

# COMPLACENCY - DESTROYER OF SAFETY

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**FOCUS** MANAGEMENT  
ASSOCIATES

# AGENDA

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- 1. What is complacency?**
- 2. How complacency creeps in**
- 3. Cognitive biases that feed complacency**
- 4. Real world examples**
- 5. Strategies to combat complacency**
- 6. Key takeaways**

# WHAT IS COMPLACENCY

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# COMPLACENCY IS...

**A feeling of contentment  
or self satisfaction**



**Lack of awareness or  
indifference to danger**





# COMPLACENCY OCCURS WHEN...

**Safety becomes routine**



**Employees let their guard down over time**



# HOW COMPLACENCY CREEPS IN

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# COMPLACENCY CREEPS ...

**Performing tasks  
repeatedly  
without incident**

**Workplace  
changes slowly  
over time**

**"We've always  
done it  
this way"**

**Lack of recent  
training /  
education**

**Leadership  
complacency  
spreads to staff**

# COGNITIVE BIASES FEEDING COMPLACENCY

- Normalization of deviance
- Confirmation bias
- Optimism bias
- Illusion of control
- Inattention blindness





# NORMALIZATION OF DEVIANCE



**Acceptance**



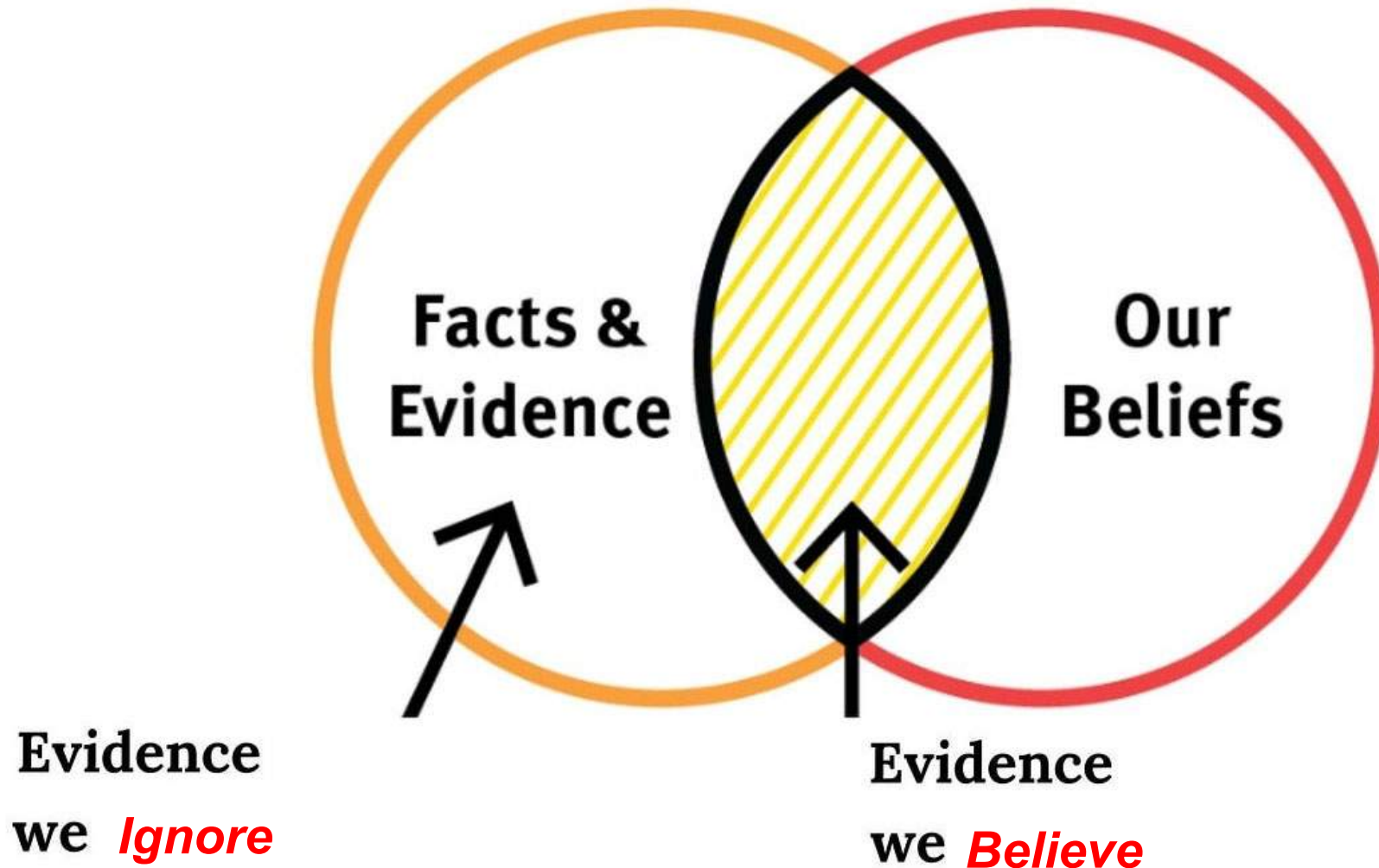
