hazard management strategy, which made him very convincing.

He documented his cases according to the potential risks of death, applicable legal requirements and the costs associated with the projects. His superiors had a lot of questions but he was able to answer them easily, one after the other, based on the reality in the work environment and the applicable requirements.

He assumed the role of reconnecting them with reality by giving them the information they did not have and, using

this information, he obtained the money needed to protect the employees under his responsibility.

While leading this major hazardous energy project, in a matter of months, he successfully did the same with:

- working-at-heights management;
- enclosed-space-entry management;
- respiratory protection (biogas site);
- contractor management;
- individual protective equipment management;
- the risk analysis process at all stations;
- the orientation and training program;
- communication, etc.

This is another good example of the benefits of leading from the bottom up and taking **full responsibility** as a leader.

Summary

- Your OSH policy is one of the most powerful documents you can use to exert your influence because it defines the commitment by the highest level of management to managing hazards and respecting legal requirements. Therefore, no one should deviate from it.
- Legal requirements are not directives that we follow when convenient. They define the minimum steps that an organization has to take; no one can ignore it, no matter how high ranking they are.

- Leaders should avoid blaming others or blaming circumstances at all times. Rather than blaming your employees for their bad behaviour, ask yourself what you could have done to get a different result: provide better equipment, provide better supervision, change the work organization, give training, etc.
- Top-down leadership is easier to execute because you have hierarchical power (authority) and the power of influence over your subordinates.
- If you do not understand the strategy well, you won't be convinced and you'll be even less convincing.
- As a leader, you must ask questions about the alignments that come from levels above you and the main question is: why?
- Your full responsibility includes your responsibility to influence from the bottom up and to do so, all you have is your power of influence.
- To influence levels above you, turn perceptions into facts (risk analyses, legal requirements and costs of corrective measures) and document your interventions. Don't forget that when it comes to OSH, what is not written down does not exist.
- If you are not successful in influencing your superiors, casting blame is not helpful. Instead try to think about what you could do differently to get what you need.
- Never accept a situation that does not meet legal requirements and could endanger the safety of the people under your responsibility. Their safety and your due diligence are on the line.

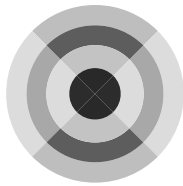
- As a leader, always ask yourself what you could have done instead of looking for what others failed to do.
- Whether you like it or not, you are the leader and there are pros and cons inherent in that role.
- Whether you like it or not, you are **fully and legally responsible for protecting the physical integrity of your employees 100% of the time and are 100% accountable.**

CHAPTER 3

TEAMWORK

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.”

— Michael, Jordan, NBA player from 1984 to 1998



So far, we have discussed the origins of a strong health and safety culture, the importance of clearly defining one's hazard management strategy and a leader's duty to get team members to play their hazard management roles.

We have also seen that leaders, regardless of their level, have a duty to influence subordinates and immediate superiors alike when it comes to executing the organization's game plan and obtaining the conditions necessary for the team's success, and that they are **fully responsible** for protecting the integrity of workers.

In this section, we will discuss teamwork because, after all, a leader, by definition, must consistently direct and motivate a whole team in executing a strategy that will allow him to properly manage hazards.

Do you think an unmotivated manager can motivate other people? As you may have guessed, it's impossible.

In reality, it is quite common to hear managers complain about their difficult and unmotivated team. It's no great surprise that when we ask these leaders about the organization's strategy, they are often unable to define it or, in other cases, sarcastic about the stance the company has taken regarding prevention.

In health and safety, there are no bad teams but many bad leaders. As a person of influence, if we are not motivated ourselves, how can we motivate others? If we don't believe in something, how can we get others to believe it? And how can we get others to commit when we are not committed ourselves?

In all those cases, the situation is bound to fail.

Communication

One of the main roles of a leader is to share the elements of the organization's strategy over and over and over again. This first step is crucial because it allows team members to understand where the ship is headed.

Managers who have a poor understanding of their hazard management strategy will usually get very nervous about this step and try to avoid it most of the time. Why? Simply because people have questions and they usually want to understand why they're doing something. **Understanding why we're doing something is very motivating but the opposite is very demotivating.**

If employees do not know why they must do something, the leader's role is to answer their questions. If the leader played his role by asking his immediate supervisor questions in order to fully understand the alignments presented to him, he should in turn be able to easily get through this first step.

Otherwise, he'll lose credibility. This type of situation often occurs when the manager announces the organization's alignments without believing in or understanding them. He plays a parrot (usually with eloquent non-verbal language), instead of a leader who believes in the orientations he has been given and must himself enforce.

Remember this: people follow a leader when they trust him. **If you lose your employees' trust, you also lose your credibility. If you lose your credibility, you lose your leadership. And if you lose your leadership, you're rowing your boat alone.**

Not only must managers communicate their teams' alignments regularly to all hierarchical levels, they must also validate the participants' understanding.

Once again, the leader must ask questions – to validate his subordinates understanding of the orientations, but also to see in which locations the alignments shake up subordinates the most based on their reality on the ground.

This will allow him to understand certain issues regarding execution that his subordinates might face and see how he can help and support them in fulfilling the requirements imposed.

The different problems raised by the subordinates can then be addressed or passed on to superiors when necessary. The leader is then supporting his team.

When I visit a company, I'm frequently told, "Listen, Marc, we installed televisions to pass on safety messages to our employees!" But I have always been a little uncomfortable with this type of communication.

Why? Simply because if the message given to the employee generates questions, the television is a terrible way to answer them.

Moreover, it does nothing to build a relationship of trust between the leader and his subordinates. Let's say the "teleleadership" concept is rather weak! For a leader, nothing can ever replace two-way communication and direct contact with his team members, no matter what level.

Involvement

To explain the importance of involving your whole team in the hazard management strategy and your change in OSH culture, we will go back to the notions of the Ferron Curve in Figure 8.

