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An Integral Approach to Safety

Most organizations say they are committed to safety. Many espouse a zero-injury focus.

Others say they are oriented around preventing injuries and incidents. Creating an environment that is injury and incident free is the right thing to do - and it is also good for business.

And so, most find themselves *saying* things like "zero injuries," but not really believing that it is possible. The notion of zero injuries becomes code for *doing the best we can by reducing the number of injuries or lowering the incident rates*.

Some organizations are now focusing on **preventing** incidents and injuries. Many managers and supervisors express frustration, saying "You can only prevent what you can predict." Eliminating injury through prevention programs, policies, and personnel requires an enormous amount of resources and still does not get at the heart of the question: "Why do good people get hurt?"

Utilizing an integral approach to safety will help to **create** a culture that is incident and injury free. When in place, this environment will produce the breakthrough in safety performance for which organizations are striving.

There are four approaches to consider in safety management: *systems-based, culture-based, behaviour-based, and commitment-based*. By examining the development in each approach, we see the emergence of three distinct developmental phases of safety management: *reactive (incident-based), preventive (process-based), and creative (vision-based)*.

Carefully analyzing each of these areas will help develop a map for your overall safety management.

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This map represents - the three phases overlaying the four approaches - 'An Integral Approach to Safety'.



Safety emerges not only from a map or guide but from the people who believe a safe working environment can be achieved and sustained on a daily basis. Provide systems that make it obvious that management knows *what really works* in safety (measured in performance and captured in systems), while also nurturing a culture that talks about safety almost exclusively in terms of *what really matters* (individuals and relationships). Successfully creating a safe working environment can spawn organizational growth in areas such as productivity. As you begin to have success you will see that there is nothing in your organization that you cannot work on through the window of safety.