Aim

- Encourage work on **strengthening safety culture**, and
- Raise awareness of **practical tools** and **actionable steps** to support improvement.

1. Safety culture tools and methods

2. Safety culture maturity

3. Safety II thinking

4. Case study

Safety Culture

Safety Culture
Workers' shared perceptions of how safety is prioritised and how this influences safety-related behaviour.

Visible Senior Management Comittment
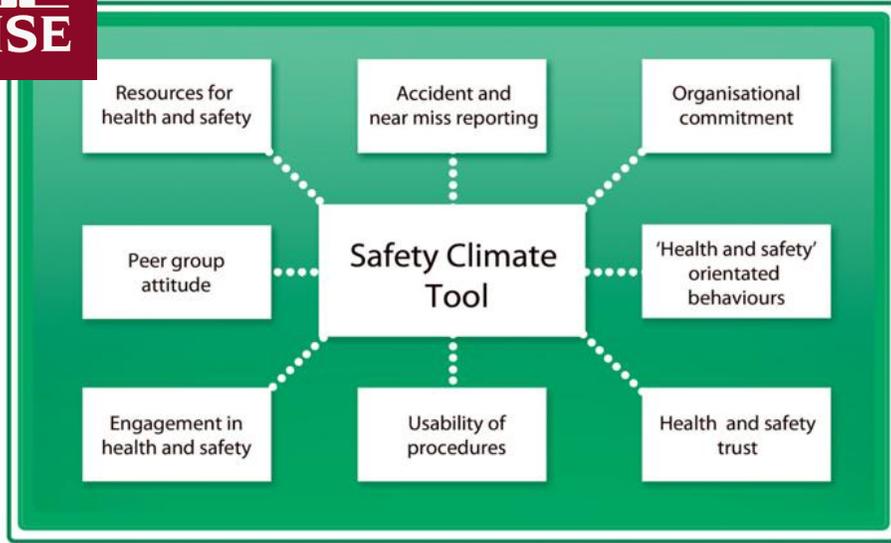
Worker Involvement

Organisational Learning

Communications

Benefits

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Improving Safety Culture Can:

- Reduce accident and injury rates.
- Reduce sickness absence.
- Improve workforce morale.
- Sustain work performance.
- Improve organisational reputation.

Safety climate

Safety culture

Health and Safety Executive, 2026

Methods

(Health and Safety Executive, 2026)

(Energy Institute, 2026)
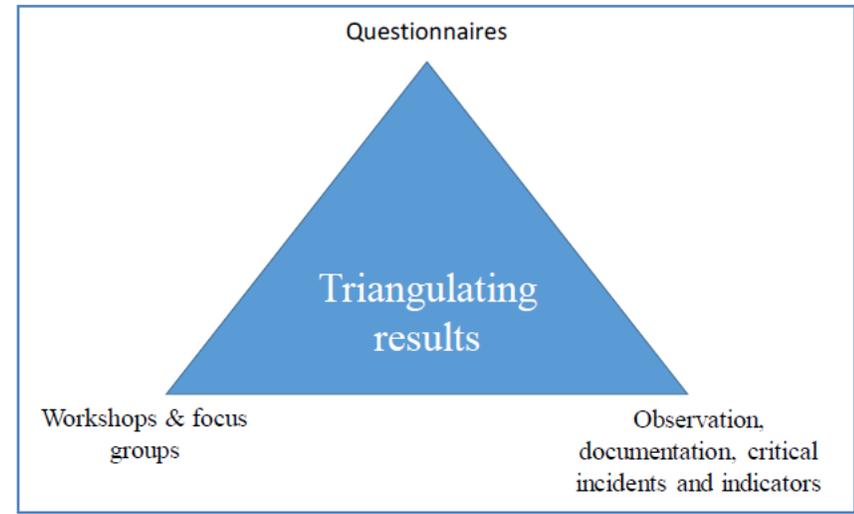
(Wright *et al*., IChemE, 2017)

