



*NAC Position Paper No. 27, AUGUST 1, 2013*  
**S A F E T Y**

**Taking “Safety as a Core Value” from a Corporate Statement  
to an Employee Commitment**

For a decade or more, Corporate Mission Statements of those companies engaged in construction have often contained the statement that “Safety is a Core Value.” To many in the Construction Industry this term means that “zero harm to the public, the employees the equipment, tools and facilities” is one of the valued outcomes of successful construction projects.

Yet today, the corporate term “Core Value” is largely undefined as far as the employee is concerned. This is a vital issue because for a Corporate Core Value to be fully realized it must be wholly integrated as a matter of course into the job duties of every employee. In the safety arena, only when each employee personally applies “safety as a core value” to their work processes can there be the successful creation of a “Corporate Safety Core Value.”

Construction leaders assert that corporate success in establishing “Safety as a Core Value” is exceedingly difficult. The principal barrier stems from the persistent presence of “at-risk” behavior within the workforce and this “at-risk” behavior is found in leaders and workers alike. Root Cause analyses of safety accidents conclusively reveal that changing and preventing employee at-risk behavior throughout the organization is the secret to a zero harm outcome.

Also another barrier may be the lack of a common definition of the word Value. When one looks to the Webster Dictionary for a definition, it quickly becomes apparent that the general meaning of the word is non-specific ranging from “monetary” to “societal ethical behavior.” Exploring the latter we quickly see that “human safety as a value” fits easily into the “ethics” category because there is nothing more important than the health and safety of employees and the public both in and outside the construction workplace.

Therefore it would be unethical for a construction leader to ignore any proven intervention that effectively engages the employee in avoiding at-risk behavior. To this end, NAC points out that making the statement that “Safety is a Core Value” is merely the beginning. To become operative in the workplace the statement must be followed-up by formally defining the term and inviting all employees to embrace a corporately published definition.

NAC offers the following model employee “buy-in” statement that asks for at-risk behavior avoidance and allows each employee to formally embrace the meaning and spirit of the worthy ideal by making Safety a personal “Core Value.” With this commitment base, it is then a Corporate Core Value of Safety can be fully realized.

=====

By accepting the following statement I personally embrace “Safety as a Core Value” as described herein.

**Corporate Objective: “Safety is a Core Value”:**

**This objective can only be realized when we as individual employees are successful in avoiding all at-risk behavior while living and working safely. It is after we have personalized “Safety as a Core Value” that “Working safe” will be what we do; such will describe and define us, reflecting a Commitment to Safety so imbedded in our personal guiding principles that we as employees cannot, except by force of personal will, act otherwise.**

**When all have subscribed to this stated thesis we as a company will achieve “Safety as a Core Value” in the manner intended.**

**Personal:**

**I accept that “Safety as a Core VALUE” as described above defines my personal belief system thus is a guiding principle in my life and work.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Data: \_\_\_\_\_**

=====

**Think about it.**

Provided by the NAC Safety Committee

NAC Safety White Papers

Through its Position White Papers on Safety, the National Academy of Construction is recommending that American businesses investigate the research of the Construction Industry Institute (CII) into how increasing numbers of employers are able to achieve a million work hours and more without an OSHA Recordable injury. The nine research-based CII Zero Injury safety leadership categories are: 1. Demonstrated management safety commitment; 2. Staffing for Safety; 3. Safe Work Planning, pre-project and pre-task; 4. Safety Education; orientation and specialized training; 5. Employee Involvement, behavior safety and safety perception surveys; 6. Evaluation and Recognition of Safety Performance; 7. Contractor Selection and Management; 8. Accident/Incident Investigation Including Near Misses; 9. Drug and Alcohol Testing.

The ROI of Zero Injury Safety Performance

The Construction Industry Institute research has proved that the cost of successfully implementing the nine CII zero injury categories is returned at a rate of 400 to 500% per annum when compared to the costs of OSHA/BLS injury rate average performance (4.70 TRIR in 2010) for the entire construction industry in the United States of America.

Information and details on the increasingly popular “Zero Injury Safety Leadership Concept” is available from the following: Construction Industry Institute, 3925 W. Braker Lane (R4500), Austin, TX 78759-5316, Ph (512) 232-3004, [www.construction-institute.org](http://www.construction-institute.org). See the NAC website at [www.naocon.org](http://www.naocon.org) for copies of the NAC Safety Whitepaper series.

---

The National Academy of Construction (NAC) is an organization of leaders from industry, construction, the military and academia formed as a knowledge base of American competence in the construction of capital facilities. NAC position papers are created from the experience base of NAC membership and are offered to American business and government leaders as answers to challenges facing American enterprise. NAC position papers are issued after review and consent by a majority of the current members.