

What does “Safety Climate” Mean in Construction?

Defining and measuring safety climate: A review of the construction industry literature

*Natalie Schwatka, Steven Hecker and Linda M. Goldenhar.
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Overview

Safety climate measurements can be used to proactively assess an organization’s effectiveness in identifying and remediating work-related hazards, thereby reducing or preventing work-related ill health and injury. This review article describes construction-specific research that developed and/or measured safety climate, assessed safety climate’s relationship with other safety and health performance indicators, and/or used safety climate measures to evaluate interventions targeting one or more indicators of safety climate. Fifty-six articles met the inclusion criteria, 80% of which were published after 2008.

Key Findings

- Researchers generally defined safety climate in terms of employee perceptions. The most common indicators used to measure safety climate were safety policies, procedures, and practices, followed by general management commitment to safety.
- Safety climate survey data can reveal gaps between management and employee perceptions, or between espoused and enacted policies, and trigger communication and action to narrow those gaps.
- The authors suggest three key areas for future research and practice: deriving a common definition of safety climate, developing and testing construction-specific indicators of safety climate, and focusing on construction-specific issues such as the transient workforce, subcontracting, and work organization.
- CPWR has been working to address these issues and has produced a report and workbook on [safety culture and safety climate](#).

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See full text:

<http://bit.ly/2a1WLFQ>

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