



The *Carnivale* of Risk

How Effective Leaders Enhance Worker Safety in the Public Sector

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Learning Objectives

- Focus on the public sector
- Describe leadership's role in workplace safety
- Identify various leadership styles and their impact on worker safety
- Describe real-life examples of leadership's impact on safety



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Why Research This?

State/Local Government Experience

- 1,949,440 work-related injuries

2011-2018

National Safety Council, 2020

Direct and Indirect Costs

Medical Treatment

Lost Wages

Overtime

Insurance

Staffing Backfill

Lower Productivity

Decreased Morale

Administrative Time



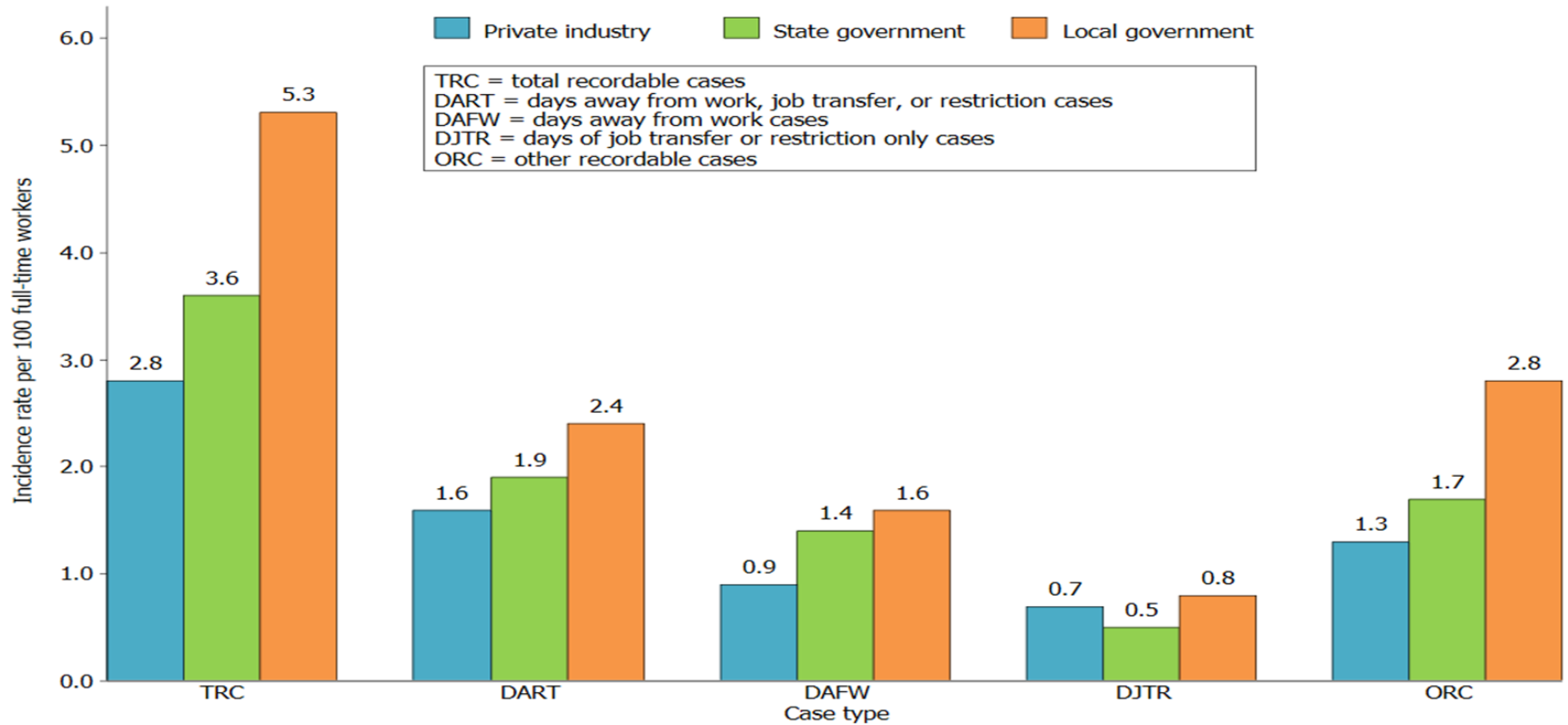
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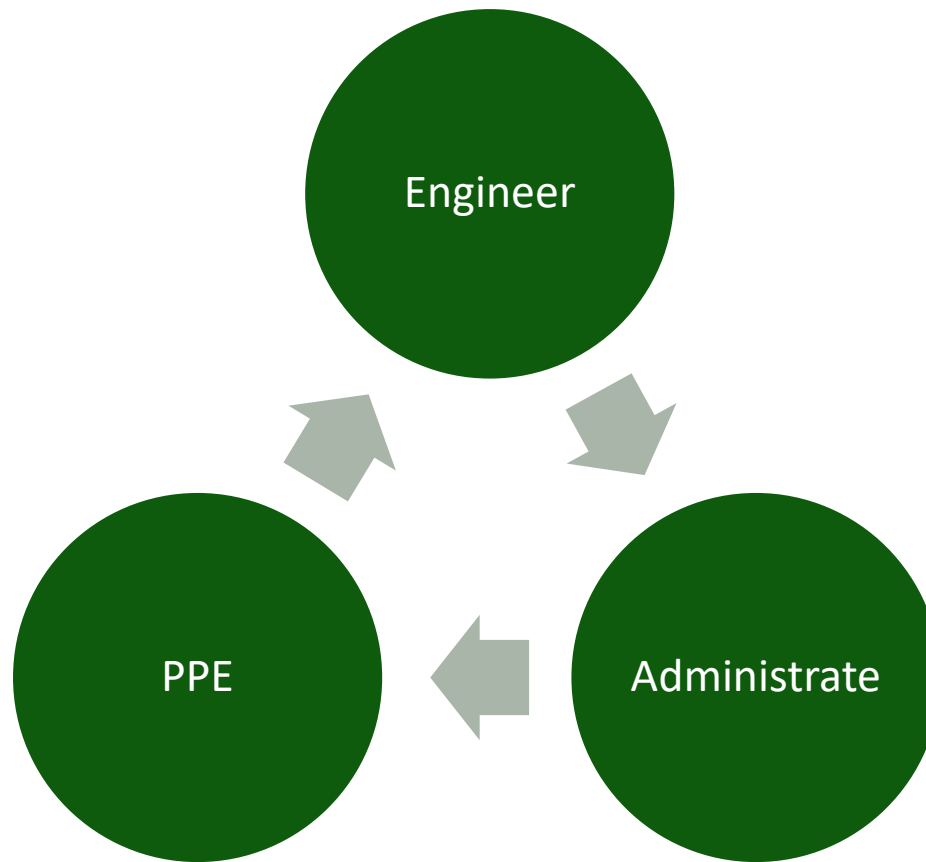
Private vs. State & Local Governments

