



Getting Started with SMS Policy, Goals, & Objectives

The Safety Leader's Guide
to Developing and Aligning
Safety Management System Policy,
Goals, & Objectives



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Introduction

Safety management systems, when developed and implemented correctly, are able to help an organization understand and control its responsibilities, risks, and help protect its most important asset: its people.

by SafetyPro Resources

If you had the opportunity to flatten your organization's learning curve by leveraging 200 years of other people's mistakes while internalizing best practices and providing an organizational capability to continuously improve your firm's performance, would you do it?

Seems like kind of a "no-brainer," doesn't it? Who in their right mind would say "nope, not interested?"

Let's get started...

Leveraging 200 Years of Other People's Mistakes

by Daniel Slattery, MS

As consultants, we get a myriad of rationalizations from clients about why a management system is unnecessary:

"Safety management systems are just a trend"

The wheel, indoor plumbing, and electricity were trends too. Safety management systems are consensus standards developed by industry experts with decades of experience in the proactive management of occupational health and safety risks.

The concepts that form the core of management systems standards have been culled from best practices for error reduction and management over the last 2 centuries.

"Too distracting"

From a safety leader's perspective, spending a majority of their day "putting out fires" is pretty distracting as well. Re-orientating the organization from reactive to proactive takes effort, but rewards the organization in reducing distractions, not creating them.

"Too expensive to implement"

Safety management systems do require time and resources to implement, but increase an organization's ability to prevent health and safety problems. Safety Leaders understand the comparative value of implementing proactive systems versus reacting to the cost of an injury, illness, or fatality in the workplace (which often times reaches a cost order of magnitudes greater than SMS implementation).

"Too much documentation and paperwork"

A good safety management system has value in the paperwork and documentation required for the system, and is often times the paperwork the organization needs to demonstrate compliance with legal and customer obligations.

“No value to the organization”

All management systems, when properly implemented and maintained, help organizations add value to their products or services. Safety management systems help firms increase their return on (safety) investment, ensure compliance with legal and customer requirements, and increase employee engagement through communication channels.

“Too rigid”

Management systems specify a framework, but do not attempt to push organizations into a mold for a particular business model. The most effective framework for a safety management system is one that efficiently addresses the health and safety risks for the organization, but allows enough flexibility. Identifying these areas during the implementation phase allows for customization of the program, allowing leeway where needed while still ensuring operational discipline and accountability.

“My customers don’t require it”

Your customer doesn’t require you to be profitable either. Implementation of a safety management system will help to ensure that you remain profitable through the reduction of health and safety risks to the firm, and while providing products or services to clients.

Safety investment represents a high ROI for any firm, returning \$3-4 per dollar invested. Safety management systems increase returns on investment by targeting higher risk aspects for reduction through the identification and risk assessment processes.

How to Write a Safety Policy Statement for your SMS

by Daniel Slattery, MS

This is one of those elements that is pretty constant across all different types of safety management systems. If the management system framework being utilized does not include a policy statement, look again, because it's there.

The policy statement is a requirement in all management system specification frameworks.



“A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal” — Mahatma Gandhi

The policy statement is really important to get right, for a number of different reasons:

1. The policy statement is going to act as the compass for your organization. Most policy statements include organizational values to establish a framework for when there is no policy, procedure, or work instruction for the situation.
2. Policy making requires the involvement of management and organizational leadership. Be wary of leadership who delegates this task, as it may signal implementation problems later on (e.g. “I didn’t agree to that” and other diffusion of responsibility-type chicanery).
3. The policy is how you begin to tailor the subscribed standard to your organization. There are no two organizations that are identical, so there should not be two safety policy statements that are identical. This is the start of differentiating your organization from others considering the size and context of the organization.
4. It gives leadership an opportunity to set the tone for employee engagement. Management traditionally used to “huddle up” to crank out policy statements,

if it was even a group activity at all, and filled them with buzzwords, vague commitments, and “zero worship.” Development of the policy statement is the first opportunity for leadership to start developing ***shared accountability and a just culture*** across all levels of the organization.

