

## Safety

Safety in the workplace is everyone's responsibility - not much argument there. Differences of opinion seem to arise, however, when deciding exactly what those responsibilities are and who is responsible for what. As Stephen Covey put it: "People and their managers are working so hard to be sure things are done right, that they hardly have time to decide if they are doing the right things." Or maybe W. Edwards Deming said it best: "Best efforts are not enough, you have to know what to do."

Achieving safety success is especially challenging for large organizations trying to build and sustain a safety culture spread across multiple locations and distributed operations. Furthermore, it is difficult and somewhat pointless to separate safety from the other closely aligned areas of risk: quality, environment, and health. Indeed, safety is logically and functionally included with these three risk areas as QEHS, with the letters changing position depending on the area of concentration. Regardless of the positioning, or if quality is included as a fundamental underlying theme, it doesn't make sense to talk about one without the others. In fact, the more integrated the various areas of risk become the more meaningful and productive the resulting risk management program will be. Many organizations have found advantages to aggregating all risk management efforts within a unified and comprehensive framework. Enterprise risk management (ERM) is often used as a general term to this integrated framework.

The essence of any QEHS risk management program can be measured, in part, by its ability to predict and prevent injuries, accidents, or any undesirable consequence to the manifestation of risk. But building or improving the performance of your safety program can be quite challenging. Organizations often face several problems in their start-up or improvement efforts.

- Multiple (global) locations with too much data spread across too many locations
- Lack of strong leadership and a governance structure committed to safety
- Lack of a vibrant culture of safety
- Lack of an integrated enterprise-wide risk management plan
- Varying degrees of commitment to participation in safety programs among operations
- Inconsistent processes, managed from the bottom-up, with no accountability
- Lack of engagement by management and employees
- Safety processes not being followed and/or enforced.
- Not using technology effectively
- Lack of a standard and consistent approach for collecting, recording, and analyzing data
- Not understanding lagging and leading indicators and how they tie together
- Unsure of how to use/analyze leading safety indicators and what actions to take.
- No way to measure quality of observations
- No way to measure effectiveness of training

Whether you are just starting out on your journey for better safety or involved in continuous improvement efforts, these problems can be solved by proven best practices and effective use of technology. The key is to start at the top. Strong leadership and a governance structure committed to safety are essential requirements for success. Just as important is the selection of an integrated software system and the professional services that are used.

ERMcs has the experience you need to help you evaluate and choose the best software solution and professional services to meet your needs.