

# Changing Organizational Safety Culture in MENA: Innovations and Challenges

Jamal N. Al-Saeedi

Executive Director, iNeed® Leadership and Talent Development Center

Faculty Member, Chemical Engineering Department, PAAET (Kuwait)

Certified Trainer, Occupational Safety and Ergonomics (OSHA-USA)

# MENA: Where Continents Meet

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- The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is not a geographical region only
- It denotes an area in which Africa, Asia, and Europe interconnect.



# Presentation Outline

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- MENA Culture
- What is Safety Culture?
- How Important is Safety Culture?
- Organizational Safety Culture: How?
- Model MENA Case Study
  - SAFETY CULTURE ON SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**
- How to create and maintain workplace safety culture?
- How do we plan to continuously improve our organizational safety culture?
- Concluding Remarks

# Middle Eastern and North Africa Culture: General

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- Honor (self-respect to self-pride) and expectation of equal treatment regardless of wealth, position, or rank.
- Fierce sense of independence and resentment of imposed rules or decisions not sanctioned by social norms and customs.
- Strong loyalty to extended family, friends, and locality, and a great expectation of solidarity.
- Hospitality to guests and visitors.

# WHAT IS SAFETY CULTURE?

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*"The product of **individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, and patterns of behaviour** that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organization's health and safety management"*

U.K. Health and Safety Commission



# WHAT IS SAFETY CULTURE?



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# WHAT IS SAFETY CULTURE?

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- In an organization, it is the way safety is **perceived, valued, prioritized and integrated** in the activities. It reflects the **real commitment** to safety at all levels.
- It is not something you can get or buy; but **something** an **organization has**. Safety Culture can be **positive, negative or neutral**.
- It's essence is in what **people believe** about the **importance of safety**, including what they **think** their **peers and leaders** really believe about **safety's priority**.

