SAFETY SOLUTIONS
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Measurement Before Management:
Best Practices for Assessing
Safety Culture

Lori Guasta, Ph.D.

Longwall USA Conference
Pittsburgh, PA
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Studying Culture

- The term, "culture" is widely used, but not always clearly defined

"Group norms of behavior and the underlying shared values that help keep those norms in place" (Kotter, 2012)

"The way we do things around here"
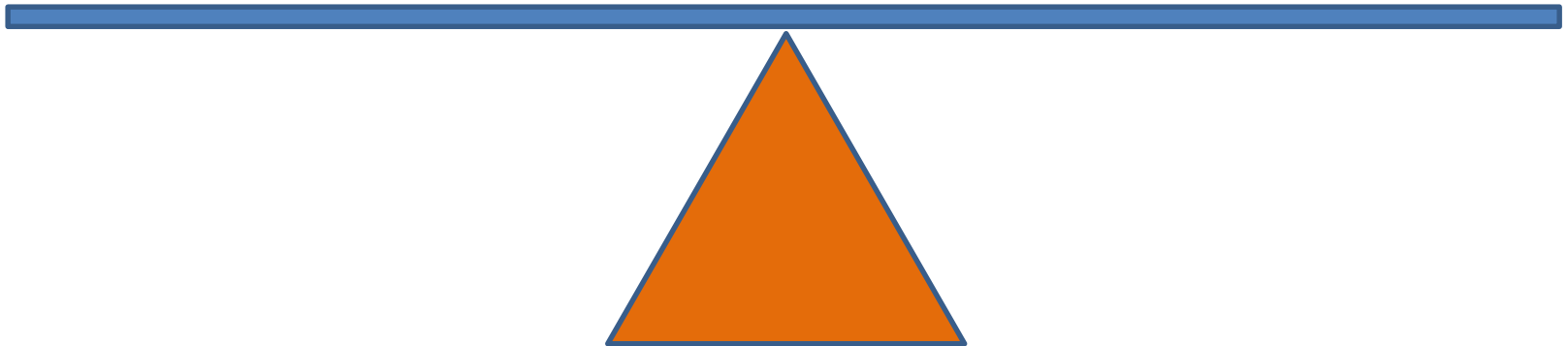
Levels of Organizational Culture

- Multiple subcultures exist within a larger organizational culture -- or within an industry involving multiple companies

  - Industry partners
  - Corporate divisions
  - Contractors
  - Individual work groups or departments
  - Night shifts
  - Etc.

