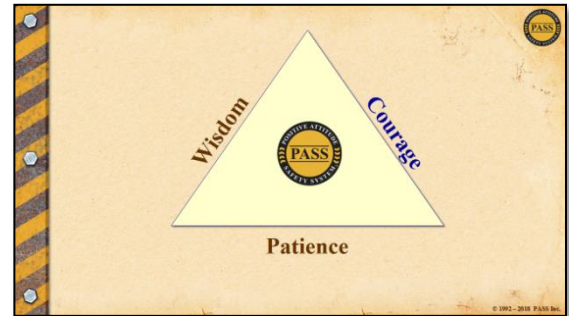




## Summary of the Positive Attitude Safety System

What are we asking you to understand when making the decision to Implement and Establish PASS to change your Safety Culture through Positive Visible Leadership?

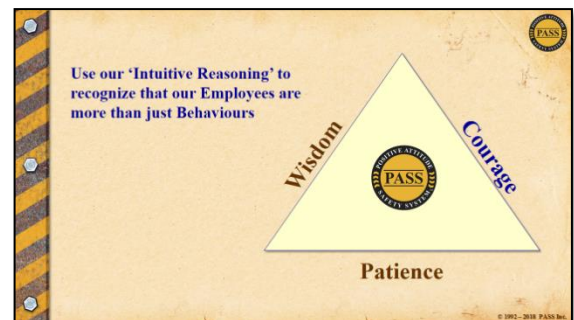
**Wisdom:** Use your experience and knowledge, not just at work but from life. Positive Reinforcement is the key and when combined with being proactive (fixing things before people get hurt) the safety results will be world-class. This positive reinforcement must be applied to decision-making and attitudes and not just behaviours. Simply managing the Output (Behaviours) and not the Process (Decision-Making) or the Input (Safety Attitudes) does not “get the job done” nor does it lead to ‘continuous improvement’ in Safety.



**Courage:** To move away from your comfort zone (external factors) to the touchy-feely (internal factor) aspect of leadership and management. Too often we have been told to deal with the behaviour and not the person, which may be correct when dealing with undesirable behaviours; however, when dealing with desirable (Safe) behaviours we need to include the person. We have to positively reinforce the person’s decision-making and attitudes.

**Patience:** Improving Safety Cultures (especially if you are replacing negative mythologies where your organization collectively perceives Safety as negative and the workers may believe they are helpless (when it comes to making significant changes to their safety performance) takes years and cannot be simply monitored as if it were a project. Projects consist of milestones (implementation of individual PASS Components), dates (when we expect results – pass or fail) and resources (time needed for training and coaching from both the external and internal consultants). Bringing about significant changes to your Safety Culture should not be viewed as a project as we know that we must be continuously working at improving our Safety Culture. These improvements are not just safety results (awards, records, etc.) but improvements in the actual safety process and the leadership abilities of those involved.

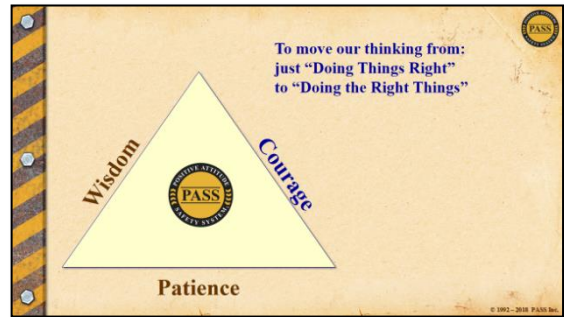
A critical point or cornerstone of PASS is the fact that Behaviours are a consequence of Decision-Making and therefore when we are positively reinforcing safe behaviours, we need to address this from a decision-making aspect. So instead of thanking someone for tying off the ladder, we thank the person for making the ‘decision’ to tie off the ladder. The finesse point here is simple - - we have now included the person’s cognitive activities and not just addressed the behaviour. This will progress to the point where we start talking about the employees’ attitudes regarding safety behaviours. A simple illustration of this is asking the person, “How come I never have to worry about you tying off a ladder?” This leads to a conversation about the ‘Why’ of the person’s behaviours/decision-making.