# SAFETY CULTURE VALUES

**Individual and group values** – *definable yet difficult to measure*



## Responsible

We are leaders in Health, Safety and the Environment

We are good neighbours wherever we operate

We do business according to high ethical standards



## Respect

We involve people and communicate in a straightforward way

We work together - helping and developing each other

We are "One Company" - building on diversity



## Exceed

Our customers' and owners' success is our business

We win through commitment and innovation

We deliver what we promise - and a little bit more



## Nimbllicity™

We are fit, fast and flexible

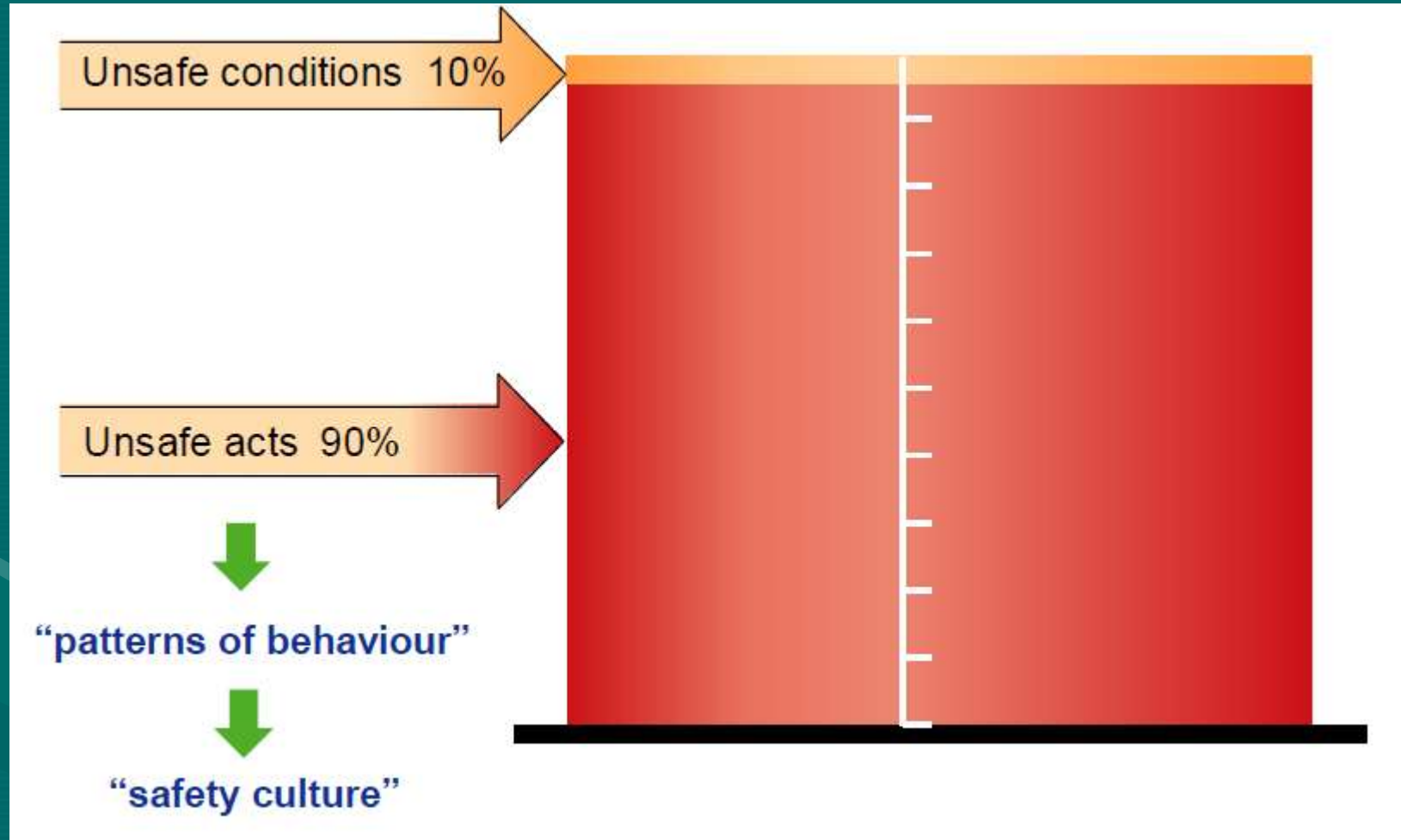
We create and capture opportunities

We seek the smart and simple solutions

**Responsible, Respect, Exceed, Nimbllicity™** define the way how we conduct business



# HOW IMPORTANT IS SAFETY CULTURE?



# HOW IMPORTANT IS SAFETY CULTURE?

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- Change safety culture and you improve the 90% contributing factor **not only to incidents but also to risks** waiting to materialize



Patterns of behavior:

Not holding the handrail  
Not following the procedure  
Not doing proper task risk assessment  
Taking a shortcut  
Not attending training  
Superficially involved in HSE  
Relying on luck



If you think safety is expensive ...  
try an accident!

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**“Safety is, without doubt, the most  
crucial investment we can make.  
And the question is not what it costs  
us, but what it saves.”**

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Robert E McKee, Chairman and Managing Director,  
Conoco (UK) Ltd



