Starting Point

NIST must fully integrate safety into decision-making processes for all aspects of our mission, from planning through mission delivery, over the full life-cycle of programs and projects.

We recognize that we must fundamentally change our culture and our way of doing business to achieve lasting and meaningful change to improve safety at NIST.

Building Momentum and Leading Change

NIST

instill safety culture from bottom up

reinforce importance of safety in office environment

make resources available for excellence in safety

be example to colleagues

hold ourselves accountable

solicit staff reactions

integrate safety into regularly scheduled discussions

communicating safety expectations

elevate/flag safety topics for the organization

check in on staff more frequently

ask questions

not see safety as a chore

integrate safety through lens of equal opportunity

help staff feel empowered to ask questions in safety

champion and live a new safety culture

Chartered Executive Safety Improvement Team

Purpose: Oversee and track to completion safety improvement actions intended to address specific NIST Safety Commission recommendations
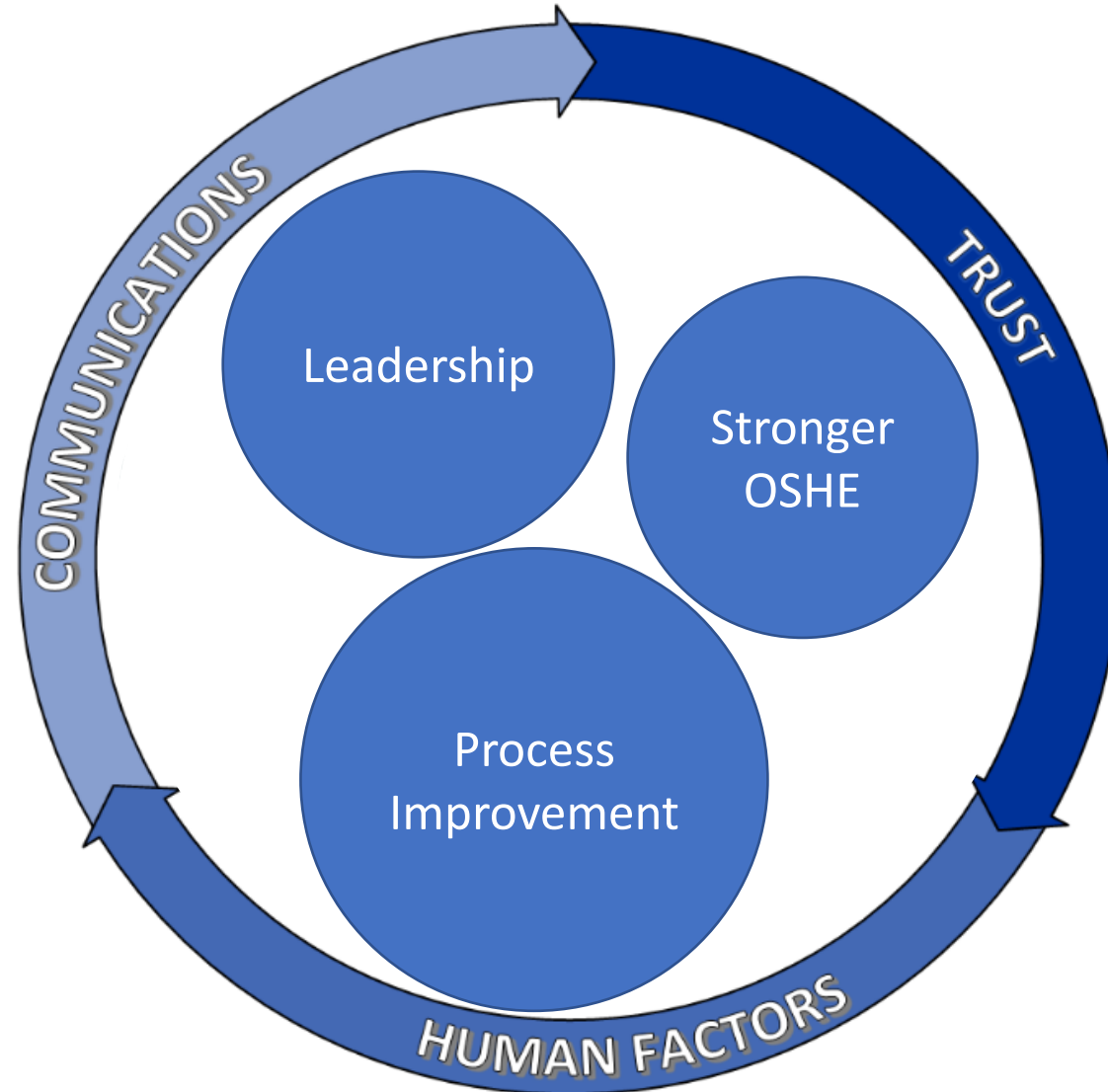
Process: Convene teams and empower staff to develop and implement actions, communicate changes

Accountability: Report regularly to the NIST Director, inform NLB and staff of progress

Committing Resources

- New Hires
- Facilities Repairs
- Safety Assessments
- Professional External Safety Consulting

Executive-level Key Action Areas

Leadership Expectations and Accountabilities. *NIST must make safety an integral part of the NIST culture, commit to continuous improvement of safety systems, processes and culture.*

OSHE's Role and Authorities. *NIST must strengthen the role of the Chief Safety Officer by ensuring the CSO has organizational responsibilities within ERM and SCMMR, and a formal accountability to the NIST Director and of safety professionals by requiring OSHE staff to specify hazard mitigation measures during inspections, investigations and hazard reviews.*

Processes, Tools and Communications. *NIST must develop new and enhance existing operational safety processes and tools to actively manage safety related risks, and have processes to assess and elevate risk to enterprise level in a timely manner, and ensure strategic and practical communications that are essential to achieving culture change.*

Leadership Expectations and Accountability
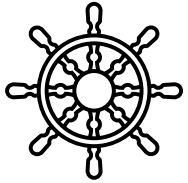
NIST must make safety an integral part of the NIST culture and commit to continuous improvement of safety practices and culture

Importance: We recognize that leadership plays an essential role in driving culture change by creating the conditions for positive changes to occur and thrive, and by supporting continuous improvement in safety systems, processes and safety culture NIST-wide.

