

Army *Safety* Gram

Leading on the Edge for Safety *Excellence*

07-21

24 September 2008



Road Map to Safety Excellence

One of the most common excuses for under performance in safety is, "lack of management commitment." The truth of the matter is, managers care deeply about many things. Most importantly, they focus on delivering results, meeting stakeholder expectations, and delivering products and services within specification, under budget, on time, and **WITHOUT INJURING ANYONE IN THE PROCESS!**

The real reasons for poor safety performance are unclear vision, weak values, poor leadership, faulty organization, poor human relationships, inadequate communications, inaccurate measurement, and lack of consequences. Every organization requires a road map or strategy to overcome these deficiencies. The simple guideposts below define what every road map should contain:

Guideposts to Overcoming Poor Safety Performance

- ♦ **Guidepost 1 – A Vision of Excellence:** A clear, highly detailed word/graphic/image describing what a safe organization will look, sound, act, and feel like at a future point in time.
- ♦ **Guidepost 2 – Values of Excellence:** Those deeply held shared beliefs that define what's really important in an organization – what people are willing to go to the mat for!
- ♦ **Guidepost 3 – Leadership for Excellence:** The willingness and ability of key individuals and groups in an organization to make critical decisions that challenge the status quo and inspire others to follow!
- ♦ **Guidepost 4 – Integration for Excellence:** The design and alignment of key roles, responsibilities and working relationships that focus people on shared mission, collaboration and shared rewards for achieving safe performance.
- ♦ **Guidepost 5 – Human Relationships for Excellence** - Policies, procedures and practices that respect and place a high value on people and strengthen the bonds between employees and the organization.
- ♦ **Guidepost 6 – Communication for Excellence:** Messaging systems and practices that assure timely dissemination of information and unfiltered flow of feedback that allows for the discovery of hidden truths within an organization.
- ♦ **Guidepost 7 – Measurement for Excellence:** Are we gaining knowledge by measuring what matters, or are we funneling ignorance by encouraging injury and illness rates that defer reporting, distort truth, and impede prevention? The key metrics communicate: What's really important in an organization; whether you're winning or losing the game; and, ultimately, if you'll stay in the game!
- ♦ **Guidepost 8 – Consequences for Excellence:** Performance management systems and practices, which effectively recognize, respond, and reinforce desired (safe) decisions, actions, and behaviors at all levels of an organization.



Employees perform safely when the destination (vision) and road map (strategy) to safety excellence are clearly defined, depicted, and communicated.