

August 2022

Hello RETRO Members

### **Do you ever feel like throwing in the towel when it comes to safety compliance?**

Even when management offers the best safety training and procures the best personal protective equipment (PPE), it seems there are always a few employees who won't follow safety protocols. It can be frustrating.

Knowledge alone has little correlation to actual compliance or follow-through. That is why every workplace needs to build a strong safety culture, which takes time and *intentionality*.



Safety culture is a three-dimensional framework that applies to all organizations. It involves **motivation**, **actions**, and **knowledge**. These three dimensions work together like a set of cogwheels—each one affecting the other two.

The trouble is that most organizations tend to focus on **knowledge** by offering safety training, providing personal protection equipment, and nothing more.

Your company likely provides proper safety training and PPEs, the *knowledge* dimension in the safety culture framework. What's missing are the other two: **motivation** and **action**.

**Motivation** refers to management's commitment to safety. That commitment is the engine that propels safety compliance so that the whole organization is motivated to use PPEs and follow safety practices—especially frontline employees.

**Action** refers to safety practices starting with management and on to every employee—*regardless of their job function*.

Think of these three dimensions as you provide safety training to deepen your safety culture. More tools to help you with your safety framework can be found [here](#).

**De-escalation Techniques.** As summer temperatures rise in the summer heat, tempers often do as well. Difficult customers can become belligerent or even hostile. The skills to de-escalate angry or intoxicated individuals are crucial to keeping public-facing workers and customers safe. Using role-playing exercises in safety trainings to address different scenarios is a practical way to acclimate employees on how to de-escalate these types of events.



For more tips on how to deal with potential violence, visit our Violence page in the [RS Safety Library](#).

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**Ladder Use** – Falling from ladders is one of the most common causes of fall-related fatalities, according to the National Safety Council’s statistics. In any given year, approximately 65,000 individuals receive emergency room treatment due to ladder accidents. Most ladder-related incidents happen *ten feet or less from the ground*. Remember, always choose the most appropriate ladder for the project.



More information is available on [RS SafetyTV](#) or the [RS Safety Library](#). The [SAFEME](#) app has a module on Ladders and is a great refresher course!

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**Battery Safety** - Batteries contain sulfuric acid and can produce explosive mixtures of hydrogen and oxygen. Even when the battery is not operating, the *self-discharge action* generates hydrogen gas, so make sure batteries are stored and worked on in a well-ventilated area.



Some of the hazards that can happen when working with batteries are:

- Chemical burns from the sulfuric acid
- Electrical shocks or burns
- Explosions from a spark igniting the hydrogen/oxygen gases
- Lifting injuries

Safety tips for working with batteries:

- Always wear ANSI Z87.1 approved safety glasses and face shield or splash-proof goggles when working on or near batteries
- Always wear proper hand protection
- Keep all sparks, flames, and cigarettes away from the battery
- Never try to open a battery with non-removable vents
- Keep removable vents tight and level except when servicing electrolytes
- Make sure the work area is well ventilated
- Never lean over a battery while boosting, testing, or charging
- Exercise caution when working with metallic tools or conductors to prevent short circuits and sparks. If you are wearing jewelry, you should remove it while working with batteries.

Batteries are heavy, considering their size, so exercise care and proper body mechanics when lifting them. If possible, store batteries at waist height to reduce the need to bend over to move them. A smart method of transporting them is with a cart or hand truck rather than hand-carrying them. It's highly recommended keep a battery spill kit on hand.

More on this subject can be found in the [Auto section](#) in the RS Safety Library.



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Think safe. Act safe. Be safe.

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