FERRON CURVE[©]

Hazard management
timeline of efficiency

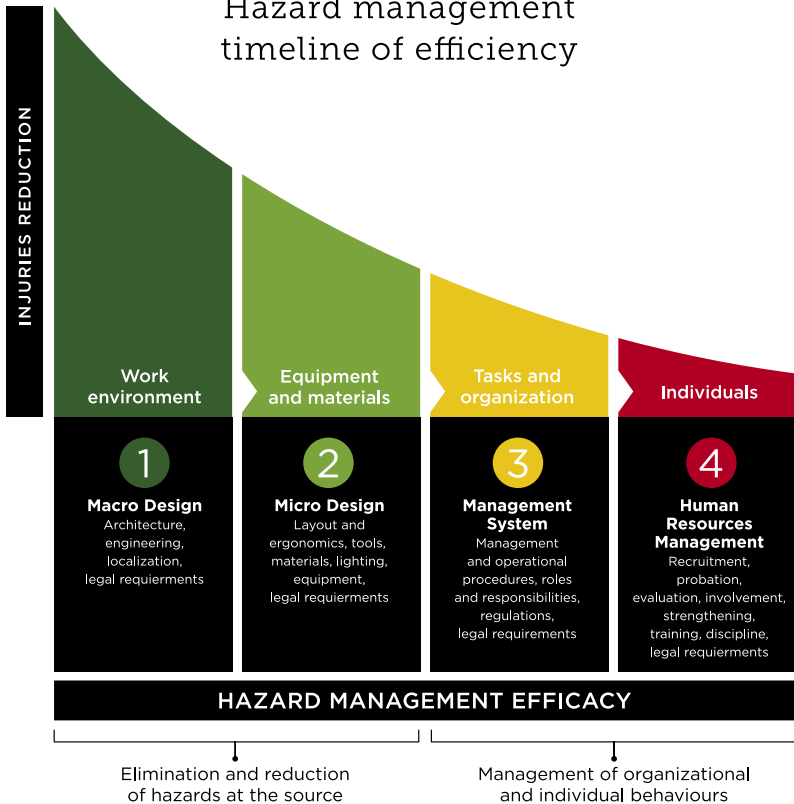


Figure 8. Ferron Curve, which illustrates where organizations should always start their hazard management, as well as the exact chronology they should follow in sound hazard management.

As mentioned in the first chapter of this book, **health and safety culture begins with the level of risk that a management team agrees to expose its employees to** (see Element 1 – Macro Design/Work Environment on the Ferron Curve).

However, **this doesn't mean that management alone is responsible for all the issues associated with it.**

Engineering teams can participate in designing the work environment, project management teams can participate in improving those designs, maintenance teams can participate in maintaining the work environment and operations teams can participate in choosing equipment and the safest and most effective layout possible. Supervisors and employees can identify hazards, as well as inspect the facilities and maintain cleanliness and good order.

In short, in this simple first element, which is the area to address to most effectively manage hazards, a large part of your team might already be involved.

As the saying goes, there is only one way to eat an elephant: one bite at a time.

However, I'd like to make the following clarification: the only way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time, but it goes so much faster as a team and we don't get so sick of eating it!

This is why it's so important to involve everyone and coordinate everyone's involvement. Health and safety in most organizations is a massive elephant -- a mammoth even!

The more people involved, the more coordinated your interventions will be and the greater your chances of success. **So it's not enough for your teams to be involved and taking OSH initiatives. Their actions must be guided and coordinated to support your game plan, organizational priorities and the best hazard management principles.**

In order to adopt your hazard management strategy, people must first understand it. This is achieved with a simple plan and communication. However, to adopt it, **your**

team members must understand their role in your strategy, the contribution they can or must make, and the reason behind this strategy.

Your hazard management system or prevention program (your strategy) should be **understandable by all and should allow everyone to get involved, from the president to the employee, in various areas.**

Now let's go back to the chronology of the Ferron Curve in Element 2 – Micro Design/Materials and Equipment. You can involve your directors in developing the budgets and resources required, your managers in the choice of materials and equipment, as well as the employees who will use them.

Always remember that your **employees are experts on their work station.** They are there forty hours a week and they have extremely useful knowledge when the time comes to make decisions about hazard management.

Your OSH staff can also contribute its expertise to existing legal requirements, new technologies or the best-known practices in the industry. The maintenance staff can participate in performing equipment maintenance routes, the health and safety committee in choosing protective equipment, and so on.

When developing the programs, procedures and rules that will determine the roles and responsibilities of each person (Ferron Curve, Element 3 – Management System/Tasks and organization), once again, all the team members can contribute.

The OSH team staff can develop drafts of your programs, review best practices and verify compliance with legal requirements. The health and safety committee can be consulted to obtain the perspectives of employee representatives on the feasibility of applying a program

and anticipating problems with implementation, as well as establishing audit programs to control the effectiveness of the programs you have implemented.

Managers are key players who have to manage and apply the programs. They should be consulted to ensure that what is written down applies to the daily reality. If there are aberrations to correct, they can participate in researching solutions to facilitate execution of the programs, etc. After implementation, the managers should actively participate in the audit of different programs on the ground while they are being carried out.

Lastly, the management teams should approve the organization's programs because they own them. They should be able to anticipate and plan the resources needed for deployment and execution, to monitor their effectiveness in a management review and ensure uniform application across the company.

Regarding the last section of the Ferron Curve, which addresses human resources management (Element 4 – Human Resources Management/Individuals), this element once again involves many people on various levels.

With respect to the selection and hiring process, naturally, the human resources managers would oversee the whole process. However, managers and supervisors would also contribute by participating in selecting their team members.

Once the applicant has been selected, the OSH coordinator can participate in the orientation program, the instructors in explaining roles and responsibilities, the colleagues in integrating the new member in the team, model employees may be offered mentoring and coaching programs, and so on.

In short, I'm sure that you understand that there are infinite opportunities for involving all employees, at all levels. **Their involvement will help them take ownership of your hazard management system, accelerate the change, contribute to numerous solutions to problems encountered and significantly reduce resistance to change.**

Resistance to change: this is one point that frightens many managers and with good reason. It's hard to estimate the number of organizations that have suffered a crisis while changing health and safety orientations, but believe me, plenty have!

