



# Measuring the effectiveness of safety training, communication

How much value are you obtaining from your safety communication and training efforts? In the 1950s, a simple model was created to measure training effectiveness. How quickly we forget. Dr. Donald L. Kirkpatrick, when looking at opportunities to determine the effectiveness of training efforts, identified four levels to evaluate. The first level focuses on how the people receiving the training reacted to the information or experience (reaction). The second level has to do with evaluating the change in knowledge, skillset and attitude (learning). The third level looks at a change or continuance of observable behavior within the work setting (behavior). Finally, he looked at the measurable benefits the organization realized following the training (results).

Too many businesses tend to look only at the amount of effort put into safety communication and training and then the results yielded. They falsely believe when results improve, it is due to the effort applied. This is the correlation-causation trap.

In several recent consulting engagements, we have focused others on better understanding the Return on Safety Attention

(R.O.S.A.) and Safety Intelligence Quotient (Safety I.Q.) resulting from their efforts.

## R.O.S.A.

Return on attention is a common measurement among marketing professionals and can easily be applied to safety. If you have a 30-minute safety meeting or training session and four important topics are discussed, how much information sticks with people? If you poll the attendees 30 days following the event and most only remember half of what was discussed, you have a 50-percent R.O.S.A. leveraging Kirkpatrick's model, a level-two R.O.S.A. metric.

Level-three thinking measures changes in behavior as a result of the meeting. If a call to action to nudge an increase in discretionary safety efforts was the focus, did it change behavior in the workforce? Behavior is observable, and thus measurable. R.O.S.A. for behavior could also be a metric and a more effective indicator of the value derived from the effort.

## Safety I.Q.

In 1951, the National Safety Council

released a 15-minute, black-and-white video — to note the marketing language, it highlighted being available with sound — with the goal of increasing the public's knowledge of accident prevention strategies in home, traffic and recreational sports. It was titled, "What is Your Safety I.Q.?" What a valuable question. Do your employees and leaders know the most important things about your safety efforts, program or system?

If your safety management system has six elements, with a quiz covering the most important aspects individuals should know with five questions each, the highest Safety I.Q. for someone who answered everything correctly would be 30. Moreover, if you have a high average Safety I.Q., what is the behavioral R.O.S.A. from this knowledge?

Most organizations never achieve the results they pursue because they spend most of their time measuring and focusing attention on what they don't want rather than on what they do. We want people to appreciate our safety communication and training. We certainly want people to know and do certain things so when we obtain

improvement in performance and cultural results, we know why. We will all be held accountable for the results yielded from our efforts. Those with measurements on R.O.S.A and Safety I.Q. are much more focused on efficiency and value-addition. When this occurs, not only do the results improve, but so does the appreciation of those involved or affected by the training and communication.

Shawn M. Galloway is the president of ProAct Safety and co-author of several best-selling books. As a consultant, adviser and keynote speaker, he has helped hundreds of organizations within every major industry improve safety strategy, leadership, culture and performance. He is also the host of the highly acclaimed weekly podcast series *Safety Culture Excellence*®.

Galloway is a member of BIC Media Solutions' speakers bureau. For more information about BIC Media Solutions' speakers bureau, contact Earl Heard at earlheard@bicalliance.com or call (800) 460-4242.

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