

# Building a Resilient Safety Culture towards a Sustainable Future for All: Presentation Notes

## Slide 1 (Title)

[No notes.]

## Slide 2 (Health)

"A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO)

*Meikirch Model of Health* defines health as "a state of wellbeing emergent from conducive interactions between individuals' potentials, life's demands, and social and environmental determinants." The model argues that health occurs when individuals use their biologically given and personally acquired potentials to manage the demands of life in a way that promotes well-being. This process then continues throughout life and is embedded within related social and environmental determinants of health.

## Slide 3 (Environment)

Human activities have adverse effects on the environment on many scales and varied degrees of extent; that's no news. Daily, numerous pollutants find their way into the environment through the rejection of undesirable wastewater, waste gas, and liquid and solid residues by individuals and organisations' activities and processes. Indeed, we all have a negative and cumulative effect on the environment and must find ways to curb this to realise a sustainable future for current and subsequent generations.

## Slide 4 (Safety)

The concept of safety can generally be understood to be the absence of accidents. An accident in itself is regarded as an event that results in unacceptable loss(es) (Leveson, 2011). Therefore, the state of safety from that viewpoint in an organisational context could be defined as a work environment free of accidents and therefore free of unacceptable loss of various magnitudes. I say various magnitudes because "consequence", as we know, could vary due to various factors that are outside the scope of this presentation.

Workplace safety is a function of the attribute of work systems which reflect the (low) likelihood of immediate/delayed physical harm to persons, property, or the environment during the performance of work (Beus et al., 2016).

Having looked at the core terms underpinning this presentation, we will now look at organisational resilience, which very much speaks to the theme of your HSE week.

## Slide 5 (Organisational Resilience)

If resilience in a system refers to what organisations need to bounce back from strain of any sort in a given system, organisational resilience is then organisations' ability to resist, absorb, recover, and adapt to an altered environment following a disaster/event (Kahan et al., 2009). It has a bearing on how organisations respond to environmental change, pushes firms to develop

In HSE terms, the challenge for organizations is the proactive development of a varied repertoire of routines and prevention strategies for an adequate response to uncertainty and complexity in a system. The focus for HSE is dealing with complex, dynamic and unstable systems.

Thus, as a firm, you must continually manage risks and create a safety culture that is grounded in resilient processes, one that is:

- Anticipatory (knowing what to expect)
- Encourages active monitoring (knowing what to look for) and reactive where inevitable
- A culture that is response ready (knowing what to do) and

Grounded in learning (knowing what can happen). A learning organization is one that, in the long term, tends to thrive.

## Slide 6 (Organisational Resilience - Dimensions)

Three dimensions of organisational resilience (Pillay et al. (2010):

1. Cognitive capabilities are important because they enable organisations to notice and interpret uncertain situations, analyse and formulate responses.

2. Behavioural capabilities move the organization forward, enabling them to learn about the situation and fully utilise its resources.
3. Contextual capabilities provide the setting that enables organisations to integrate cognitive and behavioural capabilities.

## Slide 7 (Safety Culture)

Safety culture influences the deployment of safety management resources and procedures that are indicative of the actual work environment, not the safety management system - it does not reflect actual practice but could serve as a window into an organization's safety culture.

Learning culture - learning cannot be done without good reporting.

Reporting culture - Are your employees confident to report safety-related issues without fear of blame or being victimized? It brings about a just culture - which is an atmosphere of trust that employees are encouraged to report safety concerns and issues, including gross negligence, unsafe acts and wilful violations that are not tolerated. So, it is the motivation for reporting, supported by the provision of user-friendly reporting methods, adequate training, feedback from reports and regular follow-up by management.

Flexible culture - shift from bureaucratic mode to a mode where knowledge, skills and abilities count, leading the task in challenging situations and shifting back again when the challenges are gone.

Resilient safety culture will form the focus on the next slide.

## Slide 8 (Resilient Safety Culture)

The concept of resilient safety culture stems from the idea that safety culture is not devoid of drawbacks. The main one is the fact that the culture aspect does not consider the interaction between people, technology and administration (Shirali et al., 2016). Hence the need to reinforce it by including resilience, which factors in the uncertainty associated with complex systems.

