

Weekly Safety Topic

Human Performance Principle #6 – Management’s Response to Failure Matters

Management shapes how an organization learns by their response to failure. As a leader, your response signals to employees whether it is safe to talk about workplace realities—hazards, near misses, and even actual events. Management’s response to both failure and success are observed, felt, mimicked, and will spread until they define our organization’s culture.

A leader’s role is to set clear expectations, provide resources and support, and determine what building capacity means for our organization. By clearly demonstrating an unwavering commitment to learning and improvement we can successfully change the way we think safety.



Human Performance Principles

1

PEOPLE MAKE MISTAKES

Error is normal. Even the best people make mistakes.

2

FAILURES CAN OCCUR SAFELY

It's not *if*, it's *when*. We will always plan and execute our work as if failure is going to happen today.

3

CONTEXT INFLUENCES BEHAVIOR

Workers **do what they do for a reason**, and the reason makes sense to the worker given the context of the situation.

4

VIOLATIONS ARE RARELY, IF EVER, MALICIOUS

Blame fixes nothing.

5

INCIDENTS CAN STEM FROM NORMAL DEVIATIONS

How we imagine work takes place is different from how work **actually takes place**.

6

MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSE TO FAILURE MATTERS

Managers shape how the organization learns by their **reaction to failure**.

7

LEARNING IS A DELIBERATE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

Learning is a strategic and operational choice towards improvement.