5. Engagement goes beyond employees and leadership. The company may choose to engage stakeholders in the development process. This can include insurers, labor / industry organizations, and trade associations. Regulatory contacts (e.g. OSHA, BSEE, etc.) may have valuable input, and if you don’t have a working relationship with a relevant regulatory agency, this may be an opportunity to develop a positive one.
6. From your organization’s safety policy will spring part of your first set of safety goals and objectives. One of the fundamental concepts of management systems is creating accountability. From the organizational perspective, if we’re going to put it in writing (policy statement), we have to take it seriously enough to track it (goals and objectives).

Policy Statement Elements

There are also a number of required elements to the policy statement, which are nearly identical across the spectrum of safety management system specifications. To summarize, safety management system policy statements must include:

- A commitment to health and safety of everyone in the organization;
- Employee engagement;
- Compliance with legal and other requirements; and,
- Continual improvement (setting goals/objectives).

Depending on the safety management system framework that your organization subscribes to, it may have more visible elements, but these four form the basis for a good safety policy statement.

Communicating Policy

Once you have your policy statement down, then it’s time to figure out how the company is going to communicate the policy. Most organizations choose to get the safety policy statement on their company website, but that’s usually the first step.

There are a few other people that need to know the policy (like anyone doing work on behalf of the organization; e.g. employees, subcontractors, temporary staff). Also, there are stakeholders and interested parties outside the organization, who may be interested in the policy as well.

SMS

Safety Policy Matrix

For more information on writing a safety policy statement that helps incorporate the proper elements, download our free Safety Management Systems Policy Statement Element Matrix.

Reading this in print? Go to the link below for your download!

<http://www.safetyproresources.com/download-our-safety-management-system-policy-statement-element-matrix>



How To Set Effective Safety Goals for Your Company

by Lance Roux, CSP

Setting appropriate goals is a great way to improve your performance in any field, and safety is no different. How do you set the most effective goals? What types of goals should you set? And how do you track them?

Set Appropriate Goals

The first step is to identify the areas around which you will set your safety goals. You may be tempted to set a goal to reduce your injury rates by a percentage. However, we recommend that you set goals around safe behavior (actions) rather than injury rates (results). Setting goals around injury rates may create an incentive for employees to under-report injuries. So instead of setting a goal of “zero eye injuries in 2014”, the goal should be “95% use of safety glasses in 2014”. You could set goals around use of personal protective equipment, safety training attendance, participation in Job Safety Analyses, or any other metric that is significant for your business. The key is to choose goals that are meaningful to your organization, are easy to measure, and that will improve your company’s safety results.



Make Sure Your Goals are SMART

Once you have identified the goals, make sure they meet the SMART test - Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and have a Time limit. When you set safety goals, you should ensure that your goals comply with the following 5 components. An example of a poorly written goal is “We will implement a fall protection safety program this year.”

Examples of SMART goals:

- Each employee will participate in at least 2 safety meetings by March 31, 2014.
- Each employee will complete two Job Safety Analyses for their job by January 31, 2014.
- Each team will achieve Safety Training Attendance of 95% by December 31, 2014.

Track Performance

Set up a simple 1-page Monthly Safety Activity Report that you can review monthly to see if you are on track with your goals. Your report should track your proactive measures (behaviors), your injury rates (your results), and allow you to compare current performance with historical results. We recommend keeping it to one page to avoid information overload.

Sample Monthly Activity Report Template

Having trouble getting starting tracking goals?

Reading this in print? Go to the link below for your download!

<http://www.safetyprosources.com/sample-safety-performance-report-template>



Aligning Goals & Objectives to Your Safety Management System

by Daniel Slattery, MS

For organizations who are doing a fresh (e.g. brand new) implementation of a safety management system (SMS), one of the more difficult parts is getting started.



One of the most important parts of establishing goals and objectives is linking them to your policy statement. The safety policy statement says, in essence, what your organization is going to do, and what's important to the organization. The goals and objectives should be written/developed to support the safety policy statement.

One thing to remember when establishing goals and objectives for your SMS is to remember that each is fundamentally different. Goals are targets for performance indicators; they identify a numerical (preferably) or other value that the organization deems mission-critical to health and safety. Objectives are plans or activities that are established by the organization to ensure the implementation of processes, procedures, or programs to conform to, support, or improve the SMS.

