

# Success Factors in Effective Health and Safety Management

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# Purpose of Presentation

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- Leading HSE project on H&S management
  - First completely fresh look for 16 years!
- Share current evidence for what works
- Give personal interpretation
- Provoke discussion!

## Will talk about...

- Why manage H&S? – the business case
- How to manage H&S
  - Strengths and limitations of ‘management systems’
  - Things to avoid
  - Success factors - and their implications for H&S management (new picture emerging - work in progress!)

# Why manage H&S?

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- Business risk?
- Cost?
- Criminal law? (incl. Corporate manslaughter!)
- Values?
- Productivity?
- ALL OF THE ABOVE!

# How to manage H&S

- 1989 – HSG65



Today – many imitators

# Strengths and Limitations of the 'Management System' Approach

- Help to give discipline and clarity to defined safety-related activities.
- Help organisational learning

But, as with quality management systems

- Don't by themselves guarantee success
  - Many companies with them still fail
  - Some companies manage reasonable H&S performance without a formal, documented system
- Why?

# What We See Going Wrong - Examples

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- Poor prioritisation
  - Lack of all-round view (e.g. major hazards vs injury rates)
- Lack of strategic vision
  - Efforts diffused on too much low-level activity
- Bureaucracy
  - Energy wasted on paper systems, not enough focus on what people DO
- Marginalisation
  - Too much activity by specialists, not integrated into mainstream of management

# How to get it right?

- We looked at what H&S standards say, globally
- We looked at what standards/systems industry refers to
- We talked to other regulators
- We asked top researchers - what are the key success factors?
- Looked at research on stress, and good health (e.g. Marmot, Work Foundation)
- (Still to do – link to wider OB evidence of how to manage staff successfully)

# What does the research say the success factors are?

- Line management buy-in / commitment to H&S
- H&S integrated into a mainstream strategy
- Skilled leadership
- Employee trust
- Employee empowerment / control
- *Increasing evidence of link to success in other aspects, e.g. productivity, when managed in these ways*

# What did researchers say about H&S management systems?

- ‘H&S is not a type of quality management’
- ‘There is no theoretical basis / empirical evidence’
- ‘They [iso-type systems] just represent the views of experts’

## So? (personal view)

- Traditional ‘Safety management systems’ (ISO, BS, HSG65 etc) reflect views and activities of H&S professionals
- *Real* ‘health and safety management’ is an *emergent* outcome of everyday business management...
    - Everyday business choices and plans
    - Everyday staff leadership
    - Similar skills required for productivity, quality, innovation etc.

# What might a future model look like (speculation)?

**INPUTS**

Risks / benefits  
and solutions

Feedback on  
performance

Managers

Decisions

Leadership

Integrated  
business strategy

'Health & safety  
climate'

Safe, healthy &  
productive work

**OUTPUTS**

# What to think about in your business ...

- Make the business case for integrating H&S into mainstream business strategy
  - Potential benefits in reducing sickness absence, increased productivity etc.
  - Balanced view of risks faced
- Focus efforts on behaviour, priorities and leadership skills of line managers (all levels)
- Work with managers on developing:
  - Trust
  - Participation and empowerment

## More help

- [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- CHaSPI index (benchmark)
- Business benefits – case studies

# QUESTIONS