A Process

HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority
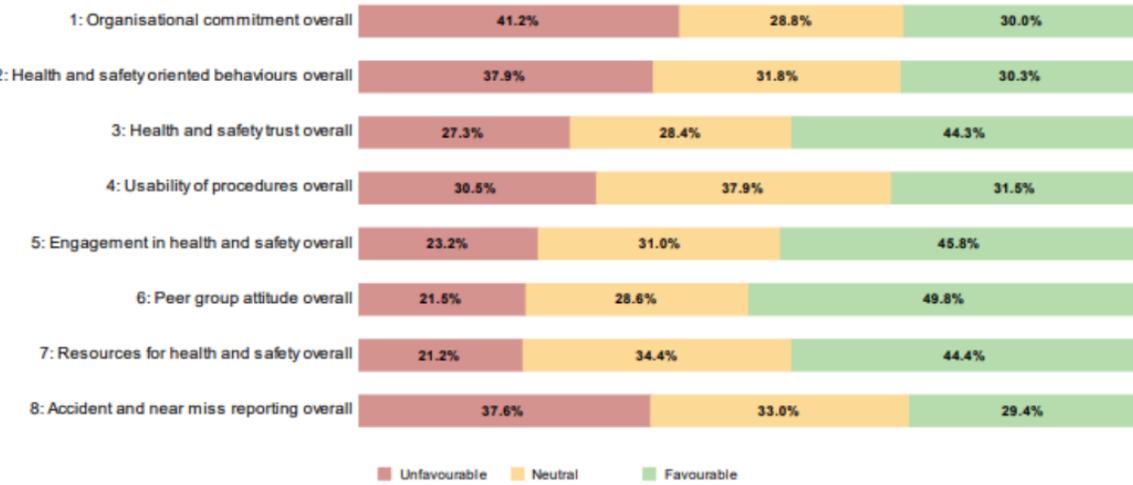
Summary of overall responses by factor for all respondents

Summary of overall responses by factor for all respondents

Factor	Unfavourable	Neutral	Favourable
1: Organisational commitment overall	41.2%	28.8%	30.0%
2: Health and safety oriented behaviours overall	37.9%	31.8%	30.3%
3: Health and safety trust overall	27.3%	28.4%	44.3%
4: Usability of procedures overall	30.5%	37.9%	31.5%
5: Engagement in health and safety overall	23.2%	31.0%	45.8%
6: Peer group attitude overall	21.5%	28.6%	49.8%
7: Resources for health and safety overall	21.2%	34.4%	44.4%
8: Accident and near miss reporting overall	37.6%	33.0%	29.4%

■ Unfavourable ■ Neutral ■ Favourable

(Health and Safety Executive, 2026)

1. Foundation

A good foundation is essential to any successful safety culture improvement programme and includes: securing senior management commitment and resources, establishing a steering group and project plan, and developing an employee engagement strategy.
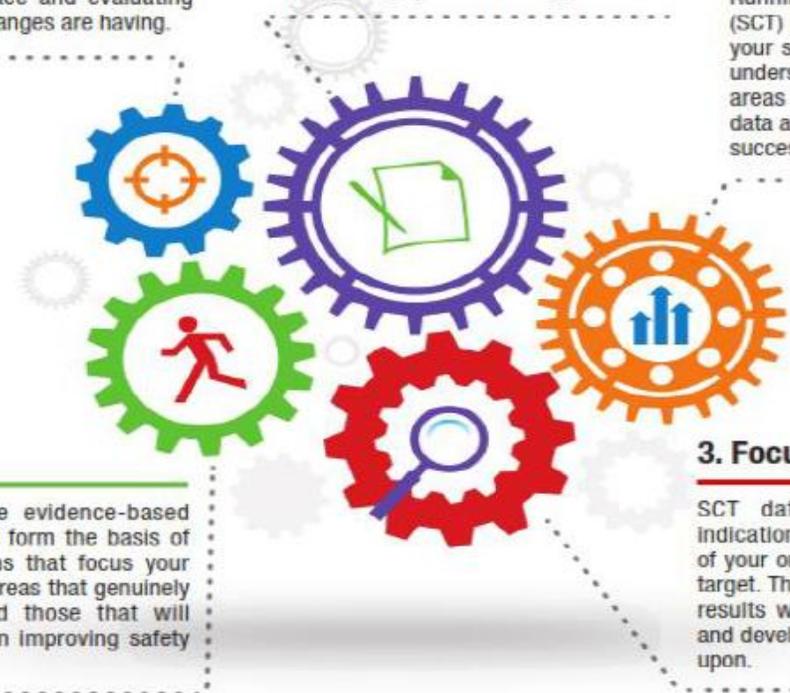
2. Analyse