Below, we're going to look at some excerpts from different policy statements, and walk through the process of establishing goals and objectives from those different examples. As a disclaimer, we're not advocating any of these particular goals or objectives, they are meant to reinforce a concept.

The first example was chosen from a policy statement that wasn't so clear:

- "Safety and health in our company must be a part of every operation."
 - **Potential Goals:**

- % Current PPE Cert. of Hazard Assessments – benchmarked or absolute # of hazard assessments that are current / # of total hazard assessments
- % Evaluations of Compliance – benchmarked or absolute # of evaluations of compliance that are current / # of total evaluations of compliance
- **Potential Objectives:**
 - Have (person/role) conduct PPE Cert. of Hazard Assessment for all organizational job role / titles by XX/XX/XXXX (date).
 - Have (person/role) conduct Evaluations of Compliance for all elements on the Register of Regulations by XX/XX/XXXX (date).

As stated, this is just an example, but it highlights two very important concepts:

- The policy statement and goals are inextricably linked. Where one goes, the other should follow. These considerations should be made during management reviews when the organization is thinking about changing policy.
- Linking goals and objectives requires clarity in your organization's policy. It doesn't allow for "fuzzy" or unclear commitments. It requires that the organization identify and articulate clear and concise goals and objectives.

Our second example comes from a policy written to support a safety management system standard and is a bit clearer:

- "COMPANY utilizes a SMS to reduce the risk of injury to personnel"
 - **Potential Goals**
 - % of total risk reduction annually
 - % of risk reduction associated with XX process
 - **Potential Objectives**
 - Have (person/role) update / reassess risks for XX process by XX/XX/XXXX (date).
 - Have (person/role) implement XX task/activity to reduce risk in xx process by XX/XX/XXXX (date).
 - Process owner reduces risk in XX process by XX% by XX/XX/XXXX (date).

Two more takeaways from this set of goals/objectives:

- These goals / objective are specific (first part of SMART); and
- There is an accountability structure – they are assigned to someone to complete by a specific date.

To wrap up, most good auditors will ensure that your goals and objectives are aligned with the SMS policy statement. Ensuring that your policy statement and goals and objectives are properly aligned will help your organization gain the maximum amount of traction and build the momentum necessary to provide for continuous improvement.

SMS

Goals & Objectives Workbook

Ready to get started on your safety management system goals & objectives for this year? Follow the link to our free SMS Goals & Objectives Workbook:

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<http://www.safetyproresources.com/download-our-safety-management-system-goals-and-objectives-workbook>



About Us

At **SafetyPro**, our mission is to provide customized safety solutions that protect an organization's best asset — its people.

Safety is not a luxury. Your company's safety record affects your bottom line, your reputation, and your ability to recruit and retain the best employees. Our safety consulting services are designed to help you make your company a safe place to work, so every worker can go home safe.

Biographies

LANCE S. ROUX, C.S.P.

Principal Consultant / Founder



Lance is a Principal Consultant at SafetyPro Resources, LLC headquartered in Baton Rouge, LA. Lance is a Certified Safety Professional (CSP), a designation awarded through the Board of Certified Safety Professionals. Lance received his Associate of Applied Science degree in Occupational Safety & Health Management from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana.

Lance's professional safety career began in 1996 in the petrochemical industry and has expanded his experience in project safety management, compliance auditing, risk assessment, and program development for an array of industrial markets including: oil & gas (upstream and downstream), healthcare, chemical processing, refineries, power (nuclear, hydro, and fossil fuel), and shipyards.

Biographies

DANIEL SLATTERY, MS

Vice President of Operations



Daniel is the Vice President of Operations at SafetyPro Resources, LLC headquartered in Baton Rouge, LA. Daniel is an Associate Safety and Health Manager (ISHM), a Certified Manager of Quality / Organizational Excellence and Certified Quality Auditor (ASQ). Daniel received his Master of Science degrees in Occupational Safety & Health and Organizational Leadership from Columbia Southern University in Orange Beach, Alabama, and his Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Strayer University in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is a Doctoral

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