



**OBSTACLES TO SAFETY**  
observations from the outside



# “From where I stand”

- Health and Safety Professional for 25 years.
- 17 years spent consulting with organizations in various industries
- A unique aspect of my career has been consulting with insurance carriers on dozens of serious injury/fatality investigations, and witnessing the aftermath first hand
- This experience has caused me to become fascinated with why organizations make decisions which are so obviously bad, and how they ignore the possible future consequences of “cost-saving” measures





Poor decision-making is fascinating



**It seems so simple to make a list of pro's and con's, assign a "weight" to each, and total them up.**





...and yet, people don't get it.



[sigh]





**And if individuals are prone to poor judgement and decision making, then so are the organizations they manage.**



# The big questions

Why do some companies get it and others don't?

Why do some companies only get it when it's too late?

Why don't some companies get it even then?





# Case study 1: Worker steps on shop-built “pan”

- 24 year old employee on an agricultural research project.
- Research staff fabricates a piece of analytical equipment from a store-bought “chaffing pan”.
- The modification creates a sharp edge on the bottom of the pan, which is filed down by hand.

# Case study 1: Worker steps on shop built "pan"







# Case study 1: Worker steps on shop built “pan”

- Student inadvertently steps on the pan. It flips up, striking him/her in the back of the knee. The inadequately filed edge lacerates an artery and a tendon behind his/her knee.
- Within minutes, the student has lost 40% of his blood.
- Coincidentally, a coworker happens upon the victim. She has recently completed a first aid class. She applies a tourniquet.
- Victim is airlifted from the scene and undergoes emergency surgery. He makes a full recovery.





## Case study 2: The hose winder

- Summer helper in a city's public works dept.
- Employees are required to wind/store water hose on a hose reel after washing city vehicles.
- Some employees aren't strong enough to handle heavy hose.
- Staff has a small 5-10 HP motor "laying around" so they decide to mount it to a hose reel, creating a power hose winder.
- It has no emergency stop or "dead man" type controls.
- The worker is using it when his/her glove becomes entangled in the hose before a coworker is able to stop the machine by pulling the plug.
- Severe injuries to his/her arms.



# Case study 2: The hose winder



\$67



# Case study 3: The heavy equipment operator

- Heavy equipment operator clearing trails in the woods.
- His dozer has a history of electrical problems.
- Rather than repairing it, they rig a system of jumper wires, other “fixes”.
- The make-shift system needs frequent adjustment (2-3/day).
- One day, he encounters the problem again. He leaves the cab and steps onto the tracks, only this time, he leaves the ignition on and the dozer in gear. When he corrects the problem, the machine starts up on its own and begins to drive forward.
- His overalls get caught in between the dozer’s track/pads. They pull him over the front of the tracks and he’s run over. He’s killed instantly.





## Case study 4: The warehouse worker

- 27 year old warehouse worker/forklift driver
- Emp. needs to adjust the industrial racks in the warehouse.
- Employees routinely use a piece of  $\frac{1}{4}$  steel plate on the forks of the forklift to elevate themselves.
- As he stands on the steel plate, applying a socket wrench to the rack arm, the wrench slips off the nut.
- He stumbles backwards, falling off the steel plate, 18 feet to the concrete floor below, landing on his head. He dies instantly.

# Case study 4: The warehouse worker



Roll over image to zoom in

## Forklift Safety Cage Work Platform Lift Basket Aerial Fence Rails Yellow 2 man

by [Titan Attachments](#)

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Price: \$699.00

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**In Stock.**

**Estimated Delivery Date:** May 19 - 24 when you choose Standard Shipping at checkout.

Ships from and sold by [Titan Distributors](#).

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# The big questions...

Why do some companies get it and others don't?

Why do some companies only get it when it's too late?

Why don't some companies get it even then?





# The big questions...

**Answer: Successful companies treat safety like any other part of the business; they manage it.**

- They view safety as quality (TQM)
- They understand their legal and ethical obligations
- They anticipate consequences, positive and negative, and make sound decisions based on them.
- *They look for/build business cases*



# Companies that get it: A business case for safety

- The business case for safety is easy to make.
- We can all agree that accidents are costly, but:
  - They are MUCH more costly than most realize.
  - The **majority** of costs aren't insured (out of pocket).
  - Out of pocket costs, as large as they are, tend to be “invisible”, so they are ignored or discounted, leaving only insured/direct costs, which seem minor.
- Safety has a direct, significant impact on the bottom line.