It usually happens like this:

- A directive is issued by head office or an upper-level position for X reason (accident in another factory, change in the company's standards, new legal requirements, and so on.
- A cumbersome e-mail is sent to the managers in question, who are usually swamped. They take a minute to skim through it;
- They forward it to their subordinates who must ensure it is applied by employees immediately;
- The supervisor who must ensure the directive is followed finds 50 inconsistencies, reasons why the directive cannot be applied and constraints, a lack of human and financial resources, deficient work organization and so on, but must communicate the directive anyway;
- The employees go into crisis mode when they see what they are being asked to do, disrupting their comfortable routine, and they ask for explanations;

- The supervisor, who is uncomfortable with his team and the directive he is asking them to follow, avoids them;
- The director is informed of the situation by his supervisor and says it will pass, then he in turn complains to his boss about the demands of head office;
- His boss answers, “That’s how it is.”

While there might be a few lines missing from the timeline above, I’m fairly certain that you recognized situations that you have experienced in the past or still experience occasionally:

- Use of a poor communication medium;
- Misunderstanding the directive and discomfort with it;
- Loss of the management team’s credibility and trust;
- Absence of consultation and involvement on many levels;
- No answer to the questions from those individuals most involved in executing the directive.

Those are a few elements to avoid when involving and motivating your employees in your game plan.

When I had the opportunity to implement my first health and safety management system at the start of my career (see *Managing Health and Safety. Get the best... Prevent the worst*), we started at the bottom with the hazard analysis.

I then met with several consultants who offered me different approaches to help us take an inventory of hazards for each of our work stations. Health and safety is hazard

management but it is impossible to manage what we don't know; so we had to start by finding out what we had to manage (see the Ferron Pyramid in Figure 4, Chapter 1).

The two consultants retained had very different approaches. One had a turnkey approach in which a team of consultants spent numerous hours analyzing the work stations for the whole factory.

At the time, this method was very attractive because it required very little effort internally. Moreover, in the end, a full analysis in a near-perfect record was provided within a very short timeframe.

The other consultant offered to come and coach our managers so that they could conduct the risk analyses for each station with employees on their teams. He started by giving basic training, conducted one or two analyses with the team and then let them work for a few weeks before coming back to review the work accomplished.

Once the analyses were conducted on all the stations in a department, the supervisor had to present them in team meetings in which the employees commented, added missing elements, made recommendations, etc.

Good luck intervened to counter my lack of experience. I didn't have the budget to hire the turnkey consultant team. The team would have had to spend more time on the ground because it was doing the work alone. That made it too expensive for me at that time.

So I opted for the consultant who put us to work...at a more affordable price.

When I say that good luck intervened, I mean that I could never have anticipated the benefits of such an approach, namely:

- The increase in the managers' and employees' knowledge of health and safety through the risk analysis training initially received;
- A deeper understanding of the risk analysis process by all levels of the organization;
- The management team's ownership of the identified risks under their responsibility;
- The direct involvement of dozens of employees from all departments in the risk analyses;
- The consultation of practically all employees in validating the results of the analyses;
- Hundreds of recommendations for corrective action from employees (most of which were very imaginative and inexpensive);
- A decrease in employees' and managers' resistance to change when the time came to implement the corrective actions because they understood why they were necessary and had often contributed by choosing the required actions;
- An increase in the ability to perceive hazards by all participants in the analyses;
- The establishment of risk management priorities and organizational priorities that everyone now understands;
- A part of the hazard management strategy in which **everyone feels useful and motivated**;
- An opportunity to share the problems we are facing instead of talking about the solutions imposed, which contributed to increasing employees' trust with respect to their management team.

You have probably heard the story about the difference between the chicken and the pig preparing breakfast. I'll tell the story here because it is particularly relevant to the situation described.

When the breakfast is served, the chicken **is involved** by supplying the eggs. But the pig **is committed** by supplying the bacon. While their contributions may seem similar, the level of participation is not at all the same...

The chosen consultant got the whole organization to fully engage in the risk analysis project, which was then a complete success. We played the pig's role in our prevention banquet...

Unfortunately, our organizations do not always take that approach. Too often, managers want to buy change. However, that never works for the simple reason that **you can't buy change. Change is managed.**

Changing health and safety culture is also managed. It is managed by managers who understand their **full responsibility** for their team and who, to achieve their goals, will get everyone contributing to a single plan, **namely the execution of your safety management system or prevention program.**

In the previous story, we could have convinced ourselves that we had bought the change. After two months, we could have presented a perfect document that would have eventually landed in some computer directory, with no one taking ownership for it. Afterwards, we would have had no return on investment and none of the above benefits.

Instead, management of the change was orchestrated. The project lasted nearly a year and a half. It motivated the entire management team and the vast majority of the 500 employees, and it produced results.

Summary

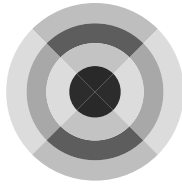
- Simple and direct two-way communication is the essential starting point of any motivation strategy.
- The role of a leader is to ask questions of both his superiors and his subordinates. This allows him to fully understand the orientations and issues on the ground that the employees might be facing.
- You will never succeed in motivating others if you are not motivated yourself.
- The involvement of managers and employees is necessary to the successful functioning of your management system.
- Everyone's involvement makes you much more effective and greatly reduces resistance to change.
- Everyone's involvement is possible in all elements of the Ferron Curve (Macro Design/Work Environment, Micro Design/Materials and Equipment, Management System/Tasks and Organization, Human Resources Management/Individuals).
- Change cannot be purchased. It's managed.
- Health and safety initiatives are important but they must be directed in such a way that members of your team don't waste energy on non-priorities.
- Share your problems with your teams instead of just imposing solutions on them. This will increase their trust in the organization and the possibility that they will help you resolve these problems.

CHAPTER 4

EXECUTION

*"Without strategy, execution is aimless.
Without execution, strategy is useless."*

— Morris Chang, Chief Executive Officer of TSMC
(Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company)



Execution and rigour

Execution of the game plan: this is a crucial element that every good leader must understand about health and safety. With this in mind, let's go back to a previously discussed notion: **accountability**.

