

Safety Must Deliver More Than Customers Expect

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Competitive advantage in the marketplace no longer lies with managing and beating competition; rather, it lies with creating and capturing new value with the customer, resulting in secured loyalty. Too often, attempts to improve safety include language such as “safety first,” “safe production,” and “safety mindset.” The focus is on making safety a priority, a value, an integral responsibility. The perception, real or not, is that safety must compete with production. This is outdated thinking.

When our goal is to beat the competition, we will fail because our competition (i.e., production), the drivers of business revenue and profit, are at the heart of business strategy. We must have a strategy to support, rather than conflicts with, business strategy. Business strategy eats safety strategy all day long.

Real strategy is a framework of choices the organization makes to capture and deliver value. Strategy is “how do we win?” Future safety improvement efforts will focus on corporate safety strategy. Far too many organizations do not have a true strategy for safety excellence.

Zero injuries, engagement, and hearts and minds are all by-products - not the goal or focus - when safety evolves to first capture and deliver value. Take a hard look. Do our communications, meetings, programs, evaluations, and observations add value? Do we create excitement? Do we have potential customers standing in line to be a part of what we all know is important and adding value on and off the job?

Successful companies must deliver new, even unanticipated value, or they lose market share to those that do. Safety can create this type of value - with a strategy and focus on delivering more than the customers know they need. If the perceived value of safety is only achieving zero injuries, why will you be needed once you provide that to your customers?



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