



# 12 Questions Safety Professionals Should Be Asking Themselves

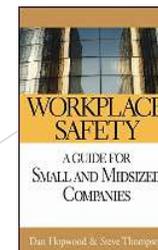
*Why Now and Why They are Important*

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## Vice President/Regional Risk Control Leader

### Sompo International, Global Risk Solutions

- ▶ Some career highlights:
  - ▶ Long term ASSP Member - SD Chapter
  - ▶ Past - Chapter President, Delegate, Program Chair, PCD Chair, Student Liaison
  - ▶ Chapter SPY and Sam Cahan President Award Recipient
  - ▶ Society Culbertson Award Recipient
  - ▶ Region 1 RVP and ARVP
  - ▶ Leadership Conference Committee Member
  - ▶ Named to the BCSP Board of Directors, 2022-2024 term
  - ▶ Co-author with fellow Chapter member and great friend, Steve Thompson, *Workplace Safety - A Guide for Small and Midsized Companies* (originally published in 2006 and still in print!)



# Why questions are important...

There are many reasons, but questions:

- Can be a guide for “what we *do*”
- Strengthen the *learning process*
- *Influences* critical thinking and serves as an *influence methodology*
- *Challenge* constructs, many that need to be challenged, leading to change
- Really helps the *creative, innovative* processes
- Is essential for timely, focused, practical and ethical *decision-making*
- *Now* is essential - why?

# Objectives?

- ❑ Answer the “why now” question
- ❑ Stretch beyond traditional/basic questions safety pro’s ask
- ❑ Categorize new & different questions and why they are important to ask
- ❑ Think about what we should be introspective on and about
- ❑ How the questions and questioning process may influence our future
- ❑ Come away with one critical thought, idea, or essential question you should ask

Basic questions have value - ask them - but are they the questions that drive change, innovation and influence? *Maybe.*

- What's most important - training, hazards management, regulatory compliance?
- What's my next certification?
- Should I try for that promotion?
- Are safety committees required?
- Who do I call for a 5194 reference?
- Do I really have to wear that mask...?
- Many, many more...
- **What drives my questions? Hmmm?**
  - Time
  - Experiences
  - Gray hair?



## Why now? Let's concentrate on the words in *bold*. Questions can:

- Be a guide for “what we *do*”
- Strengthen the *learning process*
- *Change - challenge* constructs; many that need to be challenged and are essential to analyses
- *Influence* critical thinking and serves as an *influencing* methodology
- Help the *creative, innovative* processes
- Assist with timely, focused, practical and ethical *decision-making*

## ***Category 1: Do (we must)***

*“I empower employees to make the right, safe choices endorsed in a  
“stop work” card.”*

- Mike Greenwalt, CEO  
Rosendin (Electrical Contracting firm)

Safety + Health February 2022

CEO's Who GET IT

# Do

“Doing’ safety is active, requires exertion and the investment of sweat equity...it is really hard to be successful from (always) being behind a desk or only issuing policies. Get out and prove yourself; safety is an applied science.”

- Hopwood

*Try not. Do or not do. There is no try. Yoda*



# Do

Questions:

1. Quick, name one thing you will do differently in support of the active element of the practice of safety. I said, quick!

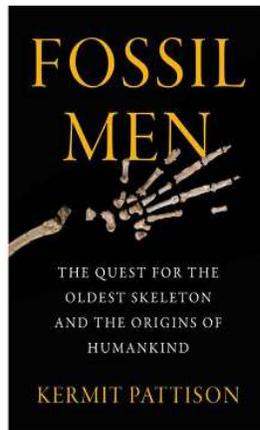
***- I understand reality -***

2. Ask yourself: can I truly shut down the plant - now, without asking for permission or concurrence? Can you...do?

## Category 2: Learn (essential)

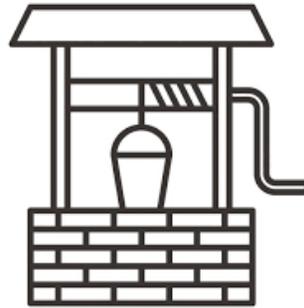
*“The consequence of an isolationist strategy is you tend to live in an echo chamber. You talk to the same people time and time again. You don’t hear new and different views. The isolationist strategy has a narrowing effect on your perspective. It’s unavoidable.”*

- Bill Kimball, as quoted in  
*Fossil Men*, Kermit Pattinson  
Harper Collins, 2020, page 352



# *Learn*

- Trial
- Practice
- Stretch
- Bump your head
- Seek advice
- Understand your mission
- Be willing to be challenged
- Broad vs. narrow (isolationist) efforts - get away from “going to the well”
- It’s organic - not simply linear



