

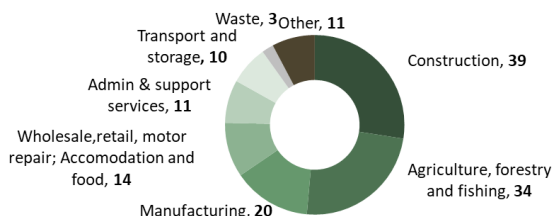
STAY UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS AND LEGISLATION

Why is Safety Leadership So Important?

Demonstrating leadership in health and safety is not easy. It requires the right people, the right culture and clear direction.

Below are a number of key statistics and a graph from the HSE regarding health and safety in the workplace:

- 142 workers killed in work accidents in 2020/21
- By age: 41 of the deaths in 2020/21 were to workers aged 60 and over. The rate of death is greatest for older age groups
- By accident kind: The most common kind of fatal accident to workers remains as falls from a height, being struck by a moving vehicle and being struck by a moving object, between them accounting for over half of all fatal accidents to workers in 2020/21.



In most organisations, it is not practical or indeed possible for stakeholders to be present on site to determine for themselves that their safety requirements are being suitably addressed. Instead, they rely on managers, supervisors, consultants and auditors to act as their advocates. Strong, effective leadership is fundamental to

improving workplace safety and health, and all those who can influence and affect safety standards must be given every opportunity to contribute ideas and initiatives that can be discussed at board level. There is always room for improvement, but it must be driven from the top down.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE LEADERSHIP?

Leadership can be defined as 'the ability of a company's management to make sound decisions and inspire others to perform well'. Leaders are entrusted to confirm that the organisation is acting in the best interests of those that it was established to serve.

Unfortunately, you don't have to look hard to find examples of serious safety leadership failures, and these can result in devastating consequences to individuals, the business and its stakeholders. Therefore, it is important for us to understand that management and leadership are not the same. It is perfectly possible for an individual to be a good manager but a poor leader, in much the same way that it is possible for an individual to be a good leader but a poor manager. Leaders must therefore ask themselves – what would be your legacy? Would your staff and management team say that you were a good leader?

WHAT IS CLASSED AS AN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM POLICY?

Top management also has an obligation to implement a policy that is appropriate to the purpose of your organisation and its management system. This must provide a framework for the setting of management system objectives which should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound) and must include commitments to satisfy applicable requirements and to continually improve the management system.

Top management are required to demonstrate leadership and commitment with respect to their management systems (ISO14001, ISO9001 and ISO45001) by ensuring:

- › The management system policy and management system objectives are both established and compatible with the strategic direction of the organisation
- › The management system requirements have been integrated into the organisation's business processesThe resources needed for the management system are availableThe importance of an effective management system and communicating that the organisation has conformed to its requirementsThe management system achieves its intended outcome(s)

- › Persons are directed and supported to contribute to the effectiveness of the management system
- › Continual improvement is promotedOther relevant management roles are supported in demonstrating their leadership as it applies to their areas of responsibility.

HOW CAN SOCOTEC'S HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM SUPPORT MY ORGANISATION TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP?

To learn more about effective safety leadership, you should consider attending one of SOCOTEC's senior management courses such as IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors or IOSH Leading Safely. These form part of SOCOTEC's broad range of classroom-based and online training courses, all of which are available for purchase via our online Shop.

Want to find out more about SOCOTEC's Health & Safety services?

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