



# Should safety pros work themselves out of their jobs?

**D**ear fellow safety professional, please abandon the idea you should work yourself out of a job. When you say this, you reinforce the idea your job is to reduce risk rather than add value. The two are not interchangeable.

If you reduce injuries to zero and provide the perception you have accomplished the desired goal, the company no longer needs you, right? Unless you are seeking project-based turnaround work, few organizations seeking strategic leaders for their safety efforts are interested in job hoppers. They are looking for those who have committed to transformational change and realize transformation doesn't occur during the timeline of a project. It takes time — at least to those who get it.

With the increase in social platforms like LinkedIn and the many community groups found within — safety conferences and private consulting — the misguided idea the safety professional should work himself out of a job appears to be an increasing popular theme.

Risk reduction and zero injuries are all by-products of the value of safety, not

the goals. When you move your focus and goals from results to value contribution, you realize (and so do those you support) safety is more about contribution to quality, productivity, customer experience and employee experience rather than the reduction of cost, failures and undesirable events. How does safety add value to productivity, quality, morale and the customers of the business? If you were excellent in safety, not just in the results but also in the culture and shared mindset of safety, how would this improve the lives of those impacted by your safety efforts?

Should zero injuries be achieved, is it due to purposeful intent or luck? If by luck, was sustainable value created? Getting to zero injuries is easy. Most companies get there every year on Jan. 1. The difficulty is Jan. 2 and Jan. 3. All safety professionals will at some point acknowledge the most challenging aspect about safety isn't going a set period of time with no injuries; it is, however, knowing how it was achieved and sustaining the results.

Many have realized the growing importance of strategy for safety excel-

lence and leadership-defined safety roles, responsibilities and results to help cement the effort and create reinforcement from the levels of leadership. When leadership support is observable, consistent and universal, this ideal state might lead the safety professional to think, "If everyone, especially management, owns safety, I have done my job." You have if you think current great results and the culture supporting it will sustain and never be disrupted by changes in regulation or the business marketplace.

I'm certainly not advocating keeping staff who accomplish the task on longer than necessary. If they don't add additional value, the business must move on. But that is precisely my point. The journey to excellence in safety must include the focus on culture and not just results. When the focus moves from results to performance and compliance to culture, no one can predict the future, and what we view as acceptable risks today as part of the business may be viewed as unacceptable tomorrow when we realize there will always be a better way.

Some risks will always exist, and cultures are forever changing. The tools used to improve safety performance and culture can easily be used and expanded into other areas of operations if an increase in value is the objective. Plus, when we focus on adding value, not only does it create better results but also a better environment — one where people actually want to get involved and help the safety professional, because they see him as an ally rather than a compliance cop. Safety adds value in many ways. If you don't believe me, perhaps that is precisely the problem that needs to be addressed.

*Shawn M. Galloway is the coauthor of "STEPS to Safety Culture Excellence" and president of ProAct Safety. He has helped hundreds of organizations within every major industry internationally achieve and sustain excellence in performance and culture. He is also the host of the highly acclaimed weekly podcast series "Safety Culture Excellence."*

**For more information, contact Galloway at (936) 273-8700 or info@ProActSafety.com. ●**



**Domestic Leaders in Field Welded Tank Supply**  
ATEC Steel is an industry leader in field-weld tank construction and specialty steel fabrication. Our facility utilizes the latest state-of-the-art equipment. Our in-house Quality Assurance and Quality Control Program satisfies the stringent requirements of API, AWWA, ASME, AISC and other specified codes.


**ATEC Specialties Include:**

- Cone Roof Tanks
- Umbrella Roof Tanks
- Dome Roof Tanks
- Open Top Tanks
- Internal Floating Roofs
- Double Wall Tanks
- Sloped / Shovel Bottom Tanks
- External Floating Roofs
- Ground Reservoirs
- Clairifiers
- Digesters
- Dry Bulk Silos and Hoppers
- Foundation Installation
- Field Applied Coatings
- Shop Built Tanks
- ASME Pressure Vessels

**In today's market, ATEC Steel commands some significant advantages over other suppliers:**

- Key employees with extensive backgrounds
- Proven industry experience
- Single point of contact project management
- Low cost - high quality producer
- Precision fabrication
- Reliable performance on every project
- Commitment to safety - Industry low TRIR and EMR ratings, member of ISNetwork
- Commitment to "Golden Rule" customer service

100 West 5th Street • Baxter Springs, KS 66713  
PH: 877.457.5352 • FAX: 620.856.5197 • [www.atecsteel.com](http://www.atecsteel.com)



Choose certainty. Add value.

**TÜV SÜD America**  
Chemical, Oil and Gas

Check out our e-newsletter!

Our Chemical, Oil and Gas E-ssentials delivers updates on the latest industry regulations and standards, critical to your operations. Its technically-oriented content features practical advice from our experts, supporting your compliance to current and future safety, quality, and environmental requirements.

Subscribe now at  
[www.tuv-sud-america.com/e-ssentials-subscription](http://www.tuv-sud-america.com/e-ssentials-subscription)

TÜV SÜD America 1475 E. Sam Houston Parkway South, Suite 100 Pasadena, Texas 77503  
(800) 747-4099 info@tuv-sud-america.com [www.tuv-sud-america.com/c.o.g](http://www.tuv-sud-america.com/c.o.g)