As a manager and leader in your organization, you absolutely must remember at all times that you have **full responsibility for your employees in 100% of cases, from the first second they set foot on your property**.

Why is your company responsible when an employee slips on ice in your parking lot? Because the parking lot is part of **your** environment and **your** property, over which you have **full responsibility**.

Health and safety advocates who tell you that 90% of workplace accidents are linked to individual behaviours do not understand the notion of accountability in health and safety.

Remember the questions in chapter 1.

Have you ever seen a single accident in an official report by the authorities, in which “the worker's inappropriate behaviour” was identified as the cause of the accident? It has never happened and it never will.

Or how many times have you heard of a worker receiving a notice of violation at home for the workplace accident he suffered as a result of his unsafe behaviour? In all likelihood, never.

Recently, a construction manager was found guilty of manslaughter for a health and safety offence after a worker died, having been buried in an improperly shored trench.

The manager's lawyers blamed the worker's "unpredictable behaviour" and were not very successful. This manager received **18 months in prison.**

The real causes of the accident were as follows:

- An improperly shored trench, or inadequate engineering (Ferron Curve, Element 1 – Macro Design/Work Environment);
- Materials inadequately positioned around the trench (Ferron Curve, Element 2 – Micro Design/Materials and Equipment);
- Procedures and regulations not applied, in other words, a problem in the application of OSH roles and responsibilities (Ferron Curve, Element 3 – Management System/Tasks and Organization);
- Inadequate supervision (Ferron Curve, Element 1 – Human Resources Management/Individuals).

Once you answer the following fundamental question, the behavioural approach to health and safety will seem so nonsensical that you'll never think of using it again.

Who is legally accountable for employee safety?

The law nearly always holds the employer responsible for the health and safety of employees and that will never change! Does that mean that the employer alone is responsible and teamwork doesn't matter? Of course not!

Have you noticed who loses their job first when a sports team isn't performing well? The coach. Why? Either he has a bad plan or he has failed in getting his team to execute it. Does that mean that hockey isn't a team sport? Not at all.

If you fully understand that you have **full responsibility** for the physical integrity of the most important resource in your organization, you would likely more rigorously execute roles and responsibilities.

Let me explain.

Each time you eliminate and reduce hazards at the source by design, you can sleep better at night. Why? Because the design of the environment or the equipment that you make available to your employees leads you to protect nearly 100% of your employees, 100% of the time, from the moment they are hired, no matter who they are.

When that is not possible, you are responsible, as a leader, for ensuring that effective roles and responsibilities are defined and executed by 100% of employees, 100% of the time, from the first minute of the first day they are hired. That's quite a challenge!

If one of your new employees falls from the third floor and dies on his first day of work because he did not follow the working-at-heights procedures, do you think you will be exempt from prosecution? No. You have **full responsibility** for the safety of your employees from the first second of the first minute they are hired until their retirement.

With that knowledge, **do you think you have the right to make mistakes in health and safety?**

Even though it may sound nice, even if I would like to tell you “yes,” even though we like to see people get a second chance in life, the reality in workplace health and safety is much more cruel. Arms don't grow back, sight doesn't return, the loss of life is the end of life and it's irreversible. There is no Undo button to turn back time. And justice applies immediately.

There is no room to manoeuvre! Accountability is immediate in health and safety and there are no second chances when an event occurs!

When managers talk to me about their behavioural approach in which they want to “make employees aware” of the importance of protecting themselves, of putting on their glasses because they only have two eyes, of putting on their gloves, etc., I give them the following wisdom from Alcoholics Anonymous:

Getting someone else to change can take a lifetime; it takes two minutes to change yourself.

So the question to ask yourself is the following:

Do we have a lifetime to get our employees to change by making them aware that they should adopt safe behaviour? Once again, unfortunately, the answer is no. You are fully accountable for your employees’ safety from the moment they are hired.

Imagine the relevance of such a behavioural approach when it’s not just one person who must change but tens and hundreds of them, like in our organizations.

Add to that the labour shortage, the mass retirements, promotions, the multicultural workforce with language barriers, different generations, the turnover rate, etc. For anyone who chooses this approach, all we can do is wish them luck; it’s a lost cause right from the start.

For those who prefer to take **full responsibility** for the physical integrity of their subordinates from the very beginning, if you are unable to eliminate and reduce hazards at the source, only one option remains:

- Define the roles and responsibilities (or make sure they are defined) with respect to the hazards to be managed in your different programs, procedures and regulations;
- Ensure that these roles are taught and fully understood in the orientation session;
- Define the frequency with which employees will be given a refresher course on these roles and responsibilities;
- Audit the execution of these programs at a predetermined frequency;
- And **do not tolerate any deviation**, from the first second of the first day, by applying a scale of sanctions likely already set out by your organization (usually in your work contract or collective agreement). All you need to do is apply what is written or, in other words; be consistent.

What you tolerate will happen. What you don't tolerate won't happen. Once again: full responsibility.

That's exactly what the law requires in the employer's obligations when it states that the employer must offer "appropriate supervision," **because it is unlikely that an employee will engage in "inappropriate behaviour" if that employee has appropriate supervision. What we don't tolerate won't happen** (see section 51.9 of the LSST on the employer's responsibilities below)!

51. Every employer must take the necessary measures to protect the health and ensure the safety and physical well-being of his worker. He must, in particular,

9: give the worker adequate information as to the risks connected with his work and provide him with the appropriate training, assistance or supervision to ensure

that he possesses the skill and knowledge required to safely perform the work assigned to him.

Clearly, the goal isn't to impose sanctions when the duty of authority is applied. The goal is to ensure that 100% of the people under your authority play 100% of the role assigned to them 100% of the time – all this to ensure that nothing happens to the people under your authority, whose health and safety are your responsibility.

Remember that when you accept deviations from your programs, procedures and regulations:

- You accept that an employee is endangering his safety;
- As a leader, you are deliberately agreeing to deviate from the group's plan;
- You accept actions that are inconsistent with what has been defined;
- You are gambling your credibility in the eyes of your team members;
- You are sacrificing your diligence;
- You are not taking your **full responsibility**.

