Safety Culture

What is Safety Culture?
Safety culture is a people based safety process. An organization's safety culture is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behavior that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of health and safety management.

Safety Culture Assessment
Commitment at the management, employee, and personal levels are all key elements of an effective safety culture.

Management Support for Safety – Managers must demonstrate their commitment through their actions and lead by example when it comes to health and safety. Without an active commitment from management low levels of motivation or concern for health and safety may result throughout the organization. Management commitment can be indicated by the resources (time, people, money) and support allocated to health and safety. If management is not sincerely committed, employees might assume that they are expected to put business interests first, instead of safety.

Employee Support for Safety - Active employee participation and good communication at all levels and safety should be part of everyday work conversations. This can include observations, feedback, open communication and accountability. It is important to build ownership and use the expertise and unique knowledge each employee has. In companies with a strong safety culture, both management and employees feel that their safety achievements are the result of a joint effort.

Personal Responsibility for Safety - It is vital that everyone, regardless of their position or job, has a personal commitment to, and responsibility for, the safety of themselves and others. Ask yourself:
- What is my attitude towards safety?
- What is our company's safety culture?
- What prevents us from working safely?
- How can I improve our safety culture?

Safety culture is not enforceable, but an effective health and safety management program is. Improving workplace safety procedures, programs and systems can positively impact a company's safety performance and safety culture. Ensure that safety manuals and on site documentation are always readily available to employees. Audits, inspections, policies, procedures, training, safety committees and incident reporting can be used to enhance your safety culture.