

Safety culture perception surveys

This sheet provides an overview of how perception surveys can be used to provide insight into an organization's safety culture, including strengths and weaknesses of surveys. Self-completion surveys are the most commonly used method to evaluate safety culture in the oil and gas industry. Safety culture surveys capture employee perceptions of the relative priority of safety and are an efficient method for capturing perceptions about safety. They also provide quantitative data that facilitates benchmarking with other organizations, comparing different departments or sites and tracking perceptions overtime. It is important to adopt a systematic approach to conducting a safety culture survey. The following five step process is a useful guide:

- Obtain informed management commitment.
- Create working group to determine approach.
- Conduct the survey.
- Interpret results and identify improvements.
- Implement improvement actions.

It is important for the senior leadership team to understand what is involved in conducting a survey, including the purpose and the potential risks. It is important that managers have considered how they will respond to negative results. When the results are negative, it can be tempting to explain them away or suppress them. This is a mistake as it is likely to negatively impact the culture. Conducting a survey requires significant planning and resources and therefore it is useful to create a working group to lead the process. This group should represent key stakeholders and include individuals with the authority to allocate resources.

The working group needs some expertise in how to conduct perceptions surveys. This expertise can be obtained from an external provider or specialist training for the team. The working group will firstly need to select an appropriate survey instrument. It is important to select a survey that is valid and reliable. The petrochemical industry has supported a significant amount of research on safety culture, which has resulted in the development and validation of a number

of perception surveys. The table below provides information on a variety of surveys that have been used in the oil and gas industry.

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Title	Dimensions
Offshore Safety Survey ⁱ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce involvement • Satisfaction w/safety activities • Perceived supervisor competence • Management commitment • Unsafe behaviours
Safety Management Survey ⁱⁱ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reluctance to speak up • Lack of commitment to safety • Status of safety • Supervision • Production pressure
Offshore Process Safety Culture Survey ⁱⁱⁱ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Reporting • Safety value/ commitment • Clarity of goals & responsibility • Supervisor involvement • Worker empowerment • Performance feedback • Procedures & equipment
UK HSE Safety Survey Tool ^{iv}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization commitment • Accident & near miss reporting • Health and safety behaviours • Health & safety trust • Usability of procedures • Engaging in health & safety • Peer group attitude • Resources for health & safety

Typically surveys will need to be adapted slightly to ensure the terms used are appropriate. In addition, the demographic section of the survey will need to be adapted to cover occupational groups used in the organization. Once the survey has been adapted, the next step involves developing a sampling strategy. If possible, it is better to distribute the survey to the entire population, to ensure everyone who wants to participate has an opportunity. Alternatively, the survey can be distributed to a representative random sample of the workforce. Typically, a minimum 20 to 30 percent of the workforce is included. Obtaining a high response rate is critical to ensuring the results are not

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biased; therefore, a response rate above 70% is desirable. A response rate below 30% is a significant concern and it is doubtful if the results provide useful information. If the response rate is low, it is worthwhile getting a small representative sample (50 people) together and asking them to complete the survey and compare the responses of this representative sample with the larger sample. Strategies to increase the response rate include:

- Providing incentives for completing the survey (e.g., prize draws),