When you have to take disciplinary action (not just against employees who did not play their role, but also managers), you first need to ask yourself a few questions as the person who takes **full responsibility for what happens**.

For example:

- Were the directives communicated clearly?
- Did we validate the understanding of individuals before execution?

- Did we provide sufficient resources for them to perform the required roles?
- Have we tolerated similar types of non-compliance over the years?
- Did I provide appropriate supervision?
- Did the work organization allow the individual to perform the required roles?
- Was this a known situation in which we did not deliberately act?
- **Am I blaming others in reaction to an event or tolerating non-compliance with regard to prevention?**
- What could I have done, as a leader, to prevent this from happening?

A leader can compel his subordinates to execute their role perfectly because ultimately the leader is accountable for their safety. He cannot tolerate any non-compliance because there is no room to manoeuvre. Therefore, he has the power to sanction any non-compliance, what we call the duty of authority with respect to due diligence.

However, it is important to note that this is not about blaming the employee for his non-compliance. This is about looking to see if, as a leader, we have done everything to fulfil our responsibility and ensure that the organization's game plan was perfectly executed. In the event of non-compliance, we don't blame others but we assume our role as a leader who is immediately responsible for the safety of his subordinates.

Remember this: **Blame is judging another person's behaviour. A sanction is a repressive *measure by an authority for failing to execute an order, not complying with***

a rule or a law. There is a big difference! A health and safety leader does not blame the failings of his subordinates. Rather, he sanctions the failure to execute roles when he has first done everything he can.

However, while he has the power to discipline with his duty of authority, **he must first use his power of influence over others, and this is done by taking all the steps mentioned above: communicating, questioning, involving, motivating, etc.**

Reinforcement

The notion of accountability is something negative for most people. That's completely normal: **accountability only exists when there are consequences** and, from childhood, the word consequence is usually synonymous with punishment.

However, as a leader we must change this perception and remember that people are just as accountable for what they do right as for what they do wrong. Only the nature of the consequences will change. They will be either positive or negative.

In many organizations, the negative consequences are not very popular and give way to tolerance. Thus, we impose very little discipline and there are no negative consequences to not doing what is required, whether due to a lack of rigour or a lack of managerial courage. As for the positive consequences, they are, in nearly every case, very rarely used.

The dosage to be prescribed in this context is 20% discipline, 80% reinforcement. I like to use the following image to explain this: if you're making lemonade and you only use lemon juice, it will probably taste bitter.

However, if you make lemonade with 20% lemon juice and 80% water and sugar, it will probably taste much better. The same is true for health and safety. If all you do is discipline your teams when they are not playing their role, there is a good chance your OSH culture will leave your teams feeling bitter and demotivated.

However, opportunities for positive reinforcement when employees play their roles and contribute to executing the organization's strategy are practically unlimited and not very costly.

For example, you arrive in a work area, all the employees are well equipped, the work environment is unobstructed, and the safety programs are fully applied. You take the opportunity to congratulate all the employees present and give them a pat on the back. The reinforcement is immediate. The effect is instantaneous. It costs nothing.

Now let's use a more poignant example. One of your plant's targets is to conduct all your risk analyses for each work station over the next year. To make the workload more manageable, each supervisor with his respective team is responsible for ensuring that these analyses are completed.

A team completes its tasks within the prescribed timeframes and the department director will assist with presenting the results. After the presentation, he says a few words to the team to thank them and makes sure that all the employees have pizza for lunch. Once again, the effects of acknowledging the teamwork are instantaneous and the cost is next to nothing.

Now two maintenance employees are dedicated body and soul to revising and implementing your lockout program to ensure the safety of all your employees. The impact of their work will be major.

The CEO will meet with them to thank them for their extraordinary dedication. He gives them a commemorative plaque for their involvement, gives them the two parking spots closest to the door for being the employees most involved in OSH and gives them a family pass to a water park. The acknowledgement is clear and the cost, once again, minute.

There is an infinite number of things you can do. When it comes to opportunities to celebrate a job well done, you are limited only by your imagination.

All too often, recognition is given only in the form of money and, very often, it is offered only to managers. Moreover, this reward is usually based on final performances instead of execution of the game plan.

For example, in recent months, I was auditing OSH management in an organization. When I asked managers what their incentive pay was based on, they told me: “on the OSHA rates.”

So I asked them what the OSHA rates included and how many injuries that met those criteria had occurred since the beginning of the year; none of them could answer that. Therefore, they didn’t know why they had received a bonus but were quite happy to get it.

When these kinds of bonuses are paid, this is often what happens, especially if they are usually paid once a year. When people receive their bonus in December, for example, they no longer remember what happened in February but we reward them for it anyway. The effect of recognition is weak and the costs are usually very high.

Summary

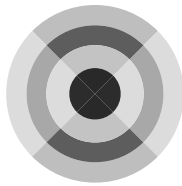
- You have **full responsibility** for the health and safety of your employees because you are legally accountable from the first second they are hired.
- You must be 100% effective in ensuring the health and safety of your employees. This can only be done through elimination and reduction at the source, or by fully executing roles and responsibilities 100% of the time.
- If you have to discipline a subordinate, first ask yourself the following question: “**Did I do everything I could for the employee to succeed?**”
- You have a duty of authority because **you are accountable for the safety of others.**
- To get the people under your responsibility to respect the team’s game plan, you can **influence** them or **compel** them. While the second option is not desirable, you cannot tolerate non-compliance that endangers the safety of others.
- There are thousands of opportunities to reinforce desired behaviours when people play their roles and properly execute the team’s game plan. You are limited only by your imagination.
- Immediate positive reinforcement has the greatest impact and is also the least costly.
- A leader who wants to motivate his team and promote OSH culture must celebrate the team’s successes and accomplishments.

- If you use your power of authority without asking yourself if you did everything necessary from the start, you risk losing your credibility.
- If all you use is your power of authority without influential leadership and positive reinforcement, your teams will quickly become demotivated.

