The importance of inclusive safety cultures, where every employee feels valued and respected

Lucy Pritchard

Let's break this down…

We need to know:

- What a safety culture is
- What it means to be inclusive
- Why that matters

Then….

- What can we do about it?

What is safety culture

"The product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behaviour that can determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of an organisation's health and safety management system"

ACSNI Human Factors Study Group

"Safety culture is about the mindset of the company and its People, looking at how their values and beliefs influence the way health and safety procedures are implemented and used on a day-to-day basis"

CHAS

"Safety culture is a set of ways of doing and thinking that is widely shared by the employees of an organisation in the context of managing the most significant risks associated with its activities."

Institute for Industrial Safety Culture

Safety culture is a combination of the attitudes, values and perceptions that influence *how* something is actually done in the workplace, rather than *how it should be* done...
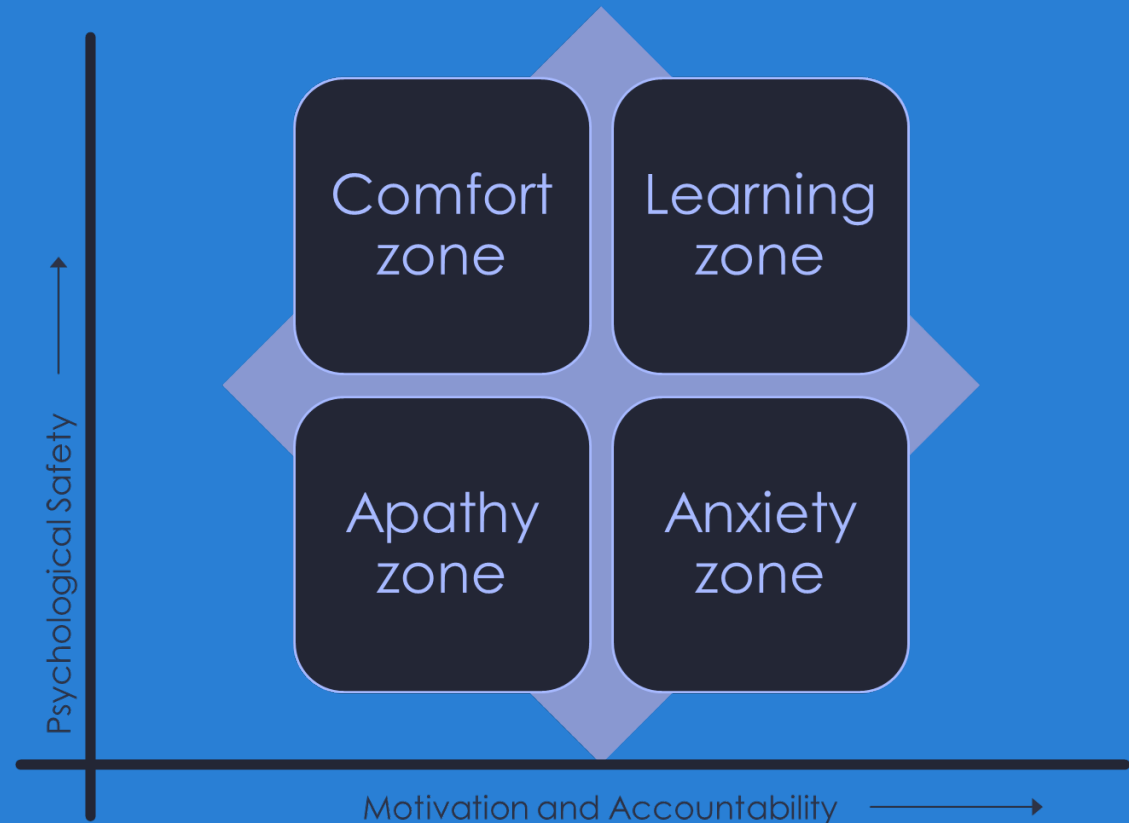and can be just as influential on safety outcomes as an organisation's safety management system itself.

HSE

What is an inclusive safety culture and why is it important?

Tom Geraghty - psychsafety.co.uk

An inclusive safety culture

- Allows everyone to be included and heard

- People feel confident to speak up…

- And not just about physical risks, about psychosocial risks too

- Avoids the development of sub cultures

- Helps you to understand why things are as they are and encourages everyone to be involved in continual improvement