# WHY ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE?

## 4 GOOD REASONS

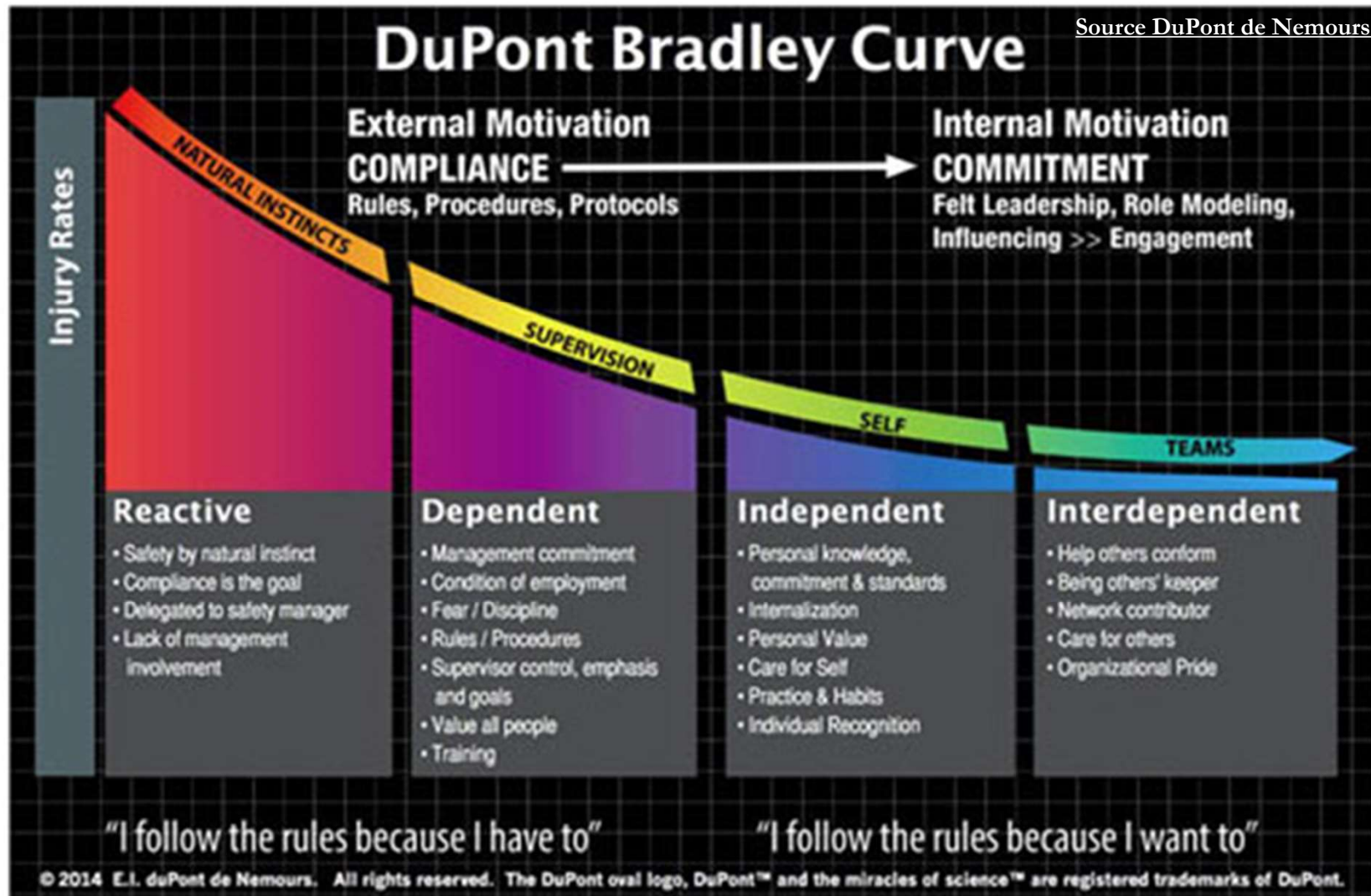
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# ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE: HOW?

## INFLUENCE BEHAVIORS & DEVELOP COMMITMENT



# ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE: HOW?

## INFLUENCE BEHAVIORS & DEVELOP COMMITMENT

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- **Reactive Stage**

Not our responsibility. Safety is a matter of luck, rather than management and “accidents will happen.” And over time, they do.



- **Dependent Stage**

Safety is rules to follow, defined by someone else.

Accident rates decrease and management believes that safety could be managed “if only people would follow the rules.”



# ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY CULTURE: HOW?

## INFLUENCE BEHAVIORS & DEVELOP COMMITMENT

### •Independent Stage

- Individuals take responsibility for their own safety.
- They assume safety is a personal concern and believe their individual actions will make the difference. This drives accidents reduction go further.



### •Interdependent Stage

- Teams of employees have taken the ownership for safety and take the responsibility for themselves and others.
- They do not accept low standards and risk-taking behavior.
- They share with others to understand their point of view.
- They believe real improvement can only be achieved with a collective commitment, and that zero injury is a goal that can be reach.