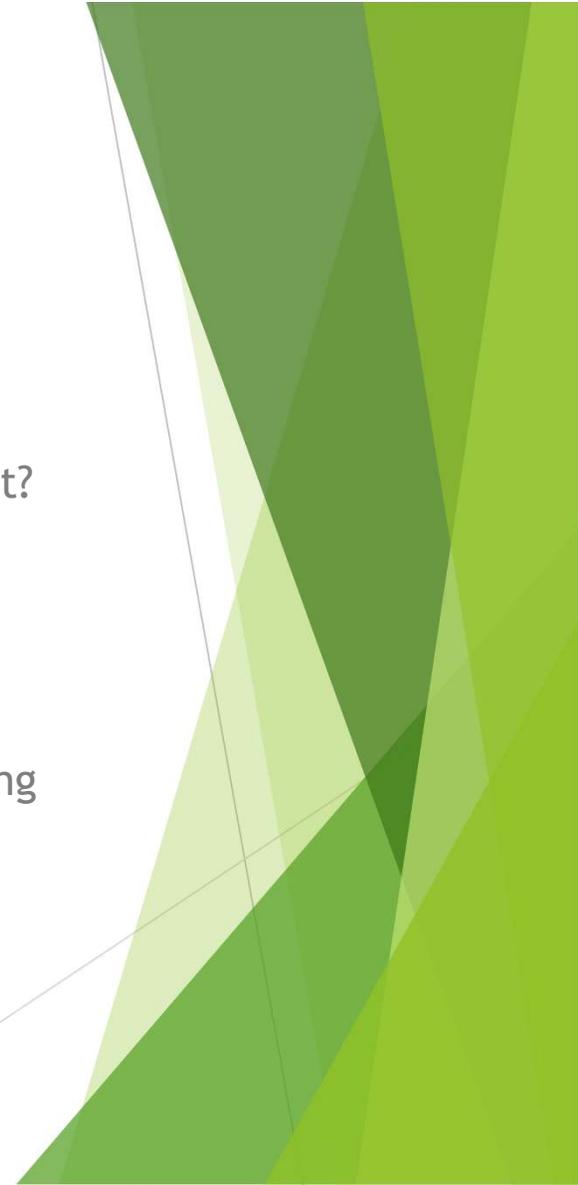
# *Learn*

Questions:

3. What's 'the plan Stan' (to get out of the well) and when does it start?

*- It's about you and about them -*

4. If the same thing happens time and time again, are you in a learning environment?



## ***Category 3: Change (effect it or live with someone else's)***

*“We’ve seen everything in the last two years - hurricanes, wildfires, hail events, winter storms and significant wind events.”*

- Michelle Bairkot, AM Best

December 2021, Vol. 122, Issue 12

*“Technology...the knack of arranging the world that we don’t have to experience it.”*

- Max Frisch (1911-1991)

# *Change*



Whatever you believe, deal with the change and attack it....or create your own change.

# Change

Questions:

5. How/can you differentiate real change from just trying something professed to be new that is a recycling of what's been done before?

**- Change 'it', change you -**

6. Can you/will you consider the *Law of Parsimony* in your analysis and assessments going forward? (Occam's Razor)

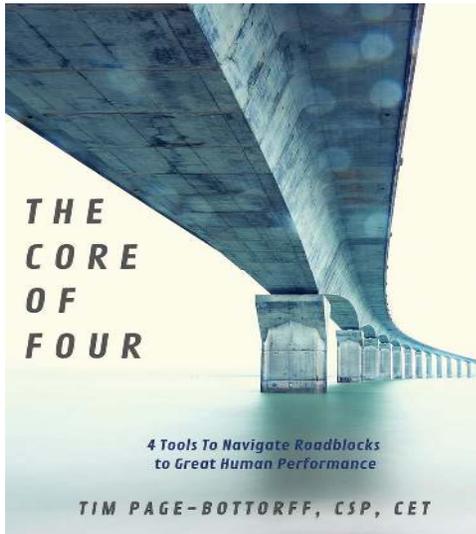
## ***Category 4: Influence/Influencing (you have more to contribute than you think)***

*“Don’t be guilty of being associated with or referred to as a spandrel.”*  
- Hopwood

*“...may you always be inquisitive, creative and influential...”*  
- Bruce K. Lyon (to Hopwood)



# Influence/Influencing



Are they - can you/are you?



# *Influence/Influencing*

Questions:

7. If you are given one chance to make a difference in your organization's safety performance, who will you seek to influence other than whom you've already worked with?

***- More than you think -***

8. Is influencing an inspirational effort? If yes, what will you do differently to become inspirational?



## ***Category 5: Creative/Innovative (c'mon, we need you!)***

*“For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for Nature cannot be fooled.”*

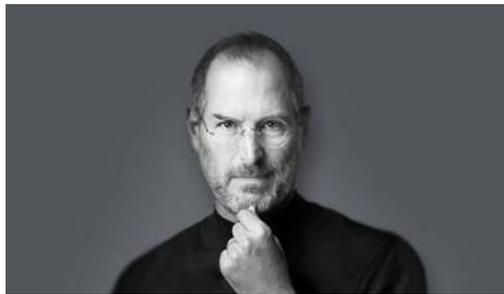
- Richard Feynman



# *Creative/Innovative*

The Visual Capitalist Model (not mine) includes some of the following points (there are others):

- Network
- Process
- Product System
- 'Customer Engagement'



# *Creative/Innovative*

Questions:

9. What's holding you back from developing a true process that (has been or) can be sustained? (Patented?)

*- Ideas -*

10. Do you have an idea or burgeoning innovation that is disruptive - are you hesitant to share it?  
)e.g. do u need 2 be a conformist?]

## ***Category 6: Decision-making (most important??)***

*“The Americans are a great people - you can count on them to do the right thing, after they’ve tried everything else.”*

- Winston Churchill

*“A man’s dying is more the survivors’ affair than his own.”*

- Thomas Mann

The Magic Mountain



# Decision-making



# Decision-making

Questions:

11. How many opinions do you need to get to make - a - decision? (better yet, can you make - a - decision without trying a bunch of options to get to the right one?)

**- Context -**

12. How will you overcome your decisions being influenced by outside, political or financial pressures and going against instinct, practice and what's best? (Are you willing to take the hit? How big of a hit?)

# Wrap-up

One last question:

- What are you afraid of?



How do you overcome that fear or hesitance? Don't lose an opportunity...

# Objectives - did we tackle these?

- ❑ Answer the “why now” question
- ❑ Stretch beyond traditional questions safety pro’s ask
- ❑ Categorize new & different questions and why they are important to ask - create your own categories
- ❑ Think about what we should be introspective on and about
- ❑ How the questions may influence our future
- ❑ One thought, idea or question?

Fini...

Thank you very much.



# Contact Dan:

- Questions
- Debate
- Modifications

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