



Question No. 9 to develop your safety excellence strategy

How will you create alignment? If you're playing in a band, there are no prizes for finishing your piece of music first. Your objective is to contribute value by harmonizing as a whole. Strategic gravity pulls everyone's effort toward a common objective like a magnetic field attracts objects. First, win hearts and minds. Only then will hands and feet follow.

George Bernard Shaw once wrote that the single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

Culture really does eat strategy for breakfast. Strategy dies when ignored, but thrives in a supportive culture. Better communication opens the way for an exchange of ideas. When people are connected to each other, you have the opportunity to benefit from the collective intelligence of the whole. Through connection, communica-

tion and support, you create a space where everyone understands what value is and how they can contribute to it.

Establishing your strategic gravity field can also minimize resistance. Shared beliefs, values, perceptions and principles shape inside strategy into a self-sustaining force. Alignment isn't just agreement, nor is it unthinking obedience. Alignment is where people contribute value in their own ways, within the confines of strategic purpose.

If you've considered the previous questions in this series of articles, you now know what you want people to believe, value and do. You maintain this strategic alignment through constant communication. The Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw once wrote that the single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place. If people are to become aligned with purpose, they have to know what that purpose is. This is why clear communication is a valuable investment of resources. People need to understand what you say and want. Is your culture ready to accept the change you propose? What will your people support or resist? What is the culture's sense of

social identity? Understanding your culture clarifies what is and isn't acceptable.

Belonging to a group is a meaningful source of social identity. Support people by including them and giving each person a chance to weigh in with their views. After hearing ideas, it's the leader's job to arbitrate and explain the reasoning for or against a proposed course of action. People will need to see themselves as actors in the strategy. What parts will they play? What will the most important roles, responsibilities and results look like? Should incentives or performance management systems be different? What effect would change have?

The following questions will help you answer No. 9 in your strategy development processes: Can everyone tell you what's expected of them and why? How do you check that your message is understood? Is your narrative the right one? Does it include or alienate? Who is the best person to effectively deliver your message? Have you identified and involved influencers? Whose input is needed? What can your history of change initiatives tell you? What

observable behavior change do you see? Is your point of focus clear? What will people support and why? What will they reject? Is your message memorable? Can people recite it? What are your top three priorities? What are you going to discard? How do you know your tactics are aligned with strategy? How is your message crafted to be understood by different groups? What is your one point of focus?

As you get closer to the completion of your strategy, how will you create alignment? The final article in this series will focus on the final remaining question that must be asked and answered to create your safety excellence strategy.

Shawn M. Galloway is the president of ProAct Safety and co-author of several best-selling books. As a consultant, adviser and keynote speaker, he has helped hundreds of organizations within every major industry to improve safety strategy, culture, leadership and engagement. He is also the host of the highly acclaimed weekly podcast series, Safety Culture Excellence®.

For more information, call (936) 273-8700 or email info@ProActSafety.com.

SERVING THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMUNITY SINCE 1967.

NOW SCHEDULING

EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR FIRE CLASSES

600 Marina Drive, Beaumont, TX

FIRE

STRUCTURAL RESCUE

PUMP OPS

CONFINED SPACE

MEDICAL

INCIDENT COMMAND

HAZMAT



INDUSTRIAL RESCUE

409-924-0710
www.industrialrescue.com