# Case Study of Organizational Safety Culture in MENA

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## THE SAFETY CULTURE ON SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

By Graeme Bowles, *et al* (Health and Safety & Respect for People 2012-2017)

Model MENA Case Study

# THE SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

## Model MENA Case Study

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### Summary:

- A comparative study of 8 developed and Arab countries shows that Saudi Arabia is performing poorest in terms of the rates of major injuries and fatalities, and embedding a safety culture in practice remains a challenge.
- Three key elements of a safety culture model are identified from the literature: person (safety climate), environment/ situation (safety management system) and behavior (safety behavior).



# THE SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

## Model MENA Case Study

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- A conceptual framework was proposed that adopts and integrates these elements for application to the Saudi construction industry.
- The framework was developed and tested using Saudi construction projects and the results were of benefit to contractors for measuring their own safety culture performance.

# Case Study: SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

Author & Year	Construction firms participated	company Size								
		Small			Medium			Large		
		Safety assessment methods			Safety assessment methods			Safety assessment methods		
		Mean Injury frequency rate	Mean Attitude score	Mean Checklist score	Mean Injury frequency rate	Mean Attitude score	Mean Checklist score	Mean Injury frequency rate	Mean Attitude score	Mean Checklist score
Jannadi & Al-Sudaini (1995)	16	43	---	---	19	---	---	11	---	---
Al-Utaibi (1996)	45	35.78	---	66.78% and rated "fair"	29.74	---	68.05% and rated "fair"	10.06	---	88.62% and rated "very good"
Al-Amoudi (1997)	122	---	16 % and rated poor	---	---	37% (poor)	---	---	45% (poor)	---
Jannadi and Assaf (1998)	14 sites	---	---	65.21 % and rated "fair"	---	---	---	---	84.55 % and rated "very good"	---
Baig (2001)	28	89.43	---	0.47 on a scale of 1 and rated (poor)	34.83	---	0.61 on a scale of 1 and rated "fair"	13.79	---	0.8 on a scale of 1 and rated "very good"
Alasmani (2010)	38	---	45.36 %, rated "poor"	---	---	---	---	---	75.23%, and rated "good"	---

Table 1: Summary of earlier studies of safety performance in Saudi Arabia

## Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

Country	Labour (Thousands)	No. injuries		No. deaths	Rate of major injuries / 100,000 employees/Year	Rate of fatal injuries /100,000 employees/Year	Date issued
United Kingdom	2404	Major	3286	53	254.1	3.4	2008
		Minor	6789		524.9		
Australia	926	Major	1621	55	175	5.9	2008
		Minor	13118		1416		
United Arab Emirates	1349	Serious	690*	20*	233.03*	6.7*	2008
United States Of America	13735	Major	164900	975	1200	9.7	2008
		Minor	316800		1500		
		Job transfer	207900		2300		
Kuwait	127	Serious	1257	13	1013	10.4	2008
*Jordan	374	Serious	2306	-	615.9	-	2008
*Bahrain	133	Serious	475	-	357.1	-	2008
Saudi Arabia	1248	Serious	38929	402	3117	28.19	2008
Max. Rate of Non-Fatal injuries (major)			3117 per 100,000 (Saudi Arabia)				
Max. Rate of Fatal injuries			28.19 per 100,000 (Saudi Arabia)				

*Table 2: The comparative study for 2008*

# Case Study: SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

Detailed Model, however doable and applicable

Depends on:

1- **Internal Psychological Factors:**

- Management Commitment
- Increasing safety knowledge & motivation

2- **External Observable Factors**

- Safety Management System
- Behavior Based Safety (BBS)