Psychological Safety

| Comfort zone | Learning zone |
| Apathy zone | Anxiety zone |

Motivation and Accountability

An inclusive safety culture is an environment where all individuals feel able to speak up about the combination of attitudes, values and perceptions that influence *how* something is actually done in the workplace, rather than *how it should be* done and why there is a difference.
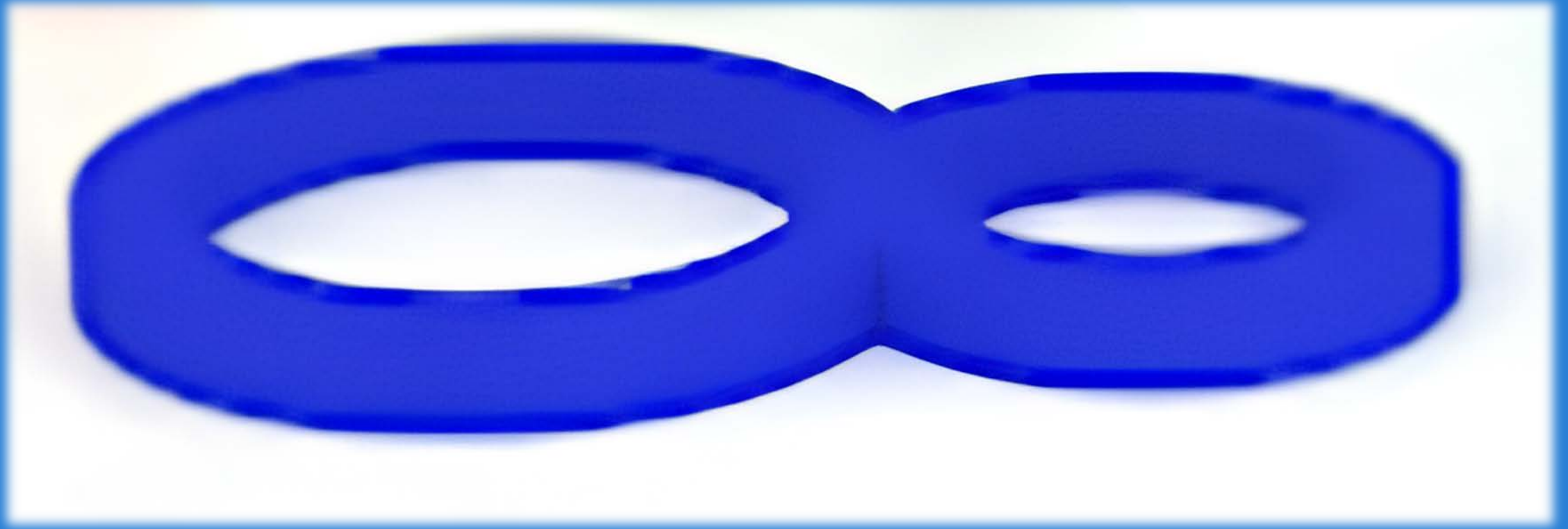
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We need to understand	Attitudes
	Values
	Perceptions

| We need input from everyone, at all levels | Creating an overarching safety culture, rather than many sub cultures |

We need to understand	How things are done
	Why they are done that way
	Why there are differences – if there are any

The power of diversity (and diverse thinking)

The power of diversity (and diverse thinking)

🌍	Identifying unseen hazards	Unique perspectives Cultural differences
🧠	Developing effective solutions	More effective and creative thinking
💬	Improved communication	Cultural sensitivity Inclusive language
❤️	Building trust	Empathy Psychological safety
⚖️	Representing the workforce	Representation Fairness

The importance of psychological safety

- Put simply..
  - When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to speak up about safety concerns without fear of retribution.

- Meaning...
  - You learn about what is really going on
  - You can understand the "why" as well as the "what"
  - Everyone feels more motivated to do the right thing

Breaking down barriers

Organisational culture	Resistance to change Hierarchical or siloed structures hindering communication
Leadership attitudes	Lack of commitment Authoritarian approach
Communication challenges	Language barriers Cultural differences
Bias and discrimination	Stereotypes Unconscious bias
Lack of support and fear of reprisal	Making it too hard to get involved

The role of the leadership team

Frame your request the right way
- Don't just tell employees you expect them to speak up... frame the issues as a learning problem and make it clear you want to learn from them

**Role modelling behaviours you expect to see**
- You can't have an inclusive safety culture if the top team aren't part of it

Focus on curiosity
- Ask questions, talk to people, get out from behind your desk and see what is going on, as a leader don't do safety tours – do engagement visits

Develop a 'Fair Culture'
- with the right blend of psychological safety to allow people to speak up, and...
- the appropriate amount of accountability so they see changes when they do
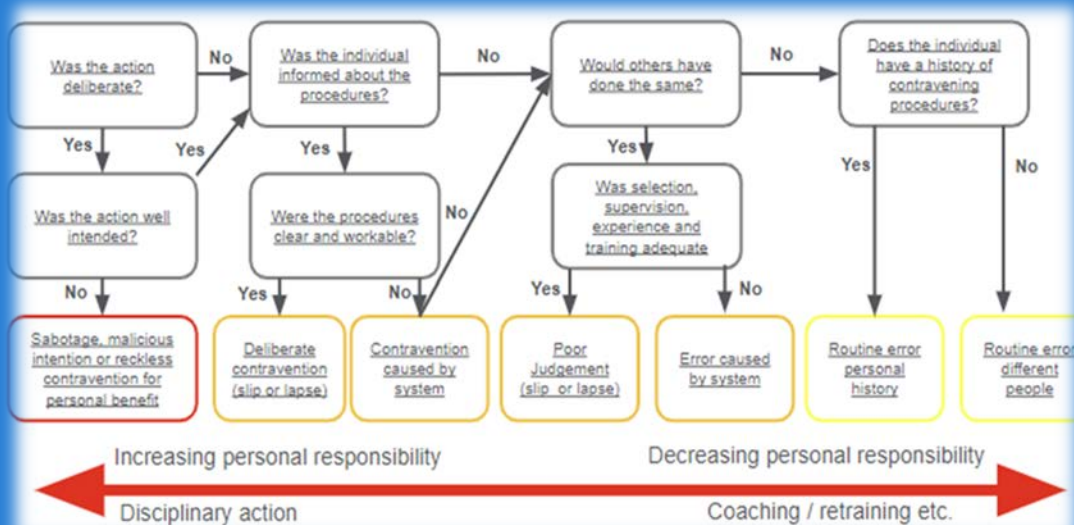
My challenge to you: What one thing could you change to make your safety culture more inclusive?