CONCLUSION

“A competent leader can get efficient service from poor troops, while on the contrary a poor leader can demoralize the best of troops.”

— John J. Pershing, U.S. Army General
(served from 1886 to 1924)



I'd like to conclude this book with a few questions:

- What is the life of your son or daughter worth? It's priceless.
- What is the life of your husband or wife worth? It's priceless.
- What is your left hand worth? It's priceless.
- What is your sight worth? It's priceless.

What would you do to protect the life of your son or daughter? Probably anything. You would take **full responsibility** for protecting them. Employees within the ranks of our organization are sons, daughters, husbands and wives to someone.

Every body part belonging to each of these thousands of people is priceless. Each of these lives is priceless and, as a manager, you are responsible for them. **Full responsibility!**

We are privileged to have these people work in our organization. They have agreed to lend us that which is most precious to them, their life and health, in exchange for pay, to accomplish a team mission.

They come to work in a working environment that does not belong to them, with machines that we provide them, with procedures that we defined, as well as the training and supervision we offer.

They are completely dependent on their management team, except if they decide to exercise their right to refuse to execute a task. Moreover, while many organizations believed for many years that their employees should be independent and interdependent when it comes to safety, that's not the case.

Being responsible for people's lives and protecting their physical integrity as they help us accomplish our organizational mission is an immense privilege.

Considering this privilege, every leader and every manager should provide the most hazard-free environment possible through elimination and reduction of hazards at the source. That's where it all starts! Once again, remember:

**HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE BEGINS WITH
THE LEVEL OF RISK THAT A MANAGEMENT
TEAM AGREES TO EXPOSE ITS EMPLOYEES TO.**

We then have the responsibility to provide them with the best equipment, as well as the best programs and procedures, to teach them those programs and procedures and to provide full supervision to carry out our **full responsibility for their physical integrity, as required by law (including the *Criminal Code*).**

Health and safety culture is not about personal values and safe habits; it's about hazard management using clearly defined principles.

The VP I told you about in this book said to me:

"In my previous life, I tried to convince my employees that health and safety had to be a value, and that never worked.

However, from the moment when, as a leader, I started managing health and safety, explaining my game plan, involving my employees, consistently executing the alignments presented, health and safety became a non-negotiable organizational value for everyone."

True health and safety leaders assume their **full responsibility** for their most precious resource and don't compromise.

Leaders who blame the demands of their superiors, the alignments from head office, the lack of resources, their management team, which, in their opinion, is not strong enough, their supervision team, which is not rigorous enough, and/or the unsafe behaviours of their employees do not understand their **full responsibility**.

Each time a leader blames others or the context, he is lying and he is lying primarily to himself. And by lying to himself, he prevents himself from seeing that **he has failed to execute his role or lead others in executing their role**.

The great thing is that we quickly stamp out this lie with the truth, which is that, **as a leader, you always have the power to influence those around you** (superiors, employees, head office, and so on).

The trick is to never be satisfied with answers that prevent you from carrying out your **full responsibility** for the safety of your employees and to continue to exercise your power of influence until you are successful.

In this journey of leadership and influence, you will have to constantly adjust according to the situations and contexts of a world in motion. Yesterday's game plan may be completely invalid tomorrow.

The situations you will face will require you to know how to play your role as leader and its many dichotomies. As a leader, you will have to be:

- confident enough to lead your troops but not pompous;
- courageous but not careless;
- rigorous but not merciless;
- organized but flexible;

- a leader but sometimes a participant;
- rational but not emotionally detached;
- kind but not tolerant;
- thoughtful but active;
- humble but not timid;
- close to operations without engaging in micromanagement;
- distant enough to have a global perspective of the situation, but not disconnected;
- etc.

This is why we are always learning as leaders.

Manage your health and safety culture because if you don't do it, you will have one by default, and it will manage you. Don't go against the principles of hazard management because you will get the opposite of what you want.

Eliminate, reduce and manage the hazards in your organization and you will see that your culture will create itself.

One day I received an e-mail from a professor who told me the following about the Ferron Curve: "Your model is nearly complete but it's missing the culture component."

All we can say to that is: provide a safe environment with as few hazards as possible, give employees the best equipment, develop **and apply** the best management systems and prevention programs, manage your human resources while fulfilling 100% of your legal responsibilities, and watch what happens to your organization's culture. It will simply be unbeatable!

In every case, if you try to change your organization's OSH culture without implementing the above elements, you're facing an uphill battle. You're in for an endless nightmare.

What's difficult about being a leader who accepts **full responsibility for protecting his employees is that he accepts full responsibility for any failures and gives 100% of the credit for any success to his team.**

Harry Truman, a former U.S. president, said the following: "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit." In other words, set your ego aside and make your team successful.

I hope that through this book I have convinced you that you have **full responsibility** for your employees. Otherwise, unfortunately, it might take the next accident in your organization to convince you.

As we saw at the start of this book, the word *culture* comes from the Latin *cultura*, which means "to care for."

As a manager, you have **full responsibility for protecting 100% of your employees and caring for them 100% of the time, starting now.**

As for the culture, I'll sum it up for you with Nike's slogan: "**Just do it!**" Rigorously eliminate, reduce and manage hazards with your team, and you will get the OSH culture of your dreams. "Just do it," and everything will fall into place.

Thank you for proudly assuming this responsibility and using this code, which is no longer a secret, to get the best OSH culture possible.

Marc-André Ferron

DO YOU WANT TO MOVE FROM “BEHAVIOURAL BLAME” MODE TO “FULL RESPONSIBILITY” MODE?

Here are a few crucial elements to take you from behavioural mode to “**full responsibility**” mode.

