

# EVERY DROP COUNTS

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Learning from behavioral safety about Organizational culture



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# What is Organizational Culture?

- „The way we do things around here“ (Krapfl & Kruja, 2015)



# How do we do things around here?

Or what defines the culture at your workplace?

Examples from audience:

- Openness & honesty
- Caring
- Hostile
- Every man/woman for themselves



# Behavioral View on Culture

- Behavior is emitted and received by leaders and employees
- Behavior in an organizational context
  - Water cooler chats
  - Feedback from boss
  - Office newsletter
  - ...



# How is safety similar to Organizational Culture

- Small probability of an accident if you are not following rules
  - Consequences reinforce behavior
- Typical solution: enforce safety rules
  - Negative reinforcement & no discretionary effort
- BBS Solution:
  - Observations & positive reinforcement
  - Discretionary effort

# Behavior Based Safety Approach to Organizational Culture



→ Small probability of accountability & consequences

- Create an Organizational Culture to value Safety
  - employees perform tasks safely to prevent injury to themselves and others
- Values Based Safety Approach (McSween)
  - Tie it in with culture and values
  - People do their tasks safely and for the right reasons

# Mission & Vision

- Establish a clear statement of an organization's mission or vision

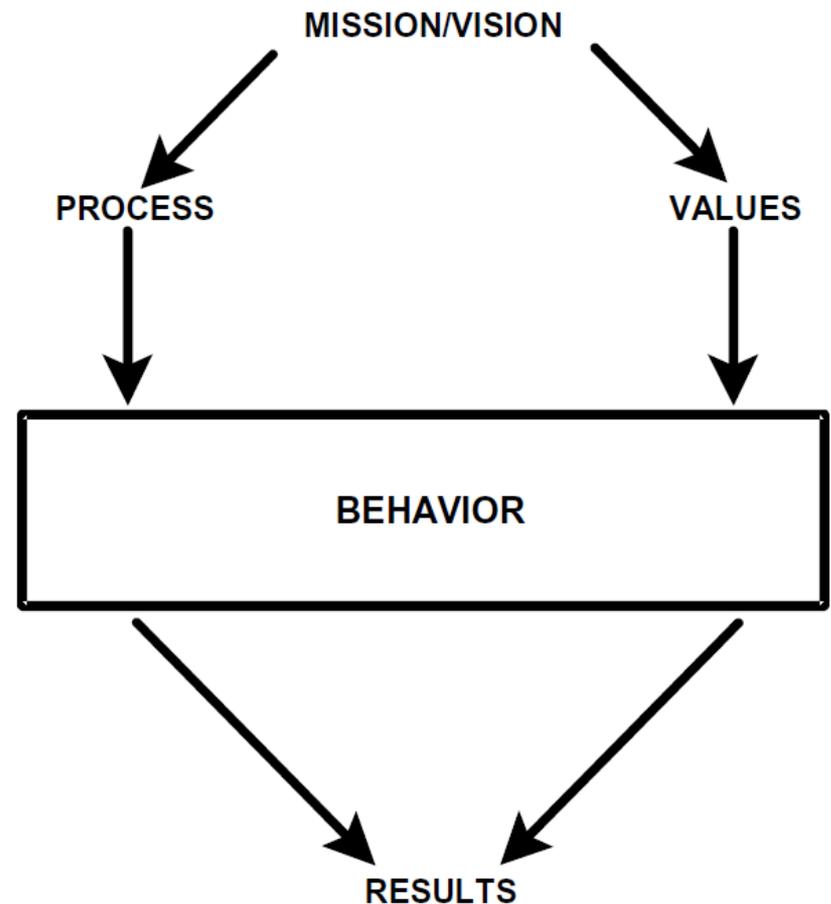


- Involve all levels of employees to establish a common purpose (e.g. Feedback, Input etc...)

# Mission & Vision as guiding principles

- Create a vision & mission
- Clarify how employees will work together
- Establish a process to achieve the desired results.

→ Alignment is important!!



McSween, 2003



# Values

- Statement or set of rules that prescribe the form of personal interactions preferred by a culture (such as the set of behaviors called “good manners”).
- Values serve as ground rules for interpersonal relationships within organizations.
- Without values one only does things for pleasure or to avoid

## Steps to Integrate Values into Organizational Culture

- 1) Clarifying Values
- 2) Establishing Values
- 3) Living Values



# Clarifying Values (Step by Step)

- Step 1: Brainstorm actions (pos/neg) likely to impact the process.
- Step 2: Pinpoint those practices.
- Step 3: Sort these practices into “value” categories.
- Step 4: Use values in designing your safety process.
- Step 5: Discuss values during kickoff meetings and training.
- Step 6: Use values as criteria for evaluation.

# Establishing Values

- Identify specific practices for each values
  - Value: continuous improvement
  - Practice: Resources committed to training & development
- Engage employees and provide situational examples
  - Add behavioral specificity
- Build long-term Commitment
  - Committing: acting in direction of what's important to you in the presence of obstacles
  - Why do you do things? → Personal Values
    - Link them to organizational culture & values



# Living Values

- Integrate values in organizational processes,
  - BBS: observations
  - OC: performance evaluation & feedback
- Provide reinforcement for these practices to maintain them
- Focus on the trickle down effects and wearing off over time
  - Leadership Support system



# Role of Leaders in Safety & Culture

- Model behaviors → living the culture
  - Commitment to values and culture
  - What does truly matter
- Provide (typically) powerful consequences
  - R+ & discretionary reinforcement
  - Feedback rules



# Take away

- Establish Mission & Vision
- Values incl. clarification



With input from employees,  
engage through discussions

- Make sure processes align with values
- Integrate values into feedback system
- Don't forget the leaders
- Need enough reinforcement in the system to support the organizational culture

# Culture is everything

- Focus on observable behavior not results
- Integrate positive reinforcement into the system (e.g. observations)
- Don't blame the rat!



# References

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# Discussion Ideas

- Organizational Culture approach through mission, vision & values → how can this work?
- Measurement of organizational culture (like in BBS with safety behaviors) → overkill or necessary for accountability and results?
- Emphasis on leader behaviors: too much, too little?