# Companies that get it: A business case for safety



## Direct costs (insured costs):

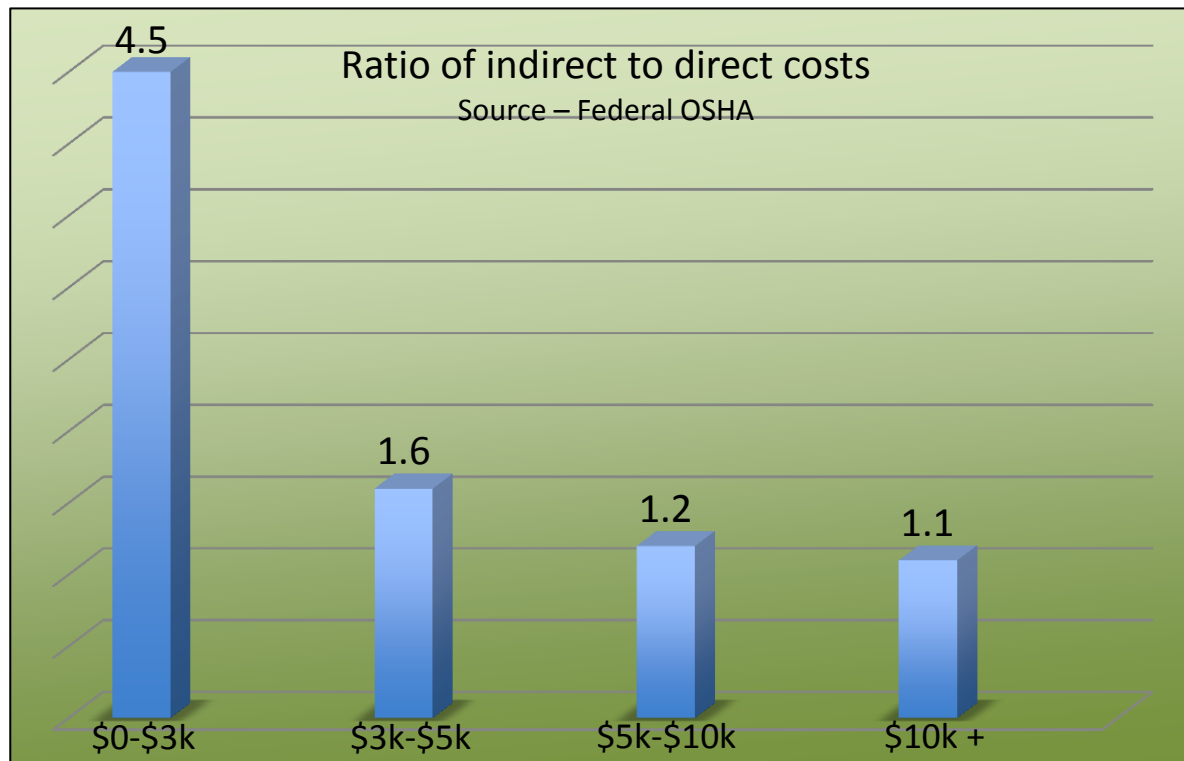
- Medical costs
- Indemnity (payments to not work)

## Indirect/Hidden costs (out of pocket):

- Lost production by victim and others
- Train replacement worker
- Reduced prod. of replacement worker
- Time/labor for accident investigation
- Admin. time to file and manage claim
- Legal fees
- OSHA penalties
- Damage to building, product, materials
- Increased premiums/increased EMR