**Improved and effective safety culture**  
**Reductions in the incident rates**

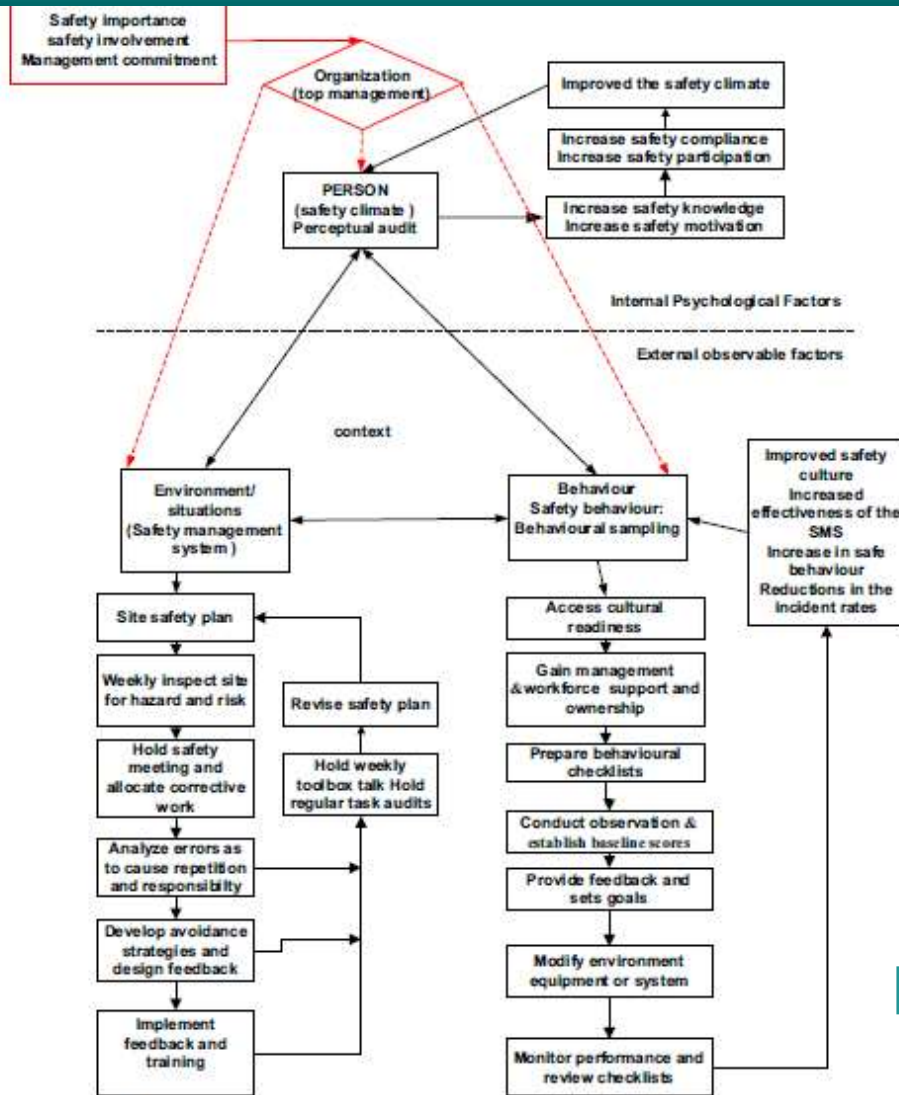


Figure 1: The Chaudhry's model with additional component in the red colour that need to be addressed

# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Framework for Safety Culture:

- **Person (Safety Climate)**
- **Safety Behavior**
- **Safety Management System**





# Case Study#1: SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES

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## 1- Person (Safety Climate)

It is the safety perception (value and belief) of employees of the safety management system of the organization. (product of safety)

**Main Confusion:** Overlap between the safety climate (perceptual approach from the bottom up) and safety culture the ability to manage the safety (organizational approach from the top down).

➡ slowing down the progress of improvement in safety performance



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE** **IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## 1- Person (Safety Climate)

The person (personal field) involves the middle management who are responsible at the project level for decision making (site engineers, project manager, workers, foremen, craftspeople etc.)



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE** **IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## 1- Person (Safety Climate)

Main influencing key:

the perception of senior management through considering the safety as important.

