Rethinking Workplace Safety Through a Digital Platform

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For years, I've walked factory floors, stood on job sites and sat across the table from leaders who genuinely care about their people but struggle to keep them safe. I've seen the frustration when accidents happen despite everyone's best efforts—when a routine day turns into a life-changing moment.

Too often, even well-meaning leaders are stuck in reactive patterns, where safety is documented but not truly managed. I started thinking about how we could shift that pattern. Safety should be about people, not just policies. It should be something we live and breathe every day, something we act on before an accident forces us to. You can't manage what you don't measure, which highlights the need for proactive solutions.

That mindset led to the creation of Keynecta. It wasn't just about building a product; it was about rethinking how we manage safety in a world rapidly embracing digital resources. It was about giving leaders real-time insights and clear data so they can spot risks early and act before problems arise.

Why Safety Needs a New Approach

When working with a new client interested in a safer workplace, we don't begin on the shop floor. We start at the top. If leadership isn't aligned on safety priorities, no amount of training or compliance paperwork will fix the problem.

Our first conversation is with the CEO. If they don't prioritize people and workplace culture, we know right away that digital solutions aren't a fit—that our *philosophy* isn't a fit. Next, we talk to the CFO. Safety has financial implications, but too often, finance teams focus only on cost-cutting instead of understanding how preventing accidents improves the bottom line. Finally, we sit down with HR. Most people think HR is all about people, but in reality, it's often about compliance. While compliance matters, it's only part of the solution.

If these three groups—leadership, finance and HR—aren't aligned, safety programs will never be effective. And that's before we even get to the supervisors and frontline workers, the people who deal with risks every day. Too often, supervisors are promoted because they were great at their previous jobs, not because they've been trained to lead, communicate or build trust with their teams. Without proper leadership, safety culture falls apart.

What we're seeing now is that a digital mindset about safety works when all these voices have access to the same real-time data, rather than after-the-fact reports.

The Role of Digital Tools in Workplace Safety

One of the biggest gaps in workplace safety is that companies don't measure it properly. Businesses track profit, productivity and quality down to the last decimal, but safety is often managed through outdated paper forms, inconsistent reporting or reactionary measures. That's where digital tools can help—for example, through a digital platform that puts all safety data in one place.

A digital solution provides real-time reporting, automated alerts and dashboards that make it easy to see patterns and trends. Instead of waiting for an accident to happen, leaders can proactively identify risks and take action before something goes wrong. When employees see that their feedback is valued and their input shapes real improvements, they're more likely to embrace the process and take ownership of safety on the floor.

Measuring What Matters: People and Process

The foundation of a strong safety culture begins with measuring the right things.

People

Ninety percent of workplace incidents are caused by behaviors. Measuring these behaviors can indicate if an organization is taking a proactive approach to safety. For example, are employees reporting hazards? Are they engaged in training? Are they participating in safety inspections? A workplace where employees actively contribute to safety discussions is far less likely to experience major incidents. I always recommend that leaders show up for safety meetings, ask questions on the floor and recognize employees who speak up about risks. When leaders model and reward the behavior they want to see, it creates a culture where safety becomes part of everyday conversations.

Process

If there's an incident, what's the root cause? What corrective actions are being taken? Are those actions being completed? Too many companies waste time placing blame

instead of fixing underlying process issues. Our goal with digital safety software is to help leadership focus on solutions. When leaders encourage open discussions about root causes and follow through on corrective actions, it builds trust. Trust motivates teams to speak up and stay engaged.

Closing Safety Gaps with Digital Solutions

Many companies don't even realize the size of their safety gaps. Simple things—like not reporting hazards or near misses—create major risks over time. A near miss today could be a serious injury tomorrow, but if it's never reported, leadership won't know how to fix the problem.

One of our clients, a mid-sized manufacturer in the Midwest, came to us after a series of unreported near misses. Within weeks of going live with our platform, their team began using QR codes on equipment to complete equipment inspections instantly. One of those inspection reports flagged a faulty lift mechanism that was fixed before anyone was injured.

For the plant manager, it wasn't just a process improvement—it was a leadership moment. The team saw that raising a concern actually led to change. Safety became less about paperwork and more about real action.

A Culture of Continuous Improvement

At the heart of it all, workplace safety is about people. It's about making sure they have the tools and support to go home safe every day. Technology helps, but real change happens when leaders are transparent about issues, hold themselves and others accountable and show genuine concern.

A digital platform can be a tool to help businesses shift from reacting to preventing, from compliance-driven to people-first safety. That's what matters—the people who keep your business running.

It's always about the people.

BIO:

Michael (Mike) A. Parins has built a career on resilience, innovation and a people-first mindset. He led sales for Jaws of Life in Iowa, helped grow a startup to $38 million in revenue and later turned his focus to education and consulting. Retirement didn't last long—he co-founded a safety and environmental consulting firm and now, at 80, is leading Keynecta, a digital platform company seeking to improve safety culture for small and mid-sized businesses. Learn more at www.keynecta.com.