- Define your OSH policy by describing your commitment as a management team to respecting legal requirements (eliminate, reduce and manage hazards);
- Establish an OSH management review (monthly or quarterly, according to the organization’s needs and reality) and monitor the implementation, functioning and improvement of all the parameters of your OSH management;
- Develop your action plan based on elimination and reduction of hazards at the source and set up your programs (which define your prevention program) in stages;
- Define your risk analysis process, involve as many managers and employees as possible, and execute that process;
- Identify recurring events by analyzing trends, addressing the underlying causes and taking action;
- Define each person’s roles and responsibilities in your programs and integrate them in your communication programs, including orientation, job training, promotion, manager-employee meetings, communications (e-mail, television, posters, etc.), and execute those roles and responsibilities;
- Establish control loops to ensure the effectiveness of what you have defined, both internally and externally (systematic program audits);

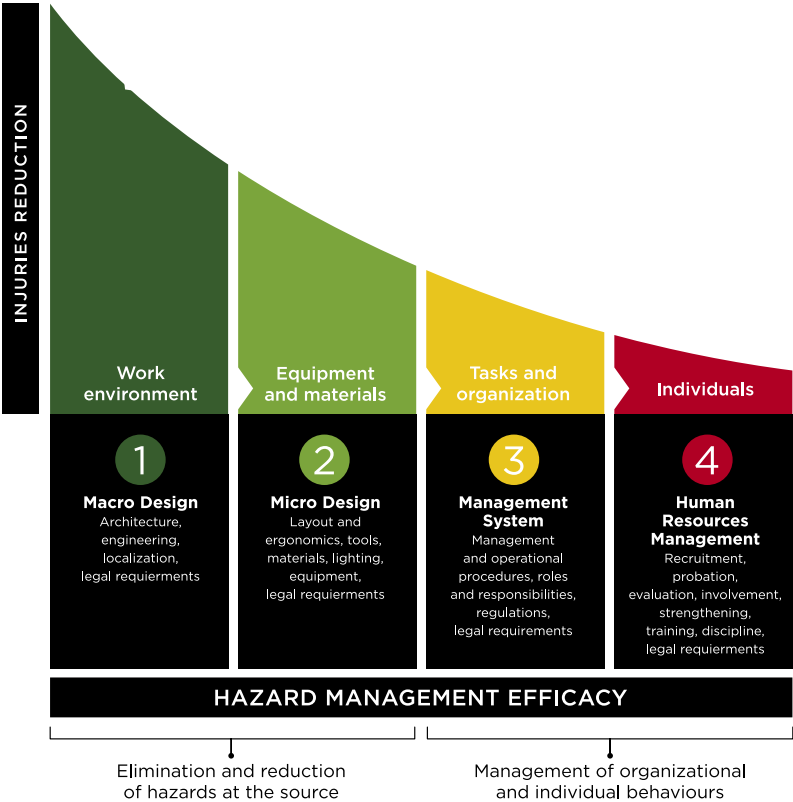
- Make sure that you are always working with facts (risk thresholds, legal requirements and costs) and not perceptions, and document your actions;
- Involve as many people as possible from every level in executing the various roles and responsibilities in your programs in the most strategic way possible;
- Execute those roles and responsibilities rigorously but not ruthlessly (with consistency and not impulsiveness in reaction to events). Use as much positive reinforcement as possible when people are 100% playing their roles and they contribute to executing and improving your hazard management strategy.

NEVER BLAME OTHERS FOR WHAT ISN'T WORKING. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU CAN DO DIFFERENTLY AND ALWAYS ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY!

OTHER CONCEPTS

FERRON CURVE

HAZARD MANAGEMENT TIMELINE OF EFFICIENCY

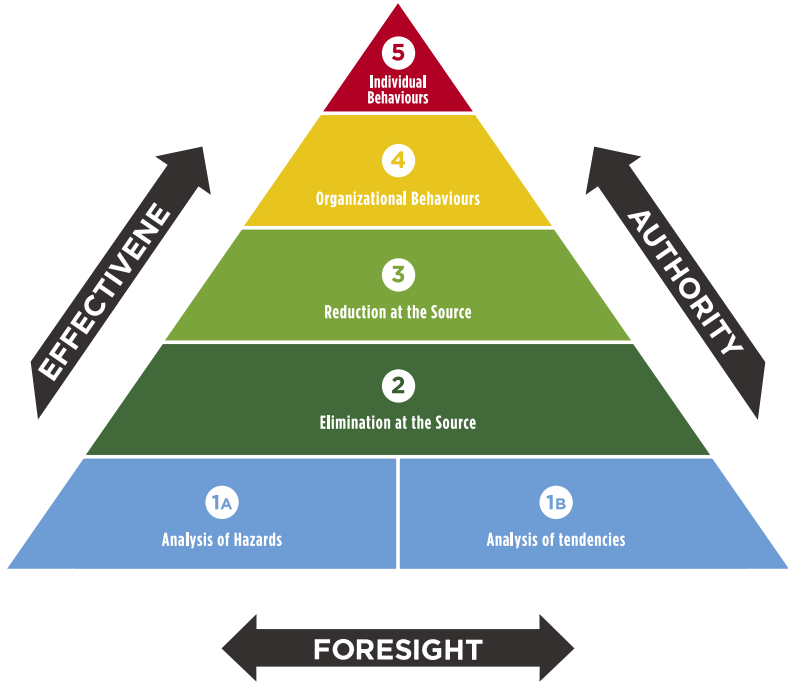


- The section on the left (macro and micro design) represents the elements allowing for the best hazard management.
- The section on the right represents the best means of managing the residual risks that could not be managed by the design, and which define the management strategies regarding organization and individual behaviours.

- Chronology from left to right must always be observed in order to ensure maximum efficiency and coherence in hazard management.
- Elements on the curve represent all the possible causes of an accidental event (environment, equipment, tasks, organization and individual). Their processing in chronological order ensures the management of the event's root causes which minimizes the possibilities of reoccurrence.
- Left-to-right elements are all interdependent and sequenced: one defines the needs of the other.
- The curve's principles are fully consistent with legal requirements.
- Total dedication for a perfect design (macro and micro) and indisputable rigour towards management systems (health and safety, and human resources) represent the bulk of the due diligence and sustainable performance in health and safety for any organization.

FERRON PYRAMID

PRINCIPLES OF DILIGENCE AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE



1A. Analysis of Hazards

We cannot manage what we don't know. Any prevention approach must begin with an analysis of the hazards present (analysis of tasks, HAZOP study, ergonomics, industrial hygiene, machine safety, and so on). This reveals which elements present the greatest potential seriousness, repetition frequency and occurrence probability.

