

### Bad News Is Bad—Communications

- Dictatorial leadership leads to isolationism
- Direct reports dread meetings
- Near-misses result

#### BACKGROUND

A Facility Manager prided himself on running a very tight ship. He had a bad temper and did not react calmly to negative events or people who disagreed with him. His direct reports dreaded the daily operations meetings because even minor problems led to harsh interrogation.

#### WHAT HAPPENED

Although bad news cannot remain hidden for long, the Manager's direct reports went out of their way to avoid bringing bad news to these meetings. Instead, they attempted to solve problems offline, usually alone to avoid having anyone who might leak the news from being aware. Root cause analyses of several incidents and near misses uncovered this lack of broad discussion as a contributing factor.

What recommendations could the incident investigation team make to address this contributing factor?

#### SAFETY CULTURE FOCUS

- ✓ Strong leadership invites an open, questioning environment so potential risks can be identified, discussed, and mitigated.
- ✓ Effective communications encourages and promotes worker input and feedback with no fear of reprisal.
- ✓ Mutual trust among management and workers is essential to employee involvement and continuous improvement.

**\*\*Only 26% of those surveyed indicated communication was a strength in their organization.\*\***

## IMPROVING HYDROGEN SAFETY CULTURE

*LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FROM OTHER'S EXPERIENCES*

***“Safety culture is how the organization behaves...  
...when no one is watching.”***

## **Safety Culture Framework**

- ▶ Safety is everyone's responsibility
- ▶ Strong leadership support
- ▶ Integrated into all activities
- ▶ Open, timely, effective communications
- ▶ Questioning/learning environment
- ▶ Mutual trust
- ▶ Continuous improvement

## **What are the benefits?**

- ✓ Eliminates common weaknesses identified as contributing factors to catastrophic events.
- ✓ Promotes trust in the hydrogen energy industry's ability to deliver safe, reliable, quality products and services.
- ✓ Supports a sustainable legacy for companies and the hydrogen industry.
- ✓ Fosters efficiency and productivity in the workplace.

## **Resources**

- ✓ For further information and resources on safety culture, see: <https://www.aiche.org/ccps/safety-culture-what-stake>
- ✓ For further case studies on safety culture, see: <https://h2tools.org>