



Article

5 Requirements for Exceptional Health and Safety Leadership

Introduction

According to a recent EHS Today survey, a company's EHS programme is only as strong and exceptional as its health and safety leaders.

Without proactive, informed and prepared leaders who ensure that safety processes and solutions are part of a company's DNA, a company will struggle to provide a healthy and safe environment for its workers. Costs will rise as incidents and accidents increase.

So, what does it take to ensure your organisation has exceptional health and safety leadership? Let's look at the top 5 requirements.

Q1

A focus on collaboration and empowerment that starts from the top

Exceptional health and safety leadership recognises that a world-class health and safety programme empowers every single employee to actively participate in and benefit from it.

Eliminating major safety incidents or worker accidents ends disruptions to productivity and output. The cash outlay for claims settlement becomes negligible. Therefore, exceptional health and safety leadership empowers employees to engage in the health and safety process—with tools, support and drive. In organisations doing it right, there are safety leaders at every job site, in every department and on every team.



02

Relentless pursuit of engagement

Exceptional health and safety leadership means driving engagement throughout the organisation and actively setting a great example that makes employees want to engage. To do this, exceptional health and safety leaders:

Keep it stupidly simple (KISS):

They make it easy to participate in health and safety by offering different platforms—accessible on familiar mobile technology—to ensure employees are involved and can easily participate fully.

Close the feedback loop:

When an employee submits a safety observation, that employee hears something back. All employees can report and consume safety information and understand the value of their contribution.

Provide organisation-wide visibility:

Exceptional health and safety leaders ensure that safety performance reporting is shared with executives and employees alike.

Perform inspections regularly:

Employees want to arrive safely to work every day and more importantly, leave work the same way – this is an employer's legal and moral obligation. Ensuring that regular inspections are completed on time proves that the organisation takes its duty of care seriously.

03

Health and safety decisions that are based on data and information

Exceptional health and safety leadership drives engagement. Engagement drives data and information, which can be used to make informed decisions that better protect workers and prevent incidents. Exceptional health and safety leaders know that guesswork is problematic. Here are examples of what they use to make informed health and safety decisions instead:

Trend analysis:

Trend analysis of real-time data visualisations and dashboards help people spot problematic trends or hotspots and proactively determine if the trend needs a solution.

Leading indicator tracking:

Health and safety key performance indicators (KPIs) are created from leading metrics that are used to drive decisions about how to improve.

Prediction and prevention:

Exceptional health and safety leaders use business intelligence (BI) tools and the metrics they provide to predict where preventative interventions will be most effective.



04

Dedication to continuous learning and continuous improvement

A quality that is inherent in all exceptional leadership, not just health and safety, is a dedication to continuous learning. Exceptional health and safety leaders use data and information and review results to drive continuous improvement. Along with others in their organisation, they:



Use analytics tools to measure performance at site or country level, tracking against KPIs.



Use tools to monitor performance, quickly and easily identifying key areas for improvement and opportunities to share best practices.



Use dashboards to analyse leading indicators to determine the effects of decisions and set goals for improvement.



Create, assign and track corrective and preventative actions with a structured workflow, triggered manually or automatically, to manage actions.

EHS Software Can Take You to Exceptional Health and Safety Leadership

Health and safety software is the cornerstone of exceptional health and safety leadership. It enables companies to ditch manual and paper files and spreadsheets with the automation and analytics needed for world-class health and safety programmes. Why not schedule a demo and see how you can be exceptional?

05

Agile response to crises

Exceptional safety and health leadership has a thorough crisis management strategy for when something unforeseen happens, such as a disaster, a pandemic or a climate event.

These health and safety leaders champion an approach that maximises visibility. They ensure that company leaders and others can monitor crisis situations in real time and get feedback, while also providing forward view of emerging risks and trends before they escalate.

Deeper insight is crucial in weathering any storm. Their crisis management strategy puts humans first, in the midst and aftermath of a crisis, focusing on people and prioritising their well-being. To understand what is really going on, they use online stress and well-being surveys to get a strong pulse on employee sentiment.



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As safety professionals and long-term leaders in the Verdantix EHS Green Quadrant, our deep and practical insight addresses your evolving needs, helping you achieve your health, safety and sustainability goals.

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