1B. Analysis of tendencies

An accident is a hazard that was not managed properly and caused damage. Since it is impossible to eliminate all of an organization's hazards or risks, we must analyze the tendencies to determine the organization's weaknesses in hazard management (or repetitive

accidents and their nature) to correct the targeted situations by taking appropriate action. (ex., OSHA rate, rate of seriousness, injury locations, accident locations, times, etc.).

2. Elimination at the Source

Elimination at the source. After analyzing their tendencies and hazards, all organizations are legally obligated to show that they have tried to eliminate the hazards at the source. A hazard eliminated at the source is 100% effective hazard management. This element is managed by design.

3. Reduction at the Source

If organizations cannot eliminate hazards at the source, they must be able to prove that they respected their legal requirements by reducing them at the source (for example, by using a safety guard). This is the second most effective way to manage hazards, and is also done by design.

4. Organizational Behaviours

When it is impossible to eliminate or reduce hazards at the source, organizations must implement the programs required by the legal requirements they must follow (ex., lockout, confined spaces, regulations, and so on). These programs must define the roles and responsibilities that each of the organization's players must perform 100%. Organizational behaviours define individual behaviours

5. Individual Behaviours

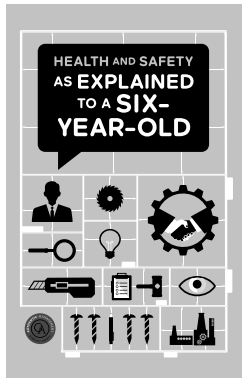
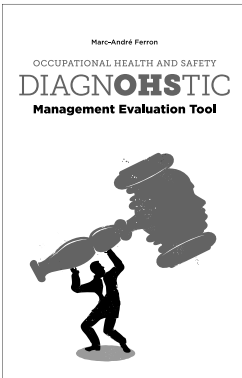
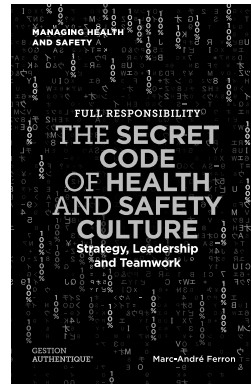
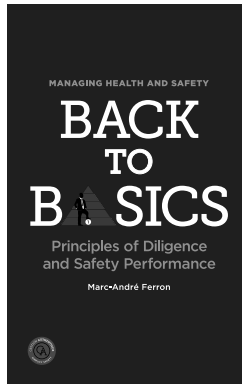
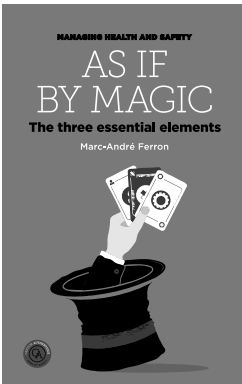
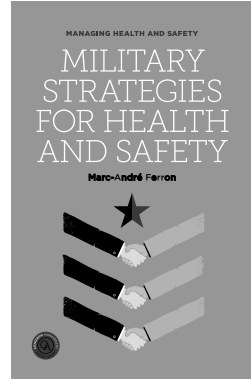
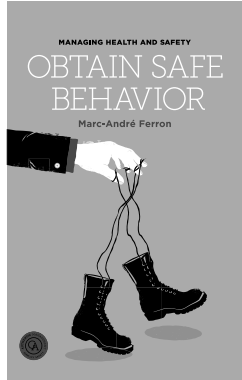
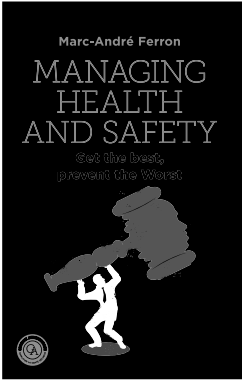
Individual behaviours must also be managed. To minimize human variations in performance as much as possible, the various human resources management activities must support employees and the management team in defining and managing individual behaviours (ex., recruitment, probation, evaluation, training, etc.).

Foresight, effectiveness and authority

Lastly, the three duties that management teams have to demonstrate due diligence (duties of foresight, effectiveness and authority) encompass and shape management prevention as a whole. This ensures that the good protective elements have been implemented, are effective and are meticulously applied.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

GESTIONAUTHENTIQUE.COM



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND GESTION AUTHENTIQUE

With close to 20 years of experience in the fields of management and health and safety, Marc-André Ferron is now an author, speaker, and consultant in workplace health and safety management.

Aiming to simplify the notions of prevention management as much as possible over the past few years, Mr. Ferron has published the following texts:

- *Managing Health and Safety. Obtain Safe Behaviour*
- *Managing Health and Safety. Get the Best... Prevent the Worst*
- *Managing Health and Safety. The DiagnoSSTic Tool*
- *Managing Health and Safety. Union SStrategy*
- *When Santa Claus Manages Health and Safety*
- *Managing Health and Safety. Establish an Effective Strategy. Be Diligent – DVD version*
- *Articles as a columnist and blogger*

To learn more about the services offered by Gestion Authentique and Marc-André Ferron, go to gestionauthentique.com/en/ or contact us at info@GestionAuthentique.com.



FULL RESPONSIBILITY

THE SECRET CODE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE

Strategy, Leadership and Teamwork

Establishing a sound health and safety culture is a desire many organizations have shared over the years. This idea is so popular that it is practically impossible to attend a health and safety convention without seeing one or more conferences on the subject.

However, while thousands of organizations try to change their culture, only a small minority of them succeed. The reason why so many companies fail is not their lack of effort.

The problem is that they are going about it the wrong way...

In this book, you will learn the importance of an appropriate prevention strategy, how to lead like the best leaders and the importance of teamwork in health and safety.



Marc-André Ferron

If you apply the principles of this book, you are 100% certain to get the OSH culture of your dreams.

Enjoy your read!

Marc-André Ferron

**GESTION
AUTHENTIQUE®**

**SIMPLIFY
SAFETY**