# Companies that get it: A business case for safety



Direct costs associated with claim



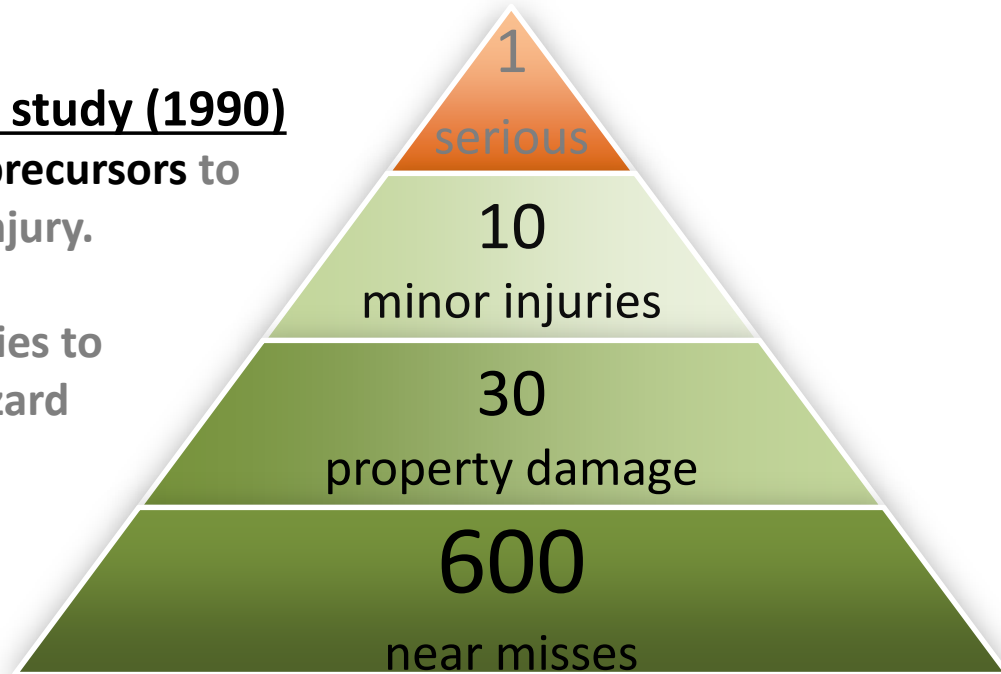
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# Companies that get it: A business case for safety

## Bird/Germain study (1990)

There are **640 precursors** to every serious injury.

**640 opportunities** to identify the hazard and prevent it before the “big one”.





# Companies that get it: A business case for safety

## A quiz...

An employee files a workers' comp. claim for a work-related hernia. The claim has direct costs of \$24,000. Assuming a 3% profit margin, how many dollars of **additional sales** are required solely to cover the costs of this claim?







# Companies that get it: A business case for safety

**Answer:** \$1.5 million



# Companies that get it: A business case for safety

<https://www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/safetypays/estimator.html>

**Beware** – some of the pre-programmed “direct” costs are highly suspect.  
(i.e. dislocation is \$73,000, but asbestosis is \$14,000)



# Companies that get it: An extension of the TQM philosophy

- TQM is a comprehensive management approach
- Works horizontally across an organization, involving **all departments and functions** and employees
- Extends backward and forward to include both suppliers and clients/customers





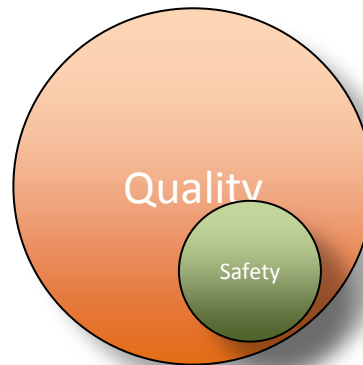
# Companies that get it: An extension of the TQM philosophy

Most organizations think like this...



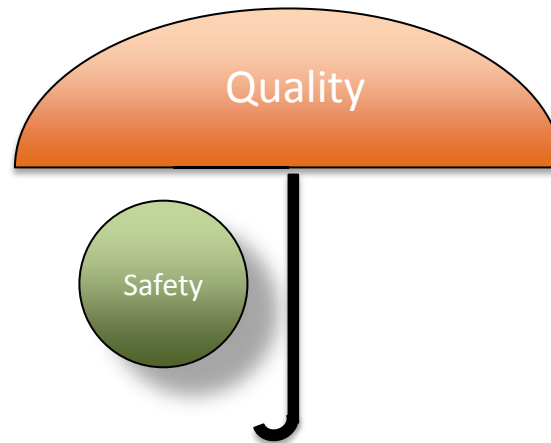
# Companies that get it: An extension of the TQM philosophy

TQM organizations think like this...



# Companies that get it: An extension of the TQM philosophy

Or this...