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Levels of Organizational Culture & Cues
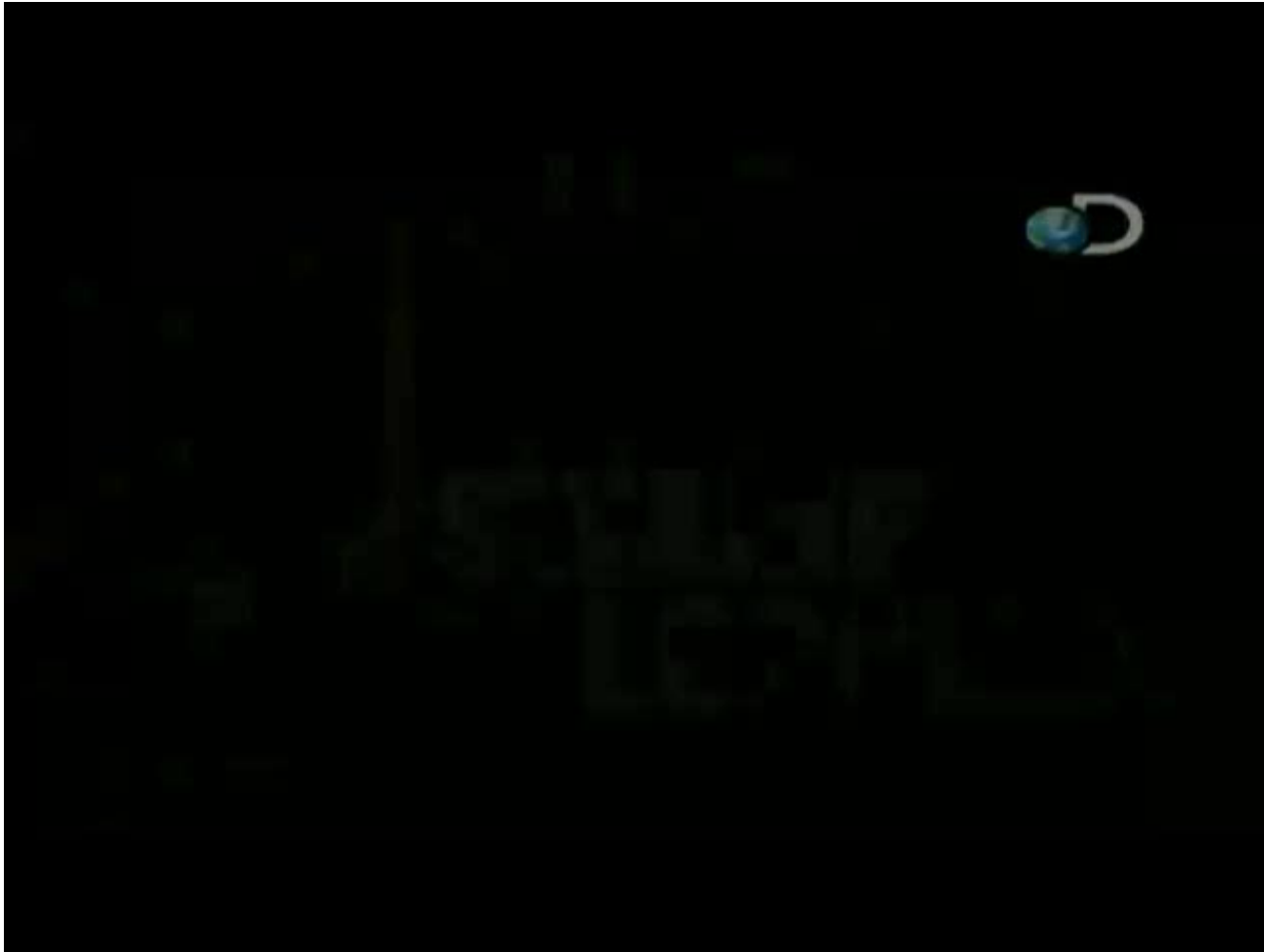
Balancing Act of Assessment

Organizational Resources and Constraints
Individual Abilities and Needs
History and Innovation
Situational Factors

Characteristics of Organizational Culture

- Innovation and risk-taking
- Attention to detail
- Outcome orientation
- People orientation
- Team orientation
- Aggressiveness
- Stability

Characteristics of Safety Culture

- Positive workplace attitudes exist
  - From the president to the newest hire
- Involvement and buy-in of all members
- Mutual, meaningful, and measurable safety and health improvement goals
- Policies and procedures serve as reference tools, rather than obscure rules
- Personnel training at all levels of the organization
- Accountability exists at all levels of the organization

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Blending Art and Science

- 400+ years of expertise in safety and health

- We assess a company's culture according to academic training and industry best practices

- Blends the **science of managing safety** with the **art of leadership**

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SSI's OH&S Culture Surveys

- Always **customized** to the client

- Based on **validation** through observational and interview methods

- Sample content areas:
  - Visible Safety Leadership
  - Work Behaviors/Conditions
  - Safety Accountability
  - Training
  - Communications
  - Contractor Safety

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Sample Culture Survey Questionnaire

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SAMPLE CULTURE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Introductory Questions

How long have you worked at XYZ as an employee? As a Contractor?
What department or area do you work in (mine, plant, engineering, etc.)?
What do you do (Executive or Senior Mgmt., middle manager, line supervisor, operator, mechanic, etc.)?
Are you represented by a union?

Objectives & Expectations

What are the top objectives at XYZ?
On a scale of 1 -5 (5; extremely well and 1; not at all) how effectively are the company objectives communicated?
In your opinion, does management place more importance on safety or production?
Is working without an injury or incident possible for XYZ?
Is working without an injury or an incident possible for you?

Safety Leadership

On a scale of 1-5 (5; very high and 1; very low), what is the level of importance that the XYZ Management Team places on your safety and to an injury and incident free workplace?
On a scale of 1-5 (5; very high and 1; very low), what is the level of importance that your department manager places on your safety and to an injury and incident free workplace?