An accident from a resilience engineering stance does not represent a failure of systems in dealing with risk; rather, it implies that the systems have failed in the adaptations necessary to cope with real-world complexities.

Therefore, resilient safety culture as a sub-set of organizational culture aims to foster safe practices for improved safety in an ultrasafe organization striving for cost-effective safety management. It does so by underscoring the importance of resilience engineering, organizational learning, and continuous improvements.

It addresses the limitations/weaknesses of traditional safety culture by responding to changing and unforeseen safety risks associated with the unique and complex nature of work projects. It necessitates that organisations develop their behavioural capabilities, managerial/contextual capabilities and psychological/cognitive capabilities - the three dimensions of organisational resilience.

## Slide 9 (Psychological Capabilities)

Psychological or cognitive capabilities of organisational resilience are based on sense-making and conceptual orientation, which enable organisations to notice shifts, interpret and provide meaning to uncertain/unfamiliar/unprecedented situations/events. It requires attitudes that balance contradictory forces of confidence and expertise against caution, scepticism and search for new information, be it in terms of analysing an array of options to then formulate responses.

It necessitates that you encourage and promote creativity and the development of new skills for withstanding/sustaining pressures in a work environment.

Cognitive foundations require a strong knowledge of reality and a desire to question fundamental assumptions. You can foster this through a strong sense of purpose, core value, a genuine vision and deliberate use of language.

## Slide 10 (Behavioral Capabilities)

Behavioural capabilities consist of routines and established behaviours that enable firms to learn more about unfamiliar situations encounter, so they can implement necessary new routines and fully use their resources.

The behavioural element of organisational resilience is the ability to follow a dramatically different course of action from the norm. It demands that you learn from situations that emerge and unlearn obsolete information. Behavioural resilience also relies on developing practical, useful habits that provide first response to an unexpected threat.

## Slide 11 (Managerial Capabilities)

Managerial/contextual capabilities of organisational resilience are a combination of interpersonal connections, resource stocks and supply lines which are the basis for quick actions. So, this requires relationships internal and external to an organization, enabling you to facilitate effective responses to environmental complexities.

This contains:

- Psychological safety - this is the extent to which employees perceive their work is conducive to taking interpersonal risks. They are more likely to be willing to take these risks. If employees perceive psychological safety, the more likely they will be willing to take interpersonal risks.
- Deep social capital - this evolves from respectful interactions within the organisational community and facilitates intellectual capital growth and resource exchange.
- Diffusion of power and accountability - shared decision-making is championed by resilient organisations and self-organisation is promoted - each part is a small replica of the whole organisation. The 39 units you have - is power diffused across the board, and are resources shared - e.g., shared relationship with suppliers?

## Slide 12 (Bringing It Together)

This is a network diagram that shows the relationship between resilient safety culture, safety culture and other culture types.

## Slide 13 (Conclusion)

In conclusion, resilient safety culture for Questoilgroup is your psychological/cognitive, behavioural, and managerial/contextual capabilities to anticipate, monitor, respond and learn to then effectively manage safety risks and create an ultrasafe organization, with rippling positive effects on individuals (employees) and therefore families, communities where you are operational and the wider society.

This is where system thinking is important and its relevance towards meaningful contribution to realising the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Which applies to all organisations including Questoilgroup.

While many of these goals are relevant to you, I will only focus on three to drive my point home about sustainable future for all in the context of resilient safety culture.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

3.9 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, soil pollution, and contamination.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.8 Protect labour rights of all workers and promote safe and secure work environments for them, includes migrant workers, particularly women, and those in precarious employment.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

## Slide 14 (Resilient Safety Culture for a Sustainable Future)

[This slide was hidden during the original presentation and the notes for it are largely a duplicate of the notes for Slide 13.]

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

3.9 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, soil pollution, and contamination.

3.a. Strengthen the implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as appropriate.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.8 Protect labour rights of all workers and promote safe and secure work environments for them, includes migrant workers, particularly women, and those in precarious employment.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

## Slide 15 (References)

[No notes.]

## Slide 16 (Thanks)

[No notes.]