Running the HSL Safety Climate Tool (SCT) to gather employee opinions on your safety culture enables you to start understanding your strengths and target areas for improvement, and gives you data against which you can measure the success of follow-up interventions.

3. Focus

SCT data analysis provides an indication of the underlying culture of your organisation and key areas to target. The next step is to discuss the results with a sample of employees and develop solutions that you can act upon.

4. Act

You can now make evidence-based decisions which will form the basis of targeted action plans that focus your resources on those areas that genuinely need attention, and those that will have most impact on improving safety performance.

5. Evaluate

It is important that you keep the momentum going with your culture change initiative by reviewing the actions you have put in place and evaluating what impact your changes are having.
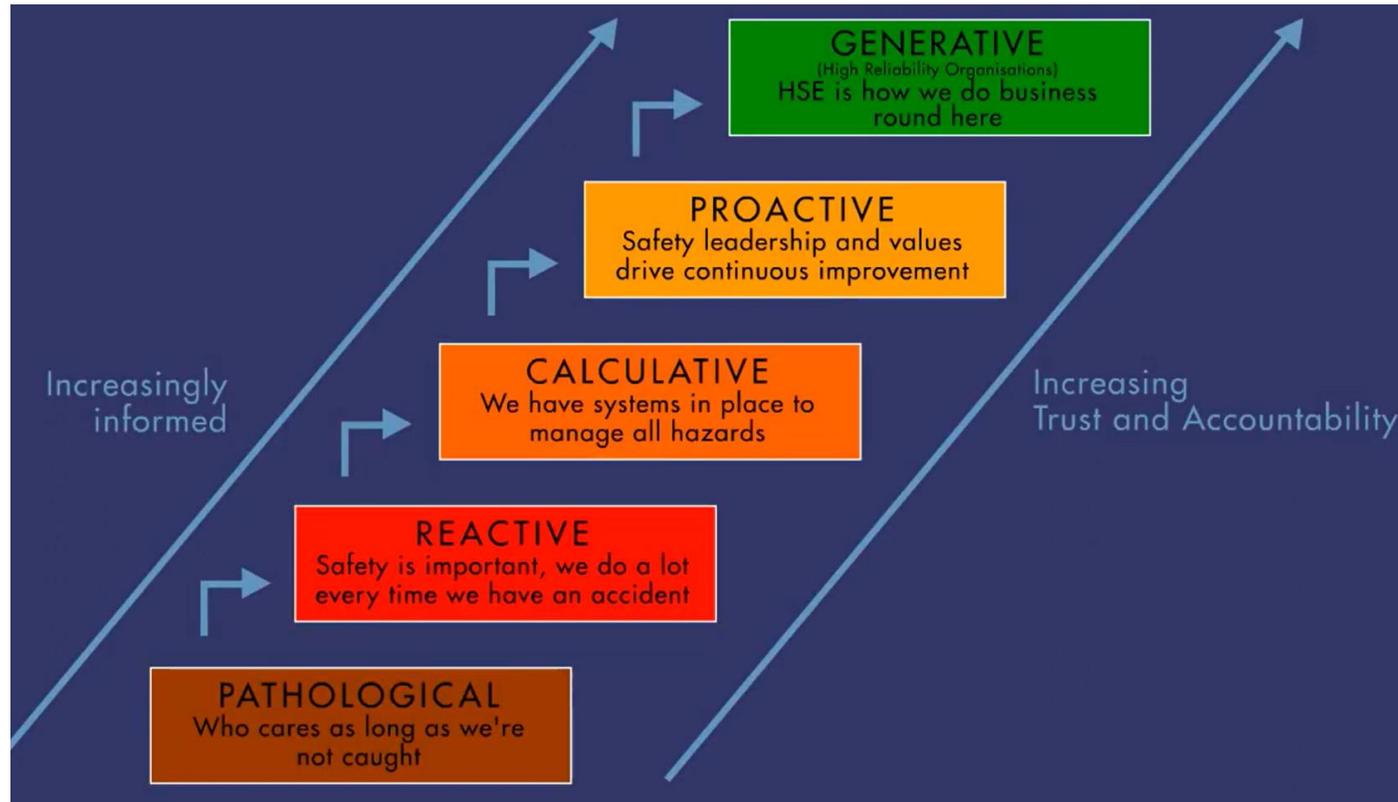
Understanding 'the why'

