OHSU

***OREGON INSTITUTE OF
OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH SCIENCES***

Safety Climate Lab

**Principal Investigator:
Dr. Emily Huang
(huangyu@ohsu.edu)**

A *TOTAL WORKER HEALTH*® APPROACH

YOUR GUIDE TO
TOTAL WORKER HEALTH CULTURE

You have the ability to create a positive Total Worker Health Culture in your organization!

*Please refer to the back of this handout for reminders about how you can recognize and contribute to a culture that supports safety, health, and well-being in your workplace.

Every workplace has a culture that shapes what you experience at work. Workplace culture, also known as organizational culture, refers to the values, beliefs, and expectations shared by everyone in a company.

It influences decisions, communication, and actions, as well as how safety, health and well-being are prioritized. A positive culture is built through intentional practices, consistent behaviors, and shared commitments.

Key Elements to Build a Positive Workplace Culture

According to Dr. Emily Huang, a company needs four things to build a positive workplace culture:

01.

Effective Leadership
(Commitment, Walk the Talk)

Leaders must take responsibility by enforcing safety protocols, offering resources, and creating clear communication channels.

02.

Resources
(Good Working Environment & Equipment)

Workers need the right tools and PPE, as well as safe and comfortable workspaces.

03.

Employees
(Engagement, Recognition & Empowerment)

Employees should receive proper training, reasonable workloads, and recognition for their work.

04.

Communication
(Open Dialogue, Two-Way Feedback, Sustained Support)

Expectations and rules must be written in formal policies and procedures, and applied in practices by leaders and workers alike.

Everyone plays a role in shaping culture, from top management to supervisors to workers. It's a collaborative effort!

WHAT IS TOTAL WORKER HEALTH CULTURE?

Total Worker Health (TWH) is a workplace management approach created by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to prioritize workers' health, safety, and broader sense of well-being. TWH goes beyond traditional safety programs by recognizing the aspects of work that affect your well-being both inside and outside of the workplace (like workload, stress, coworker interactions, and work-family balance). It unites safety programs with efforts to improve health and well-being overall.

Building Total Worker Health Culture means creating a workplace where safety, health, and well-being are top priorities for everyone. This means preventing injuries along with supporting physical health, work-life balance, and mental well-being. Everyone should work together to ensure safe working conditions while also promoting physically and mentally healthy employees.

Companies With Good TWH Culture Experience

- ✅ **Fewer Injuries**
- ✅ **Reduced Stress**
- ✅ **Better Long-term Health**
- ✅ **Higher Job Satisfaction**
- ✅ **Reputation for Wellness**
- ✅ **Better Retention of Skilled Professionals**

Companies With Poor TWH Culture Experience

- ⚠️ **More Injuries**
- ⚠️ **Higher Stress**
- ⚠️ **Burnout**
- ⚠️ **Higher Turnover Rates**

HOW YOU CAN "LEAD"

There are easy things you can do to keep building a good TWH Culture in your workplace! Listed below are examples of positive behaviors you can practice in your daily work tasks and interactions with others. To remember them, think of the word LEAD: **Listen, Examine, Act, and Deliver.**

LISTEN

To strengthen teamwork and offer/receive help, **pay attention to the people you work with.**

- **Encourage Open Communication**
  - Support speaking up about concerns
  - Ask for input and solutions
- **Promote Active Listening**
  - Focus fully on the speaker
  - Summarize and acknowledge what is said
- **Seek Clarification**
  - Ask questions to learn how to avoid mistakes
- **Acknowledge Contributions**
  - Thank those who raise concerns
- **Check on Team Well-being**
  - Ask how co-workers are doing

EXAMINE

Share the responsibility of **staying alert to potential risks, hazards, and opportunities for improvement in your workplace and daily tasks.**

- **Identify hazards and opportunities to improve**
  - Observe your surroundings
- **Ensure preparedness**
  - Confirm everyone has necessary equipment/PPE
- **Monitor work practices**
  - Check if everyone is following safe procedures
- **Review rules and regulations**
  - Stay familiar with manuals, policies, and updates

ACT

Turn awareness into meaningful change by **responding to risks, warning signs, and opportunities for improvement** in a timely and effective way.

- **Take good care of yourself**
  - Eat healthily and exercise
  - Get good sleep and relax
- **Stay focused**
  - Minimize distractions to prevent hazards/mistakes
  - Lead by example
  - Demonstrate safe work practices
  - Maintain good health on the job
- **Address issues promptly**
  - Report and act on hazards and concerns
- **Engage actively in TWH activities**
  - Participate in discussions, meetings, and trainings

DELIVER

Keep everyone on the same page by **encouraging effective communication, open dialogue, and meaningful interactions.**

- **Relay concerns formally to leaders**
  - Communicate concerns through formal channels
- **Advocate for TWH directly to supervisors**
  - Ensure needs are recognized and addressed
- **Use and give feedback on TWH initiatives**
  - Explore available TWH resources and provide feedback
- **Follow up on concerns**
  - Track progress of your concerns or feedback
- **Encourage respectful dialogue**
  - Build rapport with open and respectful communication

By practicing these LEAD behaviors, and using them as inspiration for other proactive actions you can take in your workplace, you play an essential role in building a **safer, healthier, and more connected workplace** where every employee feels supported and valued.