
Ask the Assessors!

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Overview of Today's Topics:

- ✓ **Review Safety Culture Assessor's experience on the line**
- ✓ **Review of Safety Culture Assessment commonly asked questions**
- ✓ **Open Q&A session for online participants**

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*New
Assessor!*



Safety Culture Assessor
Short Line Safety Institute



ENHANCING SAFETY
ON SHORT LINE AND REGIONAL RAILROADS.

About Us!

- Meet the Safety Culture Assessment Team!
 - JR Sampson
 - Pat Black
 - Randy Matson
 - Wayne Hamm
 - Sam Cotton
 - Robert E. Lee
 - Mike Long
 - Ron Hynes
 - Michele Malski
 - Jill Medeiros

Is this an audit or an assessment?

- The Safety Culture Assessments are Assessments, not audits. A Safety Culture Assessment is an interactive process that collaboratively and confidentially analyzes the culture and behaviors and *perceptions* at your railroad. Interviews, surveys, and observations are all tools used to aggregate information expressed in our suggested areas of opportunity.

What happens when a railroad has a policy but its not followed? What do you do?

- **“Normalized Deviance”**
 - **Definition:** “The gradual process through which unacceptable practice or standards become acceptable. As the deviant behavior is repeated without catastrophic results, it becomes the social norm for the organization.”
- **Observations and Safety Critical Events**

What advice to you give the most?

- Create a Safety Action Plan (or SAP)
- Enhance communication improvements like peer-to-peer programs
- Improve or create a train the trainer and mentor programs with structured reviews and feedback for willing and knowledgeable trainers
- Utilize and create a leadership training program for new managers
- Increase presence in the field. Supervisors need to be seen, following the rules and setting the example, in the field.

What has been the best thing you have seen at a railroad?

- Senior Leaders attend every Safety Committee meeting, set the example and expectations
- Leaders are out in the field with all PPE on, and has knowledge of rule compliance- this sets the example for commitment to safety
- Employees of all levels feel empowered to stop any action that may be unsafe without fear of reprisal
- Other Examples

What was some of the “not-so-good” observations?

- Railroads could improve on following-up with employees about safety concern resolutions
- Discipline policies are not always consistently applied to all employees
- Safety Committees sometimes do not share the information discussed at the meetings to the whole company (exclusion)
- Some employees take shortcuts to get the job done faster
- Other Examples

What have railroads thought of your process?

Questionnaire:

Would you recommend this Assessment process to other railroads? Please explain.

- *“Yes, the insight provided by the 3rd party role of the SLSI will enable to our railroad to achieve the ‘next level’ of safety. The experience level and professionalism of the assessment team alone was worth our time investment.”*
- *“Absolutely. Well worth the time for both managers and employees to go through this process.”*

What have railroads thought of your process?

Questionnaire:

Has participating in the Assessment been worthwhile, thus far?

Please explain.

- *“Yes, eye-opening experience. A bit overwhelming as a whole but in pieces it will be manageable to get our operation running safer. Your professional experience and knowledge which you were more than willing to share was greatly appreciated.”*
- *“Yes. By getting railroad experts to look under the hood and provide their assessments, based on their experiences, is very helpful. Their experience gives credence to their presence and recommendations while their non-judgmental demeanor put our employees at ease allowing for candid feedback.”*

What is required from my railroad?

Time and resource commitment from the railroad for:

- Meetings, survey participation, interviews with the senior leaders, managers, and employees, field observations and other reviews
 - Prefer one or two employees (non-managerial) to accompany SLSI personnel
- Willingness to initiate and sustain changes necessary to improve safety culture
- An average assessment of a railroad under 35 employees costs us anywhere from \$15,000- \$25,000 (varying and) depending on location. We are committing our resources to help you and need the same dedication in return to complete the best assessment possible. Cooperation with our team during and prior to the assessment is essential.

How do you protect my confidentiality?

- For RRs:
 - Pseudonyms for each railroad
 - Non-Retention
 - Aggregated information
 - No names or notes kept or recorded
 - Survey confidential with self identified usernames and passwords per individual
 - Agreement to be non-punitive
- For the Institute:
 - UConn information stored in secure location
 - Our Safety Culture Assessment materials don't get released for public use or partnering organizations use
 - Notes and materials are aggregated, no names or individuals recorded, notes are eradicated after assessment

Q & A Section:

Any Questions?



Ask the Assessors!

Questions, Please Contact:

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