Nonfatal occupational injury and illness incidence rates by case type and ownership, 2018



Continuing a trend since 2008, the total recordable cases (TRC) incidence rate of injuries and illnesses remained highest among local government workplaces (5.3 cases per 100 full-time equivalent workers), compared to state government (3.6 cases) and private industry (2.8 cases) workplaces. The local government TRC rate increased from 5.0 cases in 2017 to 5.3 cases in 2018, while state government and private industry rates remained statistically unchanged.

The Big Picture on Safety Management



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Leadership's Likely Impact on Worker Safety



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Safety Leadership
Insights From Military Research

By Gary L. Winn

The need for leader development in industry and within the safety and engineering communities in particular is the topic of many articles, presentations and conversations. This article explores the need to consider organizational research conducted by military research psychologists, sociologists and economists. Two audiences within the safety and engineering communities might best gain from military organizational research. Working safety and engineering professionals are often challenged to become leaders who can see the big picture and act as change agents. These professionals can benefit from understanding how leaders emerge and are cultivated internally in the military. In addition, many safety professionals or engineers just starting their careers have not held jobs while in school and, consequently, have missed opportunities to see how businesses operate and how authentic leaders act. Over the past few years, the author has been building an experimental graduate-level course at West Virginia University (WVU). The course is designed to offset these missed opportunities for safety and engineering students. WVU surveys indicate, for example, that only a few young people entering these professions have worked summer jobs. In addition, they have not traveled widely, do not read widely, and have not managed so much as a fast food restaurant shift or a swimming pool. On the more hopeful side of the ledger, the same surveys suggest that these future professionals are almost intuitively altruistic, have good common sense and know they are expected to be future leaders in their fields. As Winn, Williams and Feeley (2013) explain: In the pair of questions ranking at the highest affirmative response of the entire survey, our respondents indicated that learning about leadership in their career preparation was "important in a person's career path." The same extraordinarily high proportion, 98%, suggested that to practice what they might have learned about leadership outside the classroom was "important in a person's career path." *Students know that learning about leadership and its practice is valuable to these respective career paths including safety, engineering, social and behavioral sciences, and the military, among others. [otinal emphasis]*