Focus groups/interviews

- Finding out 'the why' to guide action planning
- Pre-information to manage expectations
- Facilitated structured discussion
- Group composition
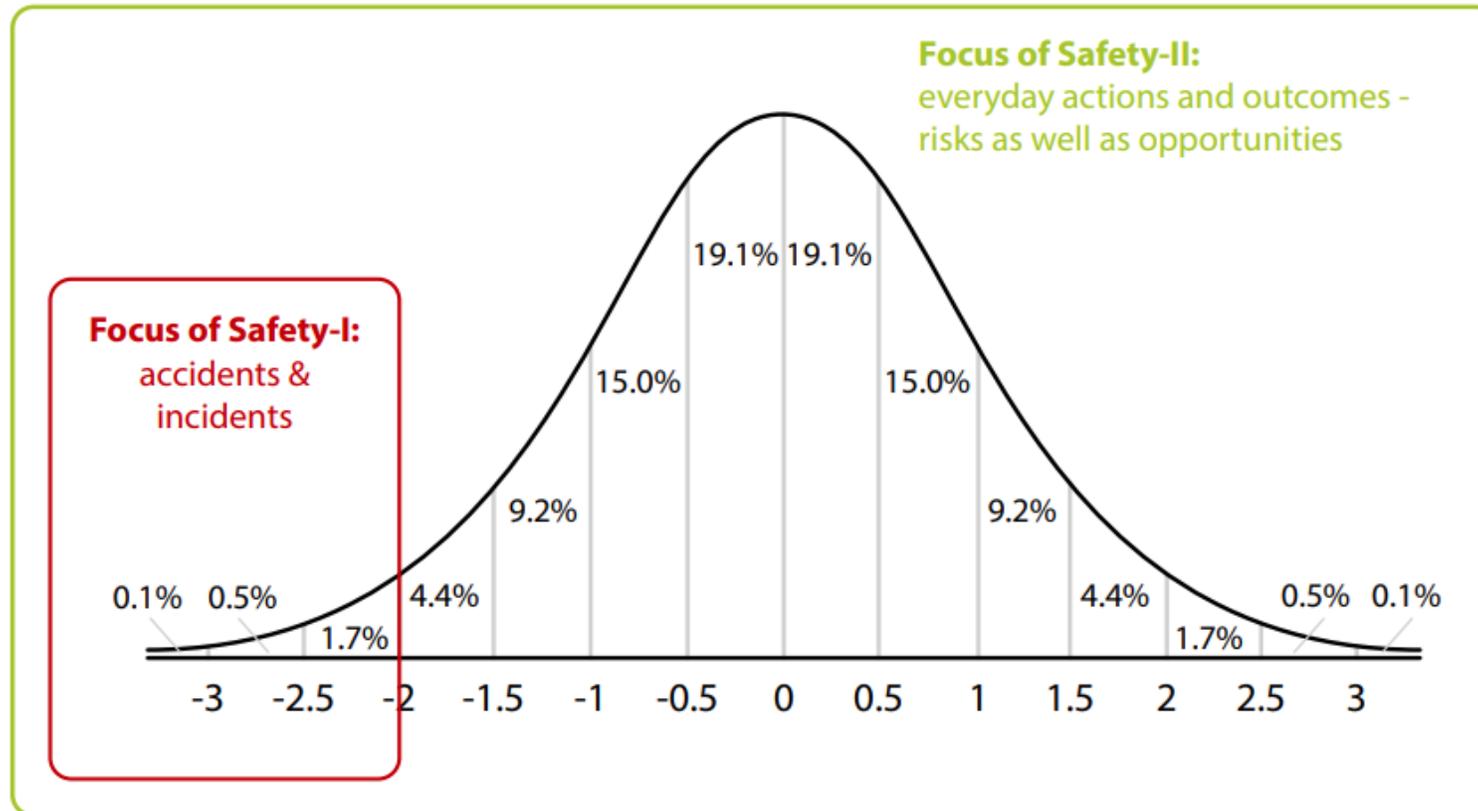- Airing 'bad news' and 'good news'