Strategy: Our strategy is to set clear expectations, enforce accountability, ensure communications are strategic and targeted, engage staff at all levels, develop, implement and maintain a Safety Culture Improvement Plan informed by survey data, relevant KPIs, supervisor and staff feedback, and best practices.

Key Actions: Leadership Expectations and Accountability

NIST

Strategic Communications

Completed: NIST leadership Safety Off-site was held to discuss the circumstance of the incident, discuss safety practices, and require leaders to define their commitment to taking personal responsibility for safety

Completed: All-staff Town Hall meeting held; NIST Director committed to taking meaningful actions to improve safety at NIST, conveyed the expectation that all staff must accept personal responsibility for safety and participate in continual improvement of safety

Completed: NIST Director meetings with OSHE staff

Planned: NIST Director will host focus groups to discuss safety concerns and safety culture improvement actions

Planned: Strategic communication plan to support roll out of safety improvements

Underway: Management by walking around

Safety Culture

Completed: Survey, report issued and posted

Completed: Safety Culture Improvement Plan drafted (May 15, 2023),

Planned: Facilitated employee focus groups to develop bench-level actions (June, 2023)

Planned: Safety culture benchmarking activities

Accountability

Underway: Team lead by Human Resources is strengthening safety performance elements

Underway: CSO formally accountable to NIST Director, required regular reports and briefings

OSHE's Role and Authorities

NIST must strengthen the role of the Chief Safety Officer by ensuring organizational responsibilities within ERM and SCMMR and requiring formal accountability to the NIST Director. NIST must strengthen the role safety professionals by requiring OSHE staff to specify hazard mitigation measures during inspections, investigations, and hazard reviews.

Importance: NIST recognizes that its post-2008 approach of assigning responsibility for safe operations to line management unintentionally undervalued the expertise of NIST safety professionals, and provided no authority to competent safety staff to enforce basic safety requirements. NIST recognizes value of competent safety professionals and the role they must play in ensuring workplace safety.

Strategy: NIST is adopting a strategy that ensures that the CSO is accountable to the NIST Director, informs enterprise-level risk assessments and resource allocations for facility improvements, and that empowers OSHE safety professionals to ensure workplace hazards are properly mitigated.

Key Actions: OSHE's Role and Authorities

NIST

Chief Safety Officer

Completed: CSO became a voting member of the ERM Council (May)

Completed: CSO to hire additional staff to meet increased responsibilities for workplace inspections, incident investigations, and hazard reviews (May)

Completed: NCNR embed position posted

Underway: CSO is meeting with OU Directors to assess need for embedded safety staff to enhance services and strengthen partnerships (ongoing)

Underway: Assessment of organizational structure to raise safety to NIST director; CSO reporting to director

Safety Staff

Completed: OSHE staff member detailed to ERM to assist with risk assessment method development

Planned: Revise workplace inspection program to specify OSHE lead on inspections of workspaces covered by hazard reviews

Planned: Revision of Hazard Review Program to require OSHE staff to participate in hazard assessments for hazardous work.

Planned: Building master keys will be provided to BSHED and GSHED Chiefs to ensure safety inspectors and investigators have access to all campus spaces
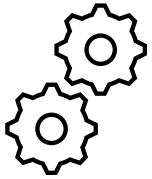
Processes, Tools, and Communications

NIST must develop new and enhance existing operational safety processes and tools to actively manage safety related risks, and have processes to assess and elevate risk to enterprise level in a timely manner, and ensure strategic and practical communications that are essential to achieving culture change.

Importance: NIST recognizes that safety must be incorporated into administrative and operational processes to achieve a systematic inclusion of safety considerations in all aspects of resource management. Easy to use tools and straightforward, practical communications are essential to support these changes.

Strategy: NIST's strategy is to develop a world class safety management system based on established international standards and best practices for continuous improvement, supported by easy to use systems that facilitate completion of safety-related tasks. Communications on safety requirements will include practical training, case studies and lessons learned from incidents to facilitate proper implementation of requirements and improve workplace safety.

Key Actions: Processes and Tools

NIST

Processes

Completed: A new process to facilitate OSHE review of facilities maintenance, testing, and inspections for regulatory compliance

Underway: A comprehensive change management program to proactively manage safety is in development

Underway: Safety checklist for exit-from-duty added to Service Now to ensure proper management of hazardous materials and transfer of safety roles and responsibilities

Underway: ERM team to develop methods for assessing safety related risks, incorporating these into enterprise level risk portfolio

Planned: External ISO 45001 assessment and experts to assist OSHE in developing an audit and assessment program

Planned: Safety program revisions for investigations, hazard reviews, and workplace inspections to improve risk assessments and improve consistency across NIST

Tools

Underway: Evaluation of COTS IT tools for integrated safety management

Underway: Benchmarking visit to NREL and ORNL scheduled for June to evaluate tools, safety training

Underway: Complete the development of NIST safety dashboard display of workplace inspections, incident investigations and training actions

Practical Communications

Underway: Use of Safety Advisory Committee to provide practical communications to targeted audiences to communicate lessons learned

Planned: Revise training to improve relevancy to work conducted, include practical applications that incorporate lessons learned from incidents

Planned: Provide training that discusses the incident and lessons we have learned or must learn.

Safety as a core value