### Outcomes:

- Increasing employee knowledge
- Provision of motivation for compliance
- Participation in safety activities



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## 2- Safety Behavior

"How people think, behave, respond to a situation and how the environment influences people behaviors"

There is a shortcoming of understanding the value of safety and its priority within the workplace,

➡ unsafe behavior that leads to 80-90% of accidents will likely be the result




# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## 2- Safety Behavior

The relationship between the senior leadership and followers to be a process to achieve the organizational safety target.

 the top management plays a major role in the promotion of safe behavior for workers directly through their perception and behavior





# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## 2- Safety Behavior

Behavior should be changed to become a safe habit by using behavior-based safety (BBS), (a systematic approach to identify the critical behavior through observation techniques)



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

## 3- Safety Management System (SMS)

To provide a process for planning, implementing, and monitoring and reviewing safety performance.

SMS efficiency need support from the senior leadership ➡ (vital)

Commitment and involvement in safety within the organization by senior management depends on their perception of the value of safety.



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE** **IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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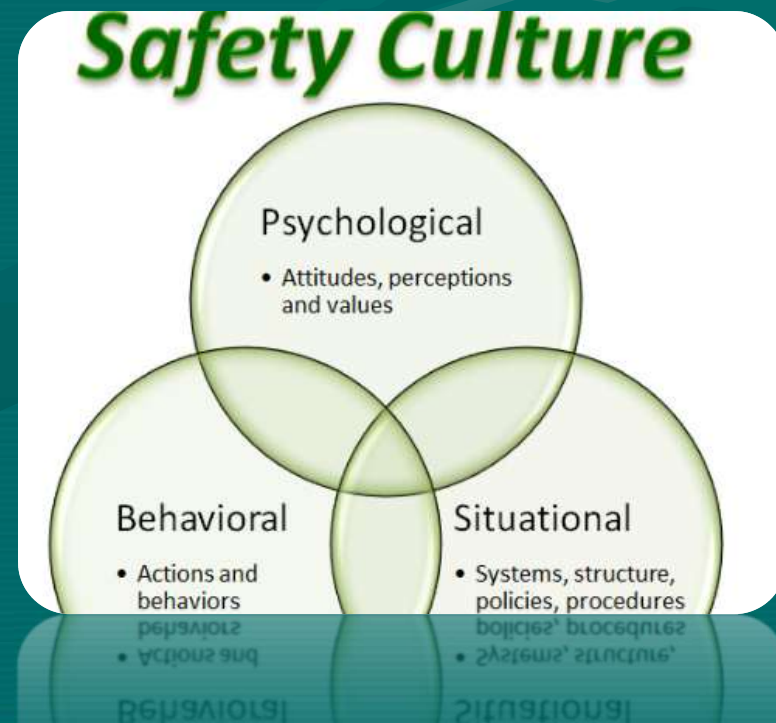
## THE MEASUREMENT TOOLS

The three main aspects of safety culture models:

- **Psychological**
- **Situational**
- **Behavioral)**

Quantitative  
and/or  
Qualitative

**It is a Separate mindset**



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE** **IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Measurement tool#1: Psychological

The psychological aspect is measured by quantitative approach using the safety climate questionnaire to measure attitude towards safety.


➡ (measurable)



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Measurement tool#2: Situational

The Situational aspect include such items as policies and safety management system, and can be measured by audits and regular inspections.  (measurable)


$$\% \text{ Audits Score} = (\text{Positive Answer}) / (\text{Total Questions}) \times 100$$



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Measurement tool#3: Behavioral

The behavioral aspect in operational sites of construction measure the workforce behavior periodically to determine whether they behave safely or unsafely to establish a baseline safety score.  (measurable)

