



DEKRA OSR's Methodology For Assessing Safety And Culture

Introduction

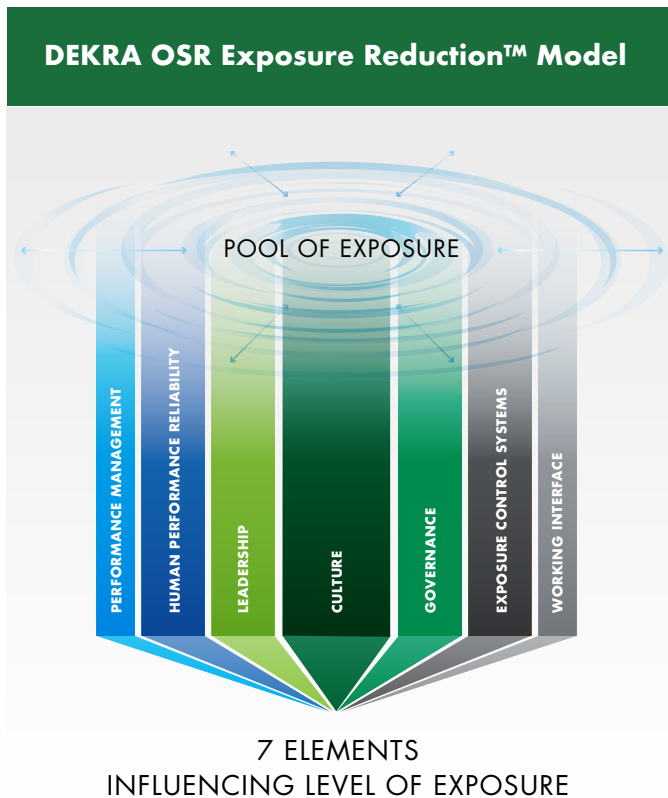
The key to improving organizational safety lies in recognizing and controlling exposures. Why exposures? Because exposures produce accidents and injuries. That means when exposures are reduced, safety improves.

Seven primary elements contribute to a given level of exposure. The purpose of the DEKRA Organizational Safety and Reliability (OSR) Assessment is to examine the state of these seven exposure "precursors" in your organization and, based on these findings, design a set of strategic recommendations to control that exposure and thereby reduce accidents and injuries.

Executive Summary

Numerous studies demonstrate that organizations with good safety performance tend to be more profitable and deliver higher quality to their customers. Those who get safety right tend to also do other things right — *the first time and every time.*

But getting safety right is complex because it is most effective when woven into the fabric of the organization's culture. An effective strategic safety plan capable of producing sustained results inevitably incorporates the organization's beliefs, culture, and systems. Which is why safety works when it depends on the same factors that impact employee morale, engagement levels, productivity, profitability, and quality.



Rather than viewing the assessment as merely a collection of data needed to decide how to achieve an organization’s objectives, DEKRA OSR consultants use the assessment process in three ways:

- To understand the state of the organization.
- To provide organizational leadership with a set of customized recommendations on how to improve.
- To operationalize these recommendations in a Strategic Safety Implementation Roadmap.

The DEKRA OSR assessment methodology examines seven elements of the organization that influence the “pool of exposure” to injuries in the workplace. As illustrated on the above graphic, these provide levers to systematically identify and control exposures and thereby eliminate the potential for injury.

These elements are interdependent in that the functioning of one element often influences the functioning of one or more of the others. Understanding how these elements function and interact within an organization enables experienced safety leaders to create strategic recommendations that reduce the exposure of workers to injury throughout the organization.

Assessment Inputs

The DEKRA OSR exposure assessment process draws on quantitative and qualitative data to both develop a clear picture of an organization’s level of maturity in recognizing and controlling exposure, and to improve managing that exposure. Quantitative data on incidents and near incidents,

investigative reports, policies, and programs are examined to understand the organization’s overall safety systems and performance. Additional quantitative data is gathered from people across the organization through administration of the Organizational Culture Diagnostics Instrument™ (see DEKRA’s Organizational Culture Diagnostics Instrument™ (OCDI)).

To get to the “why” behind the “what” of the *quantitative* data, *qualitative* data is gathered by face-to-face interviews with the executive team, focus groups with key specialty teams (e.g., training), and field visits that include interviews and focus groups with plant leaders, supervisors and line workers. Additional qualitative data is gathered at the working interface through direct observation and discussion with workers engaged in real-time activities.

Assessment Elements

The assessment process is structured around seven elements of the DEKRA Exposure Reduction™ Model (see DEKRA Exposure Reduction™ Model): Culture, Exposure Control Systems, Governance, Human Performance Reliability, Leadership, Performance Management Systems, and Working Interface.

Culture

Culture is a powerful influence on both behavior and the overall functioning of the organization. It is crucial to understand not just how the culture manifests itself in the organization but also those factors that exert the most influence on safety performance.

DEKRA uses its Organizational Cultural Diagnostic Instrument (OCDI) to delineate the organization’s overall culture as well as provide an understanding of the relationships between workers and with their supervisors and managers. The OCDI data can be broken down to provide comparisons between sites, departments, and levels of the organization. DEKRA uses interviews and focus groups to probe for the issues and actions that explain the scores employees give on their OCDI (the “why” behind the “what”).

Exposure Control Systems

These are the systems organizations use to identify, reduce, and control exposure. These programs typically include hazard recognition and mitigation; skills, knowledge and training; policies, rules and standards, and exposure-reduction mechanisms.

