



## Wilkinson, Foy LLC

Management Consulting • Public Relations

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### **SAFETY CULTURE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL**

The Wilkinson/Foy Safety Culture assessment tool allows the user to conduct an initial self-assessment of several key components of safety culture. It is not comprehensive, nor is it an independent examination. It does, however, provide a starting point from which to begin evaluating whether or not the existing culture emphasizes safety – industrial, process, and environmental – as the overriding priority.

The Assessment consists of three components: document review, observation, and interviews. Each is discussed below in sufficient detail to be executed with a modest investment of time and a minimal disruption of the workforce.

There are three sections to the assessment:

1. **Document Review**: to determine if expectations are set for Safety Culture and Safety Conscious Work Environment behaviors, if accountabilities and responsibilities are defined, and if metrics exist to measure performance in this area. The document review should also look at initial and recurrent training on these topics.
2. **Reporting of Safety Issues**: to examine the process for raising safety issues, to see if management has a good history of listening, prioritizing based on the safety significance of the issue, correcting the problem, and providing feedback to the employee.
3. **Employee Beliefs**: to determine if employees believe they can raise issues free from retaliation and if they believe management will act promptly to correct plant safety issues.

#### **DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Verify Policies and Procedures and training are in place, describing the process for raising safety concerns. This includes safety issues outside of industrial/personnel safety, to include plant processes such as maintenance, modifications, procedure use, etc. Policies should also exist that prohibit harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or retaliation against employees for raising safety concerns.

Sample the existing employee training records to verify units on the process for raising safety concerns, protection against retaliation, etc.

#### **REPORTING OF SAFETY ISSUES**

Sample the corrective action program to determine if employees have raised safety concerns. Review actions taken on concern(s) to determine effectiveness. Review any other records of reports on safety concerns.

Conduct interviews with a sample of individuals who have used the corrective action process. Is it effective? Are employees given feedback on the response to their concern?

#### **EMPLOYEE BELIEFS**

Conduct interviews and survey employees to determine:

- If employees feel free to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation (check for intimidation)
- If employees believe management will act to resolve their concerns (check for indifference/apathy)
- If employees believe management makes good decisions (i.e., safety over schedule, adequate budget for preventive maintenance, capital spending, training, etc.)

## **SAFETY CULTURE SURVEY QUESTIONS**

For the sake of this questionnaire, the term “Safety Concerns” includes concerns about industrial & personnel safety, process safety, environmental safety, plant equipment repair and maintenance, management decisions, policy and procedure adherence, etc. It encompasses all elements of plant activity and behavior that have the potential to impact safety.

1. I can report safety concerns without fear of retaliation or intimidation Yes or No
2. My co-workers believe they can raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation Yes or No
3. In the last 12 months, I have been retaliated against for raising a safety concern Yes or No  
If Yes, briefly describe the circumstances
4. In the past 12 months, a co-worker has been retaliated against for raising a safety issue Yes or No  
If Yes, briefly describe the circumstances
5. Management listens to concerns and takes action to resolve them Yes or No
6. Management provides feedback to concernees on the action taken to resolve the concern Yes or No
7. My supervisor listens to my concerns and takes action Yes or No
8. My supervisor provides feedback to me on the resolution of my concern Yes or No
9. Decisions reflect safety-first thinking Yes or No  
If No, briefly describe what seems to be a higher priority
10. I am encouraged to raise Safety Concerns Yes or No
11. Equipment essential to safe operations is well maintained Yes or No  
If No, briefly describe circumstances
12. Replacements/upgrades for equipment essential to safety are done in a timely manner Yes or No
13. In the last year I have received training on safety policies, procedures and expectations Yes or No
14. I believe management wants employees to report safety concerns Yes or No
15. I believe I am responsible for raising safety concerns to management Yes or No
16. Where would you go to report a safety concern?
17. Have you received training on the safety concern program? Yes or No

18. Have your subordinates received training? Yes or No
19. Has your supervisor received training on the safety concern program? Yes or No
20. How have you actively encouraged your subordinates to bring safety concerns to you? Yes or No

In order to evaluate the responses to the self-assessment, the user will need to establish a threshold for concern. For example, in the interview questions, question number 1 needs to have a fairly high positive response (in the 90 to 100% range). Anything less may indicate an erosion of the safety culture standards for reporting issues. In the policy review, it may not be necessary to have separate policies to address Safety Culture and Safety Conscious Work Environment (SCWE), if the appropriate standards, expectations, and metrics are described in a single master safety policy.

Generally speaking, an absence of policy or training on Safety Culture and SCWE needs to be addressed. Any interview question that does not have at least a 75% positive response needs attention. It may be helpful to attach some demographics to the survey, to determine if there are particularly low-scoring plant sections or departments. However, great **caution** should be utilized to avoid the appearance of punitive responses to low scores. Employee trust is easily damaged by poorly executed follow-up exploration.

Questions or concerns about the use of this tool can be resolved by contacting Wilkinson/Foy at 225-612-3187 or [info@wilkinsonfoy.com](mailto:info@wilkinsonfoy.com)