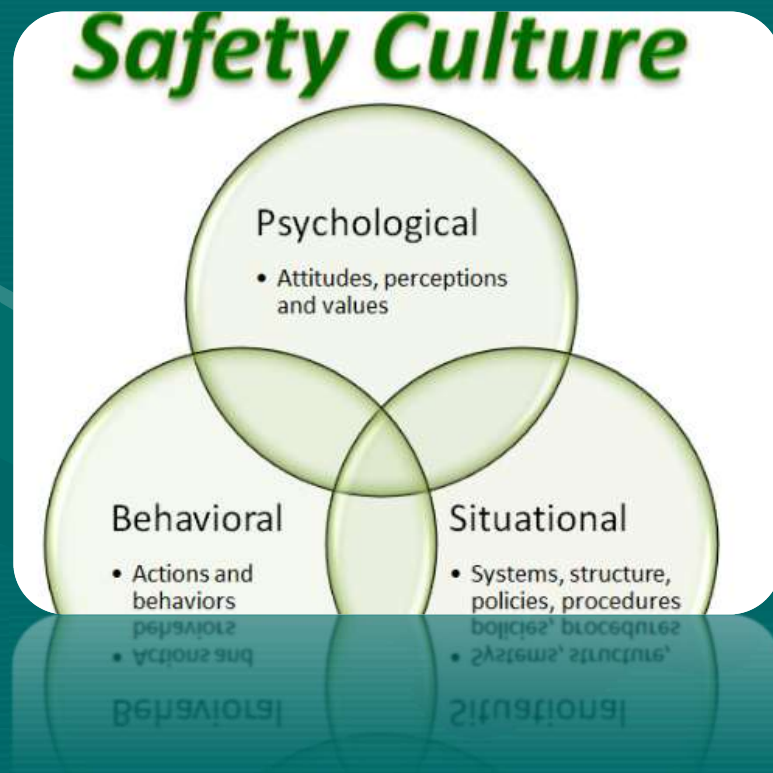
$$\% \text{ Safety Behavior} = (\text{Total Safe}) / (\text{Total Safe} + \text{Total Unsafe}) \times 100.$$

This scale helps to identify which element(s) (legs) is/are weaker and then attention can be paid in this area for corrective action.

# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE** **IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Measurement Tools



# Model MENA Case Study: **SAFETY CULTURE IN SAUDI CONSTRUCTION SITES**

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## Case Study Concluding Remarks

- As a model for MENA region, organization (top management) are not giving enough attention or sometimes ignored especially when implementing safety culture procedures in Saudi construction sites
- These limitations need to be developed and considered for the new conceptual framework due to their importance to the three original components. (Person, BBS and SMS )
- Safety culture need to be developed since fatalities and injuries have continued to constitute a major problem.
- Organizational interactions in improving safety. It is expected that the results of the study will be of immense benefit to contractors for measuring their own safety culture performance and paying attention to weaker aspects.

# How to create and maintain a comprehensive workplace safety culture?

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**7 elements should be considered as crucial features:**

1. Create workplace safety as a core value
2. Apply high standards of performance
3. Provide strong leadership
4. Document the cultural values
5. Empower employees at all levels
6. Include workplace safety in upper management decision-making
7. Steer periodic risk assessment measures.



# Organizational Safety Culture Change in MENA

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- The desired Safety Culture in MENA region can not just be imposed by rules or standards.
- It has to be continuously constructed, expressed and reaffirmed throughout organization day to day routine.
- It is a function of personnel perception on how things really happen in the organization (shared values), and not of the prescribed work systems or aspirations (espoused values).
- Changes have to occur in the underlying assumptions level (Schein, 1989).



# How do we plan to continuously improve our organizational safety culture?

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- Management commitment
- Openly communicated results internally and externally
- Contractor Safety Management (COMA)
- Observation tours & having a Guide to Safe Behavior
  - Analyses of incidents with focus on unsafe acts and behaviors contributing to the accident.
  - Incidents can be prevented or at least minimized
  - Life Saving Rules



# How do we plan to continuously improve our organizational safety culture?

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# Concluding Remarks

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- Values drive our actions
- Safe workplace is not only our moral responsibility but business imperative –safe operation is good business
- Even if wording "it starts from the top or it does not start at all" sounds like a cliché, it is so true
- However management needs everybody with them to reach healthy safety culture as you cannot buy it (a lot of small steps lead to giant leap)



# Thank you for your attention