The assessment provides insight into how safety systems and programs are implemented, their quality, and how they are sustained. Understanding begins with a review of safety program documentation, followed by an assessment of the program’s effectiveness in the field. Direct observation and discussions with employees and leaders provide real-time understanding of any gaps that may exist between objectives and implementation. The field experience normally yields best practices and important opportunities for improvement.

Governance

Governance is how the organization deploys critical safety decisions at all levels, communicates them across the organization, and implements them at appropriate levels of authority. We assess the structure of governance systems, how and at what levels various types of decisions are made, and who is responsible. Additional considerations are:

- Organizational understanding and responsibility around crucial safety measures and activities.
- Alignment of policies and rules with organizational direction and philosophy.
- Communication and accountability in the implementation of policies and initiatives.

Sound governance also requires an understanding of lagging, leading, and predictive data. This includes the performance of exposure controls related to potential for life-altering or fatal injuries. The use of such data is part of the assessment of governance.

Human Performance Reliability (HPR)

There is a clear connection between safety outcomes and reliability. While it is important to understand human reliability and the influences that impact safe decision making, it is also important to understand organizational reliability, the reliability of larger systems in delivering on expectations, and the reliability of operations. When reliability is uncertain, exposure increases.

HPR is assessed by comparing programs and policies to the perceptions of workers and leaders using interviews, focus groups, and line-of-work engagements. Areas of inquiry include:

- Intended messaging and how it is received.
- Willingness of leaders to hear or seek bad news.
- Alignment of risk tolerance.
- Awareness and reaction to weak signals.
- Prevalence of shortcuts.
- Urgency and its influence on decision making.
- Preparedness and response to abnormal conditions.
- Management of fatigue and error reduction through SOP's aligned with the way the brain works.

Leadership

This element measures how leadership influence in safety is felt throughout the organization. It also measures to what extent operational leaders sponsor and support safety initiatives and programs.

Leaders drive performance and culture by what they do and don't do, and by the messages they convey. The weight of these actions establishes the seriousness that people in the organization assign to safety such as the value placed on rules and procedures, reporting near misses, and participation in safety activities and efforts.

Effective leadership functions through rings of influence, where the leaders exhibit their personal beliefs and values to those around them, ultimately influencing and shaping the organization's culture. A leader's personal safety ethic is also an influence. This in turn impacts the leader's proficiency in the seven best practices of safety leadership that shape the organizational culture.



Performance Management Systems

Performance management systems focus the organization's attention on what truly matters. They do it by selecting the right people for the role, providing them resources to be successful, motivating people to perform, and holding them accountable for their performance. The extent to which safety is incorporated into these systems determines the sustainability of effective performance.

DEKRA OSR assess the resources allocated to the development of safety skills and leadership, the motivation for their continued utilization, and their access to supervisors and mentors who guide workers to perform safely and effectively. Also key to sustaining safety are clarity and consistency in policies, such as supervisor-to-subordinate ratios and addressing fatigue.

Working Interface

The working interface is the point within the work process where people physically interact with equipment, facilities and procedures. This is where the organization creates its value. More importantly, it is the point at which exposure occurs and safety is or is not realized.

At the working interface, all the influences of the previous six elements come together. We examine on location as workers are performing their jobs, observing and engaging them to understand their perspective on the work and exposures. Aspects considered in this line-of-work engagement are:

- Working conditions
- Housekeeping
- Size and interaction of the work group
- Interactions with other work groups
- Apparent consideration of safety rules and practices
- Recognition and control of exposures

Summary of Assessment Process

The centerline process used to complete the assessment is outlined below. This sequence of phases and steps enables collaboration and ongoing communication throughout the assessment process. It also provides for the progressive sharing of results and opportunities to adjust as necessary. The process continues beyond final recommendations into the creation of a roadmap to sustained exposure reduction.

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
<p>Orientation of leadership and internal assessment team.</p> <hr/> <p>Planning the assessment process and assigning actions to facilitate analytics, diagnostic, and gathering documentation.</p> <hr/> <p>Corporate interviews of key executives and leaders; review of systems.</p> <hr/> <p>OCDI (Cultural Diagnostic) is administered across the organization.</p> <hr/> <p>Midpoint Report delivery of quantitative data for a status discussion.</p>	<p>Field Assessment to understand the factors influencing the culture and exposure-control mechanisms through interviews, focus groups and line-of-work engagements.</p> <hr/> <p>Final Report to leadership and the assessment team of qualitative observations, overall evaluation, and key strategic recommendations with tactical courses of action for implementation.</p> <hr/> <p>Executive agreement on approach forward and how to communicate results and actions to the organization.</p>	<p>Development of a Roadmap to operationalize the path forward, identifying resources, responsibility, and timing of particular courses of action to fully implement a sustainable plan.</p> <hr/> <p>Leadership reviews the roadmap and reaches acceptance of its final form, providing the sponsorship and resources necessary to its full implementation.</p> <hr/> <p>Leadership communicates the plan and periodically updates the organization on progress.</p> <hr/> <p>The executive safety governance team provides oversight and support, owning responsibility for full plan implementation.</p>

Conclusion

Leaders need sound organizational intelligence to provide superior safety leadership. They are responsible for identifying and controlling injury exposure throughout their organization.

As leaders embark on their journey to a zero-injury goal, the DEKRA Exposure Reduction™ methodology for safety assessments gives them a systematic

process to understand critical elements affecting exposures across their organization.

Use of the DEKRA Exposure Reduction™ Model gauges the organization's maturity across the seven elements so leaders can tailor solutions that reduce workplace exposure and improve the safety and wellbeing of their workforce.

Learn More

Contact us if you would like to explore where your organization is on the exposure reduction maturity scale.

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