Once we have progressed from just reinforcing behaviours and decisions to reinforcing attitudes, these attitudes will lead to safe behaviours and decisions whether at work, home or in the community. Therefore, our family, neighbours and members of our community will benefit and we will begin to talk about safety and improving safety outside of our work environment. It is always encouraging to hear employees, in their Safety Huddles, discuss what they did safely or how they improved safety on their days off. Eventually, this leads to the Huddle members challenging themselves to improve safety on their days off. Perhaps even more important, is when someone brings up an unsafe decision which occurred on their days off (C days) so that everyone can benefit from their experience!

When I first started consulting in 1985, I remember the General Manager of the Kimberly Operations (Sullivan Mine), Ralph Hargrave, having a poster that said: *“Insanity is continuing to do what we have always done and expecting to get different results.”* He always said that one of the reasons he implemented PASS (please keep in mind that he was the first person to hire me as a consultant to implement a very crude prototype of the intellectual property now known as PASS) is that it was “Star Wars” when you compared it to the other ‘Traditional Safety Systems.’ Imagine we are going to take five minutes to talk about safety at the beginning of every shift when we have not had an accident/incident. Not only that, we are going to allow the crews to rate their own safety. Of course, Total Quality Management had been saying for years that quality could only be determined by the customer, and who is the customer in safety? Obviously, the employees are as they are working in a hazardous environment and putting their lives on the line.)

The insanity slogan has been modernized to, “Doing the Right Things” and not just “Doing Things Right.” First, I must say we need to be ‘doing things right;’ however, this is not enough and we have to be looking at innovative ways to make improvements in our safety culture. The underlining premise of a traditional safety system is doing things right/safe; however, the innovations we have seen in safety (especially underground mining) have removed the employee from the hazard totally. An example would be “rock breakers” which are now being operated from the surface; the employee is not underground therefore is removed from the hazardous environment. However, we have not moved away from auditing external environments, equipment, procedures and of course employees’ behaviours. We have not progressed in our thinking to realize that decision-making and attitudes (particularly continuous improvement in safety) are where we need to be focused, particularly when reinforcing safety.



I realize we have ‘risk matrixes’ that address decision-making, but only in a recipe approach that leads to a binary decision commonly referred to as ‘choice.’ Do I wear my seat belt?; Do I chock my tires?; etc. A true decision refers to gathering, organizing and evaluating information and leads to the quality factor regarding behaviours/activities. I fear that the risk matrix approach actually interferes with employees delivering true safety behaviours. An example would be scaling rocks in an underground drift. This is a critical component of having a safe shift and cannot be addressed in a simple binary answer: Yes, I scaled the ‘back.’ A trucking example would be driving to the speed limit, when in fact we want operators to be constantly monitoring road and truck conditions, weather, fatigue, etc.

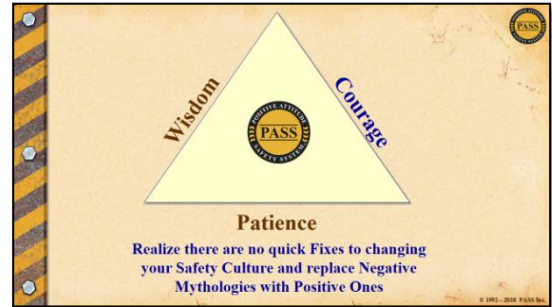
We have the signage at work and these signs often allow me to evaluate the type of safety culture an organization has. Negative signs such as “did you remember to tag out?,” “do you have permission to be in this area?,” instead of “thank you for tagging out” and “thank you for having permission to be in this area (call local 2828),” reveal much about the culture of the organization. Too often, our clients have exceptionally large signs that are clearly there to intimidate the reader and will draw attention to an issue unnecessarily. I remember a very large sign on the entrance road to a mine about “We are happy to be a drug-free site and all vehicles are subject to search.” Do these large and public signs deter someone on drugs or someone selling drugs? No, they simply draw attention to the drug issue they have or had and makes me think that they obviously had a drug problem at that workplace.