**Rationalize**



**Low**

**FAILURE**

# CONFIRMATION BIAS





**GRAVITY  
ISN'T  
REAL!**

**40% in 2021**



**YOU'RE  
GOING  
TO  
FALL!**

# OPTIMISM BIAS



# ILLUSION OF CONTROL





# REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

**Fatalities due  
to lack of fall  
protection**



**Back injuries  
from  
repeated  
unsafe lifting**

**Lack of PPE  
leading to  
chemical burns**

**Amputation due  
to machine  
safeguard  
removal**

**Explosions from  
ignoring  
hazardous  
chemical  
handling**

# STRATEGIES TO COMBAT COMPLACENCY



# ONGOING TRAINING



# ANONYMOUS REPORTING

**Report with  
confidence**



# REGULAR AUDITS/INSPECTIONS



**Prevention**

**Policies**

**Regulations**

**Procedures**

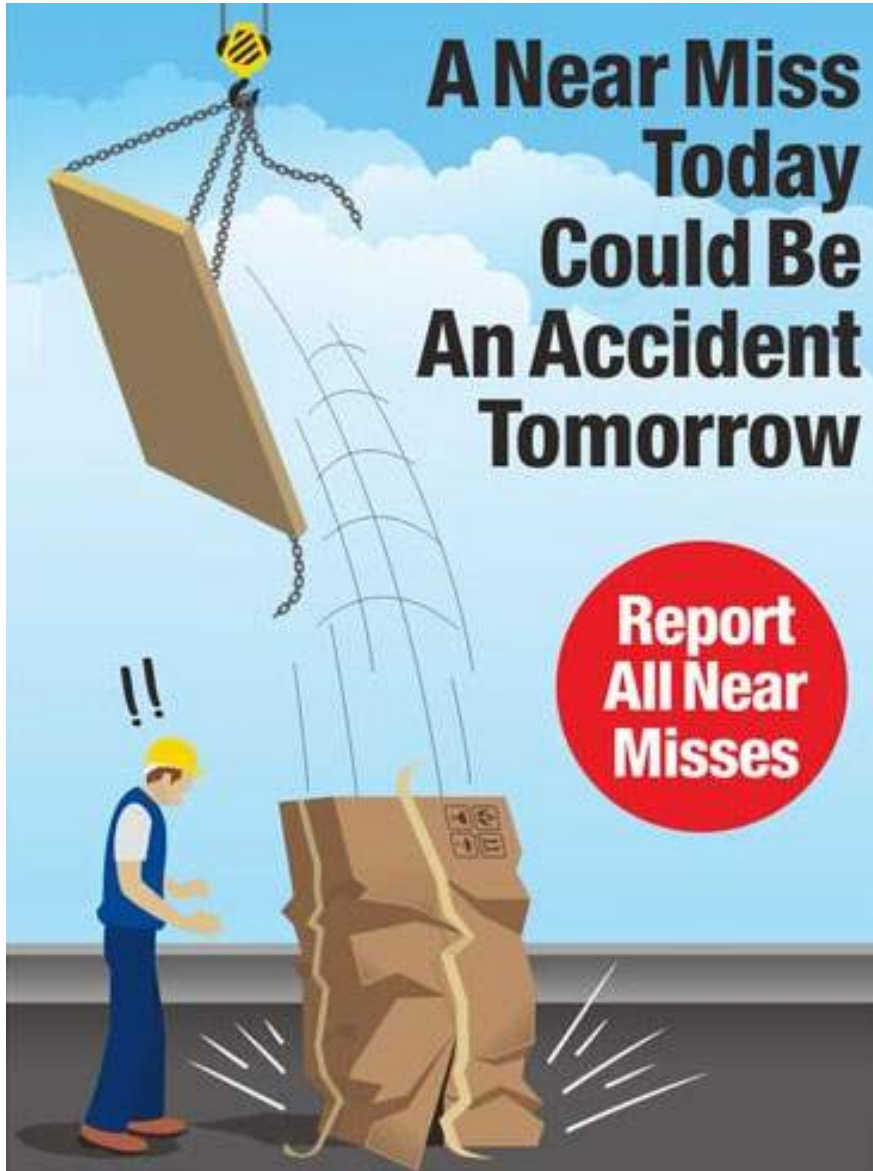


# REINFORCE SPEAKING UP

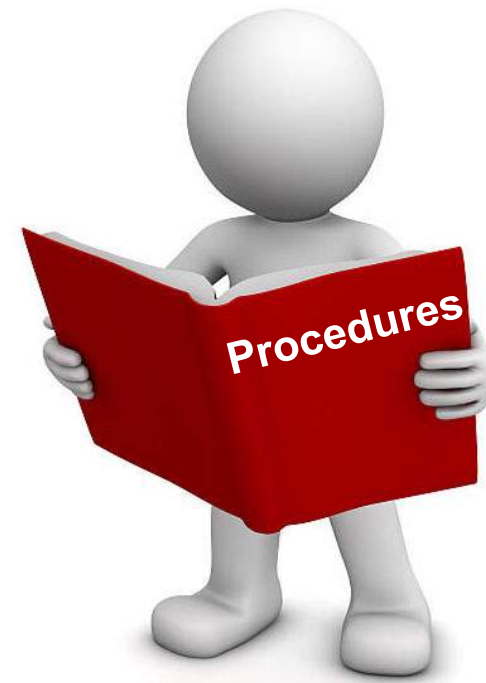
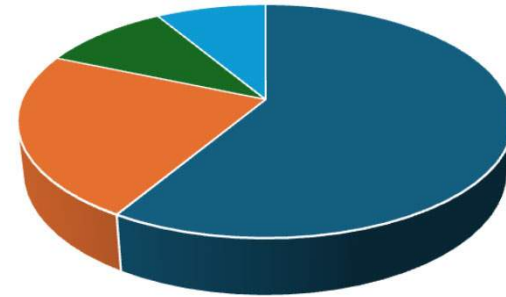
**Prevent accidents  
to yourself and  
others**



# ANALYZE CLOSE CALLS



Analyze Data



# KEY TAKEAWAYS




**Complacency is  
the enemy**

**Bias contributes to  
complacency**

**Ongoing vigilance  
Small steps matter**





**QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?  
THOUGHTS?**

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