# Companies that get it: An extension of the TQM philosophy

- Top-performing TQM organizations vs. national averages:
  - Emp.s receive almost 2x training (safety and other topics)
  - Outperform industry averages for safety by 6%-8%
- Not surprising when proven concepts are applied to a different area
  - Employee participation, incentives, recognition
  - Continuous improvement
  - Process analysis, control, and interventions
  - Job design
  - Analyze/investigate issues and failures
  - Employee training and education
  - ***Conformance to standards and requirements***



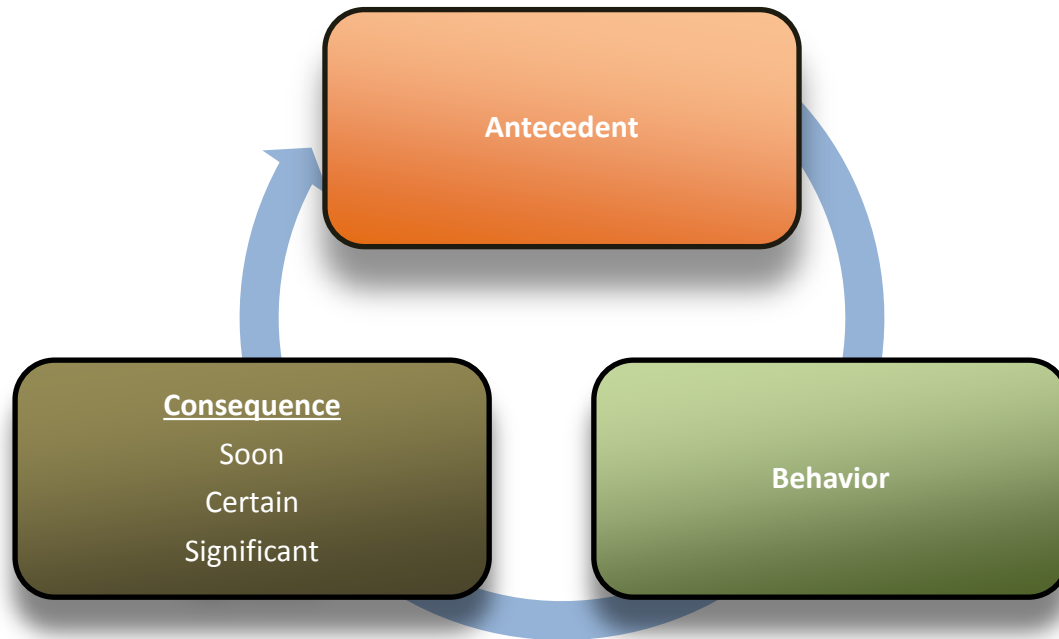
# Companies that get it: An “emotional connection”

**“You will NEVER see me again.”**

- Company owner, to me, at the end of a fatality invest.

Translation – There will NEVER be another accident like this on my watch.

# Companies that get it: An “emotional connection”








# Companies that don't get it until it's too late

- They haven't been educated on the “business case”
- “Under estimation of obligation”/Over-estimate their status and compliance
- They **think** they don't have the requisite resources
- There haven't been consequences **yet** – no emotion connection



Respirator program  
Call Dr. Davis  
for respirator  
stuff in May



# Companies that will never get it

- Ethically “challenged”
- Obstinance



Guess? stores

- Recent inspection - \$65,000 for repeat and other citations
- “obvious and easily preventable conditions”

wwd business news ■ government

April 11, 2016

## OSHA Cites Guess Stores for Safety Violations

By Arthur Friedman

A- A A+ PRINT

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AD REPORT

## Diaz Roofing, LLC, Edgerton, WI.

- 13 citations since 2005
- Mostly for fall protection and related
- Included “willful” and “repeat”!
- Most recent was \$104,000

## Edgerton roofing stockpile of OS

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ANDREA BEHLING  
Monday, January 5, 2015

EDGERTON—Federal regulators say an Edgerton roofing company allowed four employees to work on a roof without required fall protection in August 2014, resulting in two citations totaling \$73,080,

The violations add to several earlier safety citations Diaz Roofing Company, 12

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Liberty mutual weighs unbundling

Employers urged to tread lightly on obesity

## Dollar General racks up more OSHA safety violations



By Gloria Gonzalez

REPRINTS

Workplace Safety

### Dollar General Stores, Inc.

- Multiple inspections *settled* for \$825,000!
- Simple violations – blocked exits, fire extinguishers