In reality, there are no quick fixes as we need to align the leadership at every level of the organization. The first systematic step in this alignment occurs through the interlocking Huddles from the shop floor to the senior management team. In management’s SupLex<sup>®i</sup> Huddle, each member is asked what they did to improve safety, who did they reinforce for safety (in the last 24 hours and what are your plans to reinforce safety in the next 24 hours) and what are they going to do to improve Safety. These Huddles also allow safety concerns to be addressed at the appropriate level and if they cannot be, they are then escalated to the next tier. Therefore, the supervisor, superintendents and/or managers attend two Huddles daily: one with their reports and one with their peers and superiors. This face-to-face, daily, interlocking communication process regarding safety, quickly aligns line management’s approach to safety. Encouraging everyone to be positive (reinforcement process) and proactive (fixing

things) and provides a forum for them to report/discuss their activities (a framework for continuous improvement throughout line management).

I also use the analogy that in professional sports, a losing team watches the game film the next day to spotlight all the negative points of the game. However, when a professional team wins, they also watch the game film the next day to celebrate all the positive points of the game. Simply put, we need to run the game film when we have had a safe day in order to reinforce the Safe behaviours, decisions and attitudes.

The second systematic step in achieving a change or improvement in the safety culture is when line management collects the Safety Huddles' ratings (A, B or C's) from the crews' Safe Day Charts and scores them on their Report Down System Board. If we were collecting these ratings from the boards and we see an A Day, we would then ask line management to read the 'A Log' and to initial it. We encourage them to write a comment or provide positive feedback to the supervisor, the crew and/or the individual when appropriate. Providing positive feedback for safety decisions and not just behaviours is an important step for line management.



The third systematic step is regarding how line management addresses the SupLex® White Boards. This gives them an opportunity to assign accountability to a staff member for completing the item and clearly shows that management is addressing the item in a timely and organized fashion. This public display of the safety improvement and the actions being conducted allows anyone interested to get involved with the improvement and/or its implementation. One of the positive aspects of the SupLex® White Board is that we do not address the hazard but the actual safety improvement that is desired by the crew. Too often when a hazard is listed, we fail to remove or control the hazard in the manner the crew wanted it addressed. We put a 'caution sign' up at a pedestrian crossing when they wanted a speed bump. However, if we trust them to request an improvement we have to trust in their solution. If we do not agree that their suggestion is practical, then we have that discussion with the crew.

**Positive Visible Leadership:** The three systematic steps above are part of the PASS methodology (intervention therapy with a common language and a common process) and can be easily monitored and evaluated as they occur basically in common areas and office settings. No matter how well we conduct these PASS Components, the most critical component is the Dynamic Daily Safety Conversation. This is our daily safety feedback/discussions regarding the employees' Safe behaviours, then Safe Decision-Making and finally their Safety attitudes. As I always say to the crews, when you screw up you hear about it, when you really screw up, everyone hears about it, and when you do a good job? The answer is "no one hears about it!" We cannot have this type of negative scenario occurring with safety. We need to be giving positive feedback daily and I call this Positive Visible Leadership!

Jim Burns  
Revised October 2020



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**SupLex®**

A **SupLex®** Safety Culture in which the organizational members value having a positive and proactive Safety Attitude which underpins their safety decisions and actions. As a result of this mindset, they look for every opportunity to embrace the principles of Continuous Improvement in order to make their workplace safer for themselves and their fellow workers, and leave it safer for their cross-shift.

This progressive Safety Attitude will go beyond the work site; therefore, benefiting their families, neighbours and communities. No longer are the employees' actions being motivated by compliance to safety rules or fear of reprimands; rather, they are solely motivated by the realization that Safety is controlled by their attitudes, decisions and actions and that they have a responsibility to make their surroundings Safer, whenever possible.

**SupLex®** is the registered Trademark of Positive Attitude Safety System Inc.