

LEARNING CULTURE



Learning culture is one of the 4 elements of safety culture in the SOS model.

An organization with a strong learning culture encourages the sharing of safety-related information through incident/injury reporting, near miss reporting, and a fair or just culture. Although an abundance of incident or near miss reports may seem like a bad thing, it is important to be aware of these incidents so we can learn from them and take a proactive approach to managing safety.

In order to have an organization where a learning culture is prioritized, we need to steer away from a culture of blame. A blame culture takes a reactive approach to safety and often uses discipline as its main tool. Relying on discipline as a safety strategy can lead to underreporting of incidents and injuries.

If you're wondering if discipline is the answer, ask yourself this: Would this incident have occurred if a different employee was placed in the same scenario? If the answer is yes, this is likely a system problem.

Discipline can become a huge focus when employees are the only means of defence against a hazard. Strengthening the systems employees work in can mitigate risk and remove the over-reliance on employee behaviour.

It is important to remember that risk can be managed but can never be removed entirely. Creating a work environment that allows employees to fail safely is a better approach to risk than relying solely on employee behaviour. Humans are not machines.

"WE SHOULD NOT FOCUS ON THE ABSENCE OF FAILURES, BUT ON THE PRESENCE OF DEFENSES."

-TODD CONKLIN