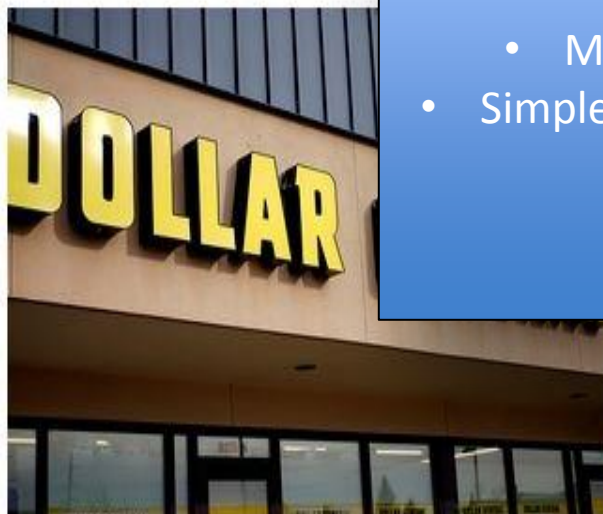


Photo by REUTERS

Administration cited the Goodlettsville, Tennessee-based discount retailer after inspectors found a 5-foot high by 15-foot long pile of trash between employees and an emergency exit at an O'Fallon, Missouri store, the agency said Monday in a

statement.

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# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

Two primary buying motivations:

## “Desire for gain”

As it relates to safety:

- Easy to demonstrate, quantify
- Appeals to core values and concepts (profit, ROI, etc.)
- Builds trust
- Positive communication

## “Fear of loss”

As it relates to safety:

- Harder to demonstrate, quantify
- Is often not grounded in fact/reason (almost by definition, is irrational)
- **Harms trust, especially when fear must be “manufactured” (i.e. OSHA)**
- Negative communication
- More speculative







# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

## **Temptation to use fear to sell safety is great**

- Perceived vulnerability – “How likely is this to hurt me”
- Perceived severity – “How bad will it hurt”
- Perceived efficacy – “Can I do something to prevent it?”



# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool



**“If you’re not totally clean, you’re filthy”**  
- “Just” Hand soap campaign

If you aren't totally clean, you are filthy.



# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool



**“If you’re not totally clean, you’re filthy”**  
- “Just” Hand soap campaign



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# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

## Canadian workplace safety ads

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwCyVku1HvI>

**Central message:** Workplace accidents are preventable

**Themes:** Gore, shock, fear – NEGATIVITY!

**Results:** 72% of Canadians object. Ads are removed.



# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

**Royal Dutch Guide Dog Foundation**

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlIPFRsseQ8>

**Central message:** Our guide dogs protect those in need

**Themes:** Rescue, protection, safety

**Results:** Memorable, award winning ad



# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

If you appeal to fear of loss (i.e. OSHA)...

You might say...	In reality...
“OSHA’s going to inspect you”	Probably not
“They’re going to fine you for this”	Probably not
“It’s going to be a big fine”	Probably not

..and trust is damaged





# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

If you appeal to fear of loss (i.e. lawsuits)...

You might say...	In reality...
“You’re going to get sued”	Almost impossible (WC - sole remedy)

..and trust is damaged



# Overcoming objections and using fear as a sales tool

If you appeal to the desire for gain/sell the positives/make cost the thing that is feared...

You might say...	In reality...
“This is a <b>potential</b> hazard and you may go 100 years without an incident”	True
“But if there is an accident it’ll be serious”	True
“Your costs will be significant and you’ll be paying for years.”	True
“A small investment now may save big money you down the road”	True

...and trust is established/maintained



# Summary

- Like people, organizations often exhibit questionable decision making
- For many reasons, some organizations seem to get it, others don't





# Summary

- The common thread between the companies that get it, is that they manage safety like any other part of the business:
  - They look for the “business case”
  - They manage quality
  - They understand the obligations/responsibilities
- Appeal to this by educating them on **true** costs of accidents, financial and otherwise...but especially financial



# Summary

- Move on from obstinance, and the ethically questionable
- Avoid fear as a sales tactic, especially if it has to be manufactured
- Educate on positives



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