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Culture Surveys (cont'd)

- Pre-survey customization to ensure relevance and validity

- Interviews conducted onsite with a sample of all employees

- Data is assembled and analyzed

- Executive report and presentation delivered

- Recommendations may include a culture enhancement plan

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Constructing a Culture Enhancement Plan

- A culture enhancement plan can be developed based on the findings of the culture survey and a company's position on SSI's Health and Safety Maturity Model

Health & Safety Maturity Model
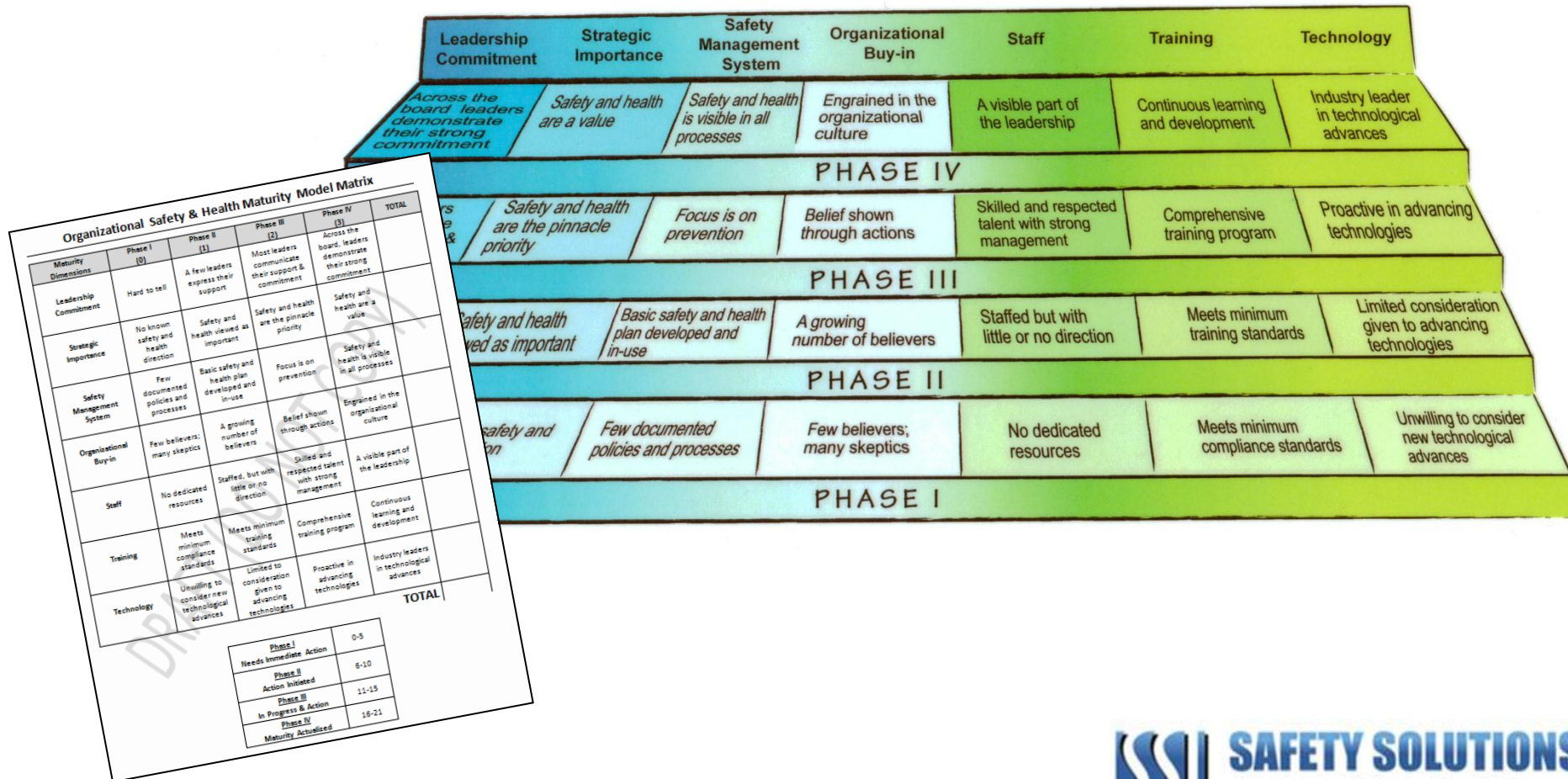
Health & Safety Maturity Model

Seven Dimensions:

- Leadership Commitment
- Strategic Importance
- Safety Management System
- Staff
- Training
- Technology
- Organizational Buy-In

ASSESSMENT OUTPUT	
Phase 1	Immediate Action Needed
Phase 2	Action Initiated
Phase 3	In Progress & In Action
Phase 4	Maturity Actualized

Summary: Key Points

"Measurement Before Management"

"Blending Art and Science"

"Collaboration Goes A Long Way"

"Respect The Culture(s)"

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