Safety Culture Maturity Models

(Example of a Safety Maturity Model: This one is used in 'Hearts and Minds', The Energy Institute, 2026)

High Reliability Organisations

Just culture:
Encouragement to report without fear or blame
Individual accountability
Ability to abandon work on safety grounds
Open discussion of errors

Containment of unexpected events:
Valuing technical expertise
Back up systems
Training and competence
Procedures for unexpected events

Mindful leadership:
Bottom up communication of bad news
Proactive audits
Safety-production balance
Engagement with frontline staff
Investment of resources

Problem anticipation:
Preoccupation with failure
Reluctance to simplify
Operational awareness

HRO

Learning orientation:
Continuous technical training
Open communication
Root cause analysis of accidents/incidents
Procedures reviewed in line with knowledge base

(High Reliability Organisations: Health and Safety Executive, 2011)

Safety I and Safety II

(From Safety I to Safety II: A White Paper, Eurocontrol, 2013)

Key Messages

Good safety culture work finds the levers for change and can action them to positively impact health and safety outcomes.

- Use multiple sources to inform your assessment e.g. quantitative and qualitative

- Understand 'the why' to guide action planning

- Use safety culture maturity for continuous improvement - 'indicative only'

- Learn from 'what goes wrong' and from 'normal work' – Safety I and Safety II

Resources

HSA Human Factors Website
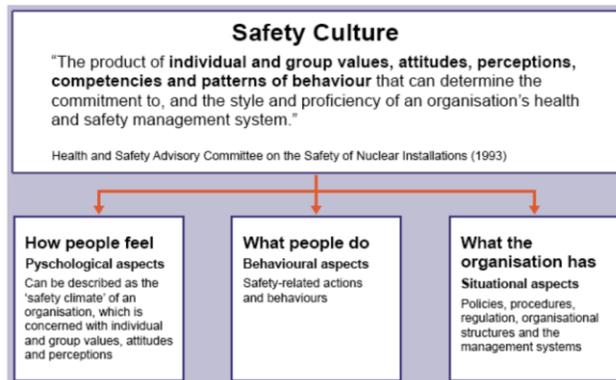
Other

Energy Institute (2026) What is safety culture?

EU-OSHA (2011) Occupational Safety and Health Cultural Assessment: A Review of Main Approaches and Selected Tools

Health and Safety Executive (2026) Organisational Culture: Why is Organisational Culture Important?

Health Service Executive (2023) Developing Organisational Culture, Health Service Executive, 2023

Health Service Executive (2026) Just culture

Skybrary Aviation (2026) Safety Culture

Resources

: Driving a Change in Culture By Viewing Safety Differently

Go raibh maith agaibh

Thank you

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