In preparing the course, many existing academic syllabi on leadership were reviewed. Although a few contained respected academic treatises on leadership and were research based (e.g., Northouse, 2013), most required texts were volumes of well-packaged, bulleted words of wisdom presented as empirical work on leader development. While visiting military schools during the data-gathering process, the author concluded that many teaching safety and engineering academic courses in leadership are either unaware of or actively ignore the bounty of information and research on organizational behavior written by military academicians and scholars. This finding was intriguing and raised some questions: Why did the military leadership syllabi used at Virginia Tech or Virginia Military Institute (VMI), for example, include research by nonmilitary researchers such as Edgar Schein, Geert Hofstede, Kurt Lewin or Jean Piaget (among many available), yet the academic leadership syllabi reviewed contained no mention of Thomas Kolditz, Michael Matthews, Doug Crandall or Patrick Sweeney (among the dozens of military researchers available). Are military theorists and researchers somehow hidden from nonmilitary academics or are they simply being ignored? More research revealed that some academic and military institutions do exchange concepts. For example, Harvard Business School (an academic institution) regularly conducts field trips to Gettysburg, PA, to analyze the strategic and logistic decisions made by James Longstreet and Robert E. Lee compared to George Meade and Joshua Chamberlain. During these trips, military historians and business analysts are on hand to provide details about the difficulty of making life and death decisions under extreme conditions. As more materials were reviewed, it became clear that safety and engineering undergraduate

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Leadership's Likely Impact on Worker Safety

Scholars repeatedly emphasize the role of organizational leadership in a safety program

Leadership has long been considered an antecedent for the delivery of high quality and efficient services in government (Hassan, Hatmaker, 2014)

Safety performance can be tied to individuals, leaders, and the organization working together through systematic programs, processes, and training to achieve safe job performance (Kowalski, Summers, 2019)



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Leadership's Likely Impact on Worker Safety

Scholars repeatedly emphasize the role of organizational leadership in a safety program

For the systematic approach to safety to be effective, the alignment of behaviors of the organization, leaders, and individuals is needed (Kowalski, Summers, 2019)

Ineffective leadership, specifically when it comes to safety, hinders an organization's ability to achieve success (Cooper, 2015)



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Jorge's Take



- Leadership in the City Manager's Office
 - Role of leadership at all levels of the organization
 - Leadership from a Risk Manager's Perspective
-
- Safety is not a meeting, an email or a tailgate discussion, it is in *everything* you do. Employees take notice



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A Quick and Funny Video on Leadership

[Leadership-cartoon - YouTube](#)

Can we surmise from this video that leadership can also reduce workplace injuries?



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Common Leadership Styles

1
Coach
Motivational

2
Visionary
Progress-focused and inspirational

3
Servant
Humble and protective

4
Autocratic
Authoritarian and result-focused

5
Laissez-faire or hands-off
Autocratic and delegatory

6
Democratic
Supportive and innovative

7
Pacesetter
Helpful and motivational

8
Transformational
Challenging and communicative

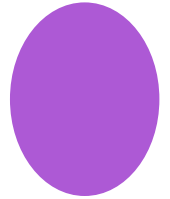
9
Transactional
Performance-focused

10
Bureaucratic
Hierarchical and duty-focused

Your Leadership Style

What's your leadership style?

What are leadership styles in your workplace, regardless of effectiveness?



Transactional

- Focuses on obtaining results by conforming to an existing structure and system of rewards and penalties
- Transactional leaders consider their agents as responsible for their own work, and utilize monitoring and consequence management systems to ensure adherence
 - Cooper, 2015



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Applying Transactional Leadership to Safety

- Consequence-based management is not new to the field of Occupational Safety & Health (*think OSHA....*)
- A persistent belief in the safety industry is that unsafe behaviors are the primary cause of injuries (Gantt, 2017)
 - Organized and practical approaches for rewarding and punishing certain safety-related behaviors
- As a result, tools have been developed to address unsafe behaviors
 - Training initiatives and other *behavior-based* safety solutions



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Transformational

- Endeavors to evoke change in workers' value systems to align them with organizational goals

Transformational leaders shape and transform company culture by knowing where they want to go and doing everything possible to make it happen

- Cooper, 2015



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Applying Transformational Leadership to Safety

- Achieve collective safety goals by creating an environment necessary for success and participation.
 - Generate higher levels of commitment by motivating public employees to be more heavily invested in the goals and objectives of a safety program
- A Transformational leader would endeavor to motivate employees to place their own safety and that of others onto their own shoulders.
- Encouraging active participation in safety-promoting activities.



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Servant

- Endeavor to work closely with workers on safety-related issues, building expectations and responsibility into the fabric of the relationship

Using tools like coaching, open communication, and resource development, servant leaders seek cooperation and dialogue for improving relationships and thus aligning behaviors for improving safety performance

- Cooper, 2015



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Applying Servant Leadership to Safety

- Servant leaders strive for a culture that is imbedded with safety; they aim for authority rather than power through interactive processes.
 - Primarily done through relationship building and sharing responsibility
- Leaders are actively involved in cooperative activities promoting safety, like safety committees and training.
- Actively promote and receive ideas of the workforce on how to improve safety



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Examine these Leadership styles to.....

