



INPO Safety Culture Trouble Signs

Finger Pointing Instead of Teamwork

- Individuals who question current practices or provide alternative points of view are not considered team players.
- The initial management reaction to a plant event is to “find the guilty.”
- “Good catches” are not celebrated and publicized.
- There are “clay layers” in the organization where downward and/or upward communication stops.
- Workers exhibit symptoms of “malicious compliance.”
- Workers are reluctant to speak candidly from fear of retribution or criticism.
- Unresolved conflicts among groups or individuals are prevalent.
- Minority opinions are not encouraged or are stifled.



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Assumptions Rather than Verification

- People tend to jump to the obvious conclusions and explanations rather than exploring plausible alternatives.
- Management decisions seem to be made without a thorough understanding of the facts or without staff input.
- Individuals don't seem to recognize things can – and sometimes do – go wrong, and they don't anticipate the worst possible outcomes.
- PRA information and insights are not used as an input to manage safety margins.
- Problems are “pencil-whipped” away by engineering analyses.
- The design basis is not maintained – drawings, calculations, safety analyses are out of date and/or not easily retrievable.
- Managers and supervisors are not in the plant personally looking at equipment problems.



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Unfounded Optimism vs. Facing Facts

- The “burden of proof” for resolving important safety questions is inverted (i.e., when a safety question is identified, rather than requiring the organization to prove safety margins remain adequate, management forces individuals to prove the problem creates undue risk).
- Changes in employee concern program metrics go unnoticed or are not investigated for possible degradations in the culture.
- Workers have a perception that managers only want to hear positive reports.
- The organization is not actively searching for safety culture “blind spots.”



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Unfounded Optimism vs. Facing Facts (cont.)

- Input from independent sources is not valued.
- People live with problems.
- Outside auditors are not allowed to see unvarnished performance because activities are “managed” in their presence.



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Satisfaction with Status Quo instead of Challenging Goals

- The organization seems overconfident and isn't striving for continuous improvement – the numbers look good and the plant is living off past successes.
- Standards are set by outside influences rather than the site.
- Through isolation or complacency, the organization does not understand what levels of performance are realistically achievable.
- Workers and managers tolerate longstanding equipment problems, process deficiencies, and human errors.
- The importance of some issues is not recognized and some are not treated as “significant emotional events” to help communicate the need for change and internalize lessons learned.



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Mixed Signals instead of Consistent Safety Message

- Nuclear safety is not very visible – it is assumed.
- Schedule adherence is valued more than taking the time to do the right thing.
- Executives seem only to recognize/reward actions that kept the plant on line or contributed to quick resumption of operations.
- Managers and workers don't make suggestions that cost money because of perceived budget constraints.
- Workers (including non-station personnel) are unsure if they will be rewarded or criticized for stopping an activity in the face of uncertainty.
- Procedures are not consistently used – they are considered guidelines only.



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Mixed Signals instead of Consistent Safety Message (cont.)

- Operations shift managers aren't viewed as key members of the station management team.
- When evaluating problems, managers appear interested only in satisfying "requirements."
- People don't intervene and correct coworkers when they observe rules not being followed or standards not being met.



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"Flavor of the Month" as opposed to Well-Managed Change

- The pace of change is excessive, creating a sense of confusion.
- People are busy doing unimportant things or meeting arbitrary due dates.
- Work hours are poorly managed, and overtime is high.
- Management and bargaining units have longstanding unhealthy relationships.
- Managers overly focus on the near-term, with crisis management being the rule.



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“Flavor of the Month” as opposed to Well-Managed Change (cont.)

- Site managers aren’t adept at withstanding overemphasis from corporate management on reducing costs, cutting resources, and shortening schedules.
- Personnel are not informed of the basis for important decisions that impact them.
- Managers are changed too frequently.



INPO Safety Culture Trouble Signs

Lack of Trust Equipment Will Perform

- Equipment performance problems continually distract the organization.
- Operators lack confidence in the reliability of equipment.
- Workers don’t strive to maximize equipment availability.
- Maintenance backlogs are high.
- Unplanned entries into technical specification limiting conditions of operation are viewed as normal.