

Visible Management Leadership and Commitment to Safety & Health

The success of your organization's safety and occupational health management system (SOHMS) implementation lies on the shoulders of your leaders and managers. Only leadership can make safety and health (S&H) an organizational priority—they set the tone, provide a path forward, allocate the necessary resources, and, above all, motivate your workforce to support S&H activities. This one pager emphasizes the importance of management leadership and commitment in an SOHMS. It provides ideas on how your leaders and managers can visibly show their support for S&H.

SAFETY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Management leadership and commitment is a core element in nearly every SOHMS model. The objective of management leadership and commitment is to secure the workforce's involvement in all aspects of S&H and encourage an attitude of continuous improvement. Workers view S&H as a priority when leadership and management consistently support and show commitment. A lack of effort or non-commitment from leaders and managers will cause the workforce to question the SOHMS and S&H. This leads to a poor safety culture and produces non-compliance. Commitment to S&H must be visible at the top leadership level and propagate through all levels of the organization, including contractors. Management leadership and commitment is necessary for the success of an SOHMS!

RESPONSIBILITY

All levels of leaders and managers, from the Commanding Officer down to the first line supervisor, are responsible for creating a positive S&H culture. Your leaders and managers must realize the journey to safety excellence starts at the top, or it won't start at all. This commitment may be demonstrated through their actions, to include:

- Communicating and demonstrating the vision of your SOHMS,
- Holding themselves and all personnel accountable for S&H responsibilities, and
- Rewarding and recognizing groups and/or individuals for S&H excellence.

Consider incorporating visible management leadership and commitment responsibilities and example duties into your local S&H policies and programs.

What's important to your boss is important to you!



The image illustrates leadership participating a safety council meeting.
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IMPACT ON CULTURE

Leaders and managers must be positive, proactive role models who promote and support S&H as an organizational core value. This is evident when S&H is integrated into all organization processes and organization-related decisions. It and sets the pace and tone for your culture!

A positive S&H culture leads to lower injury and illness rates, improvements and increases in production, employee retention, and positive workplace attitudes.



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VISIBLE SUPPORT

How your organizations leaders and managers show their support for your SOHMS and S&H programs will vary. At a minimum, it must include leadership being a visible presence in the workplace. You will be asked how your leaders and managers show their commitment during an SOHMS assessment like those conducted by the SMCX.

Here are a few examples to share with leaders and managers in your organization:

TOP LEADERS	MIDDLE MANAGERS	FIRST LINE SUPERVISORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set the organizational S&H mission and vision• Draft, sign, and communicate a S&H/SOHMS commitment letter• Take action to address identified hazards and negative trends• Set organizational S&H goals• Have representation in safety meetings• Acknowledge S&H excellence during award ceremonies• Lead safety walkthroughs in work areas• Ensure open lines of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote and execute the organizational safety vision and goals• Set S&H objectives (to meet established S&H goals)• Encourage and support employee involvement• Engage employees in one-on-one safety conversations• Hold personnel accountable for following S&H rules• Participate in safety inspections and safety meetings• Recognize safety excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead by example• Ensure employees understand and follow S&H rules• Inform leaders and managers when employees should receive recognition• Actively support employee involvement in S&H activities• Implement a stop work program for hazardous conditions

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smcx.org/>.