Acumen Safety Model

Welcome back to Acumen

Since 2004, Acumen Software has been helping organisations to manage their health & safety workflows. During this time the software has collated data for over 250,000 safety incidents.

Our articles and papers are work in progress and we welcome feedback from all who read - feedback we hope can be included and will enhance what we discover.

At the heart of everything we do is the Acumen Safety Model. This model has five key elements which we believe are important to improving safety:

1. An **Information Model** that allows for the correct information to be created and shared to the right people at the right time.

2. The continuous delivery of **Training & Competencies** for all individuals for safe working and wellbeing.

3. The ability to allow individuals to protect themselves by continuously reinforcing the correct practices through **Self Checks & Risk Assessments**.

4. The delivery of formal workflows and processes for conducting **Inspections and sharing Best Practice**.

5. The organisational processes and workflows to enable **Corrective Action and Learning.**

The Acumen Safety Model Elements

1. An Information Model that allows for the correct information to be created and shared to the right people at the right time.

The first element of the proposed safety model is the underlying information framework required to ensure that messages, directives, instructions and guidance are all structured, formed, transmitted and received correctly as intended. This, we believe is the most fundamental aspect of the safety model and if the information is formed wrong here, then no matter what technology you have, or processes you adopt, the intended outcome will not be delivered.

There are a number of components to a information model including:

- The basic process of information creation

- Message forming and payload contents

- Message transmission

- Ability to disambiguate information

- Reception and internalisation of information

- Avoidance of competing information forces

- Information tacitness

The workings of this information model are not linear, nor simple - it is incredibly complex, multi layered and temporal model.

2. The continuous delivery of Training & Competencies for all individuals for safe working and wellbeing.

The need to embed the correct competences in individuals through knowledge retention, training and process is our next element to the model. Through the information model, culture and training we can embed the correct competencies to ensure team members undertake their tasks in a safe and secure manner. If we can embed and continually reinforce the correct behaviours and actions, we can make safety part of every activity each individual does.

3. The ability to allow individuals to protect themselves by continuously reinforcing the correct practices through Self Checks & Risk Assessments.

As work tasks are undertaken or team members attend work locations, we have the opportunity to again reinforce the correct behaviours and ensure that tasks, facilities and equipment are safe. By continuously checking and re-checking the current safety situation through risk assessments and self checks, we create not only an opportunity to identify issues but more importantly an early warning system that can flag potential concerns or issues showing early signs of realisation.

4. The delivery of formal workflows and processes for conducting Inspections and sharing Best Practice.

As self checks and risk assessments are undertaken, the organisation has a duty of care to review and check compliance to ensure that

what they believe is occurring is actually occurring and what the people involved in conducting self checks / risk assessments are presenting the real world scenarios. This formal process also allows organisations to share best practice - this ensures continuous learning and reinforcement of safety practice for all. It is important to note, that these formal processes should not focus on just looking for issues, this is about the constant reinforcement of the correct behaviours, culture and practice.

5. The organisational processes and workflows to enable Corrective Action and Learning.

Finally, across all elements of the safety model, there is a need to learn and take action to correct issues, Openness to correction and leaning must be embedded in all elements. Not only the culture, people and processes but also in the work tasks, deliverables and physical artefacts (such as building fabric, tools and equipment) must be part of this learning model.

Our leaning model is not positioned as the silver bullet to all organisations involved in heath, safety and well-being practice. It is a model we have used and developed over many years to support organisations wishing to improve their health, safety and wellbeing outcomes. Our data shows that this model can have huge positive impacts on organisations and the adoption of such as model (not necessary the Acumen model) will help organisations deliver improved health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

All these points will be developed as we delve into each area of the model in the forthcoming articles.

We welcome feedback on our article!

About the Author

Paul Robinson PhD blends his academic track record with 20 years industry experience in technology and safety solutions working for organisations such as the NHS Patient Safety Program, consultation and software services to numerous organisations such as Skanska, Qatar Foundation. ASTAD, Amey, AVOVE, Pitney Bowes, TIME Qatar, Balfour Beatty and many others.

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