Transactional

- Motivate employees to work safely through rule setting, monitoring, and consequences for non-compliance

Transformational

- Motivate employees to work safely through engagement, partnerships, and a true understanding of organizational ideals

Servant

- Motivate employees to work safely through culture changing events, promoting communications and partnerships with management and cooperation

Studies on How Leadership Impacts Safety

Sharon Clarke in 2012 developed a safety leadership model that incorporated Transactional and Transformational leadership styles.

- Both were shown to be effective in certain aspects of safety management
- Transactional – *motivated employees to comply with rules and regulations*
- Transformational – *Encouraged active participation in safety activities*

Most Notably: *When considering safety program management, different leadership styles have a different effect on compliance and participation.*



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Safety Performance is Management-Sponsored and Leadership-Driven



By the collective behaviors of the organization – Executives to the Workers



Shared Perceptions from the group are promoted when a consistent pattern of action regarding safety is displayed

Jorge's Take

- We need all three leadership styles. It's about application and commitment
- Public Works- an example in action!
 - Transactional- Tailgate Meetings, Compliance, Safety Inspections, Documentation
 - Transformational- Managers providing training, vision and direction.
 - Servant- PW Director creates the environment where "Pismo Beach is the greatest place you will ever work". Beach Cleanup Events
- Employee Training Is Tailored to Employees Role



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CEO/City Manager Role/Executives



- Employee Culture Matters
- Reinforced through action
- Employee Quarterly Lunches- It's not just about meeting a safety goal; it is a reminder to employees.

Which is the Best Style to Use?

- There is no “one” best leadership styles. Leaders need to employ different styles to address a differing and changing workforce.
- The best leaders use multiple styles.
- The best leaders know their audience working style *and adapt*
 - *Authenticity and Sincerity come into play*



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How Effective Leaders Enhance Worker Safety

*For the systematic approach to safety to be effective, the **alignment of behaviors** of the organization, leaders, and individuals is needed (Kowalski, Summers, 2019)*



Safety Starts at the Top

The Chief Executive Officer indirectly influences safety through the shaping of collective experiences and injury reduction efforts of organizational actors



Safety Starts at the Top

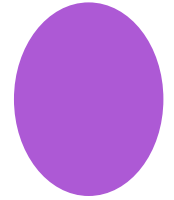
A clear understanding of the CEO's high expectations and priorities for safety

Various management-level staff are closely associated with translating safety to others

Employee/Supervisor exchanges can be a primary determinant of employee behavior

Increase Employee Involvement

Studies have been conducted on the correlation of an employee's engagement with organizational leadership and the likelihood of that employee experiencing a work-related injury



Communication is Critical



Well-Structured communication strategies that are understood and well-practiced.

Establish and Maintain Good Relationships

Start by understanding where you stand with the general population

Appendix A

Employee Safety Perception Survey

1. New hires are trained quickly and are expected to work safely and follow the rules.
2. Shortcuts or compromises are not taken.
3. Management works hand in hand with staff to ensure safe working conditions.
4. Staff is spoken to when they do not follow good safety practices.
5. Worker safety is a big priority with management.
6. I can freely report safety violations.

Source: (Janicak, Zreiqat, 2019)

Think About Leadership at Every Level



Summary

- A primary component of management is leadership
- Studies have shown that leaders are both directly and indirectly involved in an organization's safety program
 - Powerful and high-status individuals can significantly influence the behaviors of others
 - They do this from the executive level down through implementing safety protocols and setting the tone on expectations and safety culture
- **Leadership development is critical**



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Complete Session Surveys on the App

Find the App, Click on Events, Click on Browse by Day, Click on the Specific Session, Click on Rate Event. See Below for Screen Shots.

The image displays four sequential screenshots of the 2022 Parma Conf mobile application interface, illustrating the steps to complete a session survey. Green arrows indicate the navigation path.

- Home Screen:** Shows the main menu with options like My Schedule, Exhibitors, Maps, Events, Speakers, Attendees, What's On Now, Locate Me, My Exhibitors, My Notes, My Favorites, and Exit to Conference List. The 'Events' icon is highlighted with a green arrow.
- Events Screen:** Shows a list of browsing options: Browse by Day, Browse by Level, and Browse by Track. The 'Browse by Day' option is highlighted with a green arrow.
- Events List:** Shows a list of sessions for a specific day (Sun 27 to Wed 2). The 'Welcome and Keynote Speaker' session is highlighted with a green arrow.
- Event Detail Screen:** Shows the details for the 'Welcome and Keynote Speaker' session, including the date (Monday, Feb 28 8:45 AM), duration (1 hour, 15 minutes), and a 'Rate Event' button. The 'Rate Event' button is highlighted with a green arrow.



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