

# Behaviour Based Safety Process Profile

**FOR COMPREHENSIVE, SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR  
MODIFICATION SOLUTIONS**

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Part of MelRah SHEQ Services (PTY) Ltd  
Product offering.

**Prepared by Leon Geldenhuys  
Behaviour Based Solutions & MelRah Operation Manager**



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**Our  
OBMS  
Vision**

MELRAH will be the preferred Behaviour Modification Solutions enterprise, enhancing sustainable overall business performance, thus assisting Organisations in their quest for “Safe Production.”

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**Our  
OBMS  
Mission**

To achieve Behaviour Change within organizations by developing their existing capabilities and delivering professional value added services to clients through Sustainable Relationships, exceptional Customer Service, Respect and Integrity.

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## **Behaviour Based Safety (BBS) Product Description**

### **Background to the strategy for furthering safety excellence through behaviour intervention**

#### **The Behaviour-Based Process: What is it?**

The behaviour-based safety process is essentially an employee empowerment tool, which gives ordinary workers the opportunity to contribute to safety performance in a meaningful way. It is both a top-down and a bottom-up process that focuses on the critical behaviours related to every task, and the elimination of factors in the workplace that act as barriers to optimal safety performance.

Behaviour based safety focuses on upstream process measures rather than traditional outcome measures. Eliminating all at-risk behaviours from the workplace can eradicate all incidents and accidents from the workplace.

The behaviour based process is not intended to replace or supersede any of the measures that organisations have in place to manage safety; rather, it enhances and adds a new dimension to existing initiatives. This includes existing SHEQ initiatives.

The process is implemented from the lowest hierarchical level in an organisation to the very top and uses the group dynamics in a team to obtain compliance behaviour. Teams identify the critical behaviours of every task they have to perform and then, through a process of behaviour modelling, observation, and feedback, the required behaviour is achieved amongst the team members.

The behaviour based process is cutting-edge technology based on years of psychological research. Implementation of its principles, however, is a straightforward, practical process if carried out by experts.

#### **Barriers**

The natural relationships between behaviour and its motivating consequences usually result in some form of convenient, time-saving, and at-risk behaviour. Consequently, to achieve a world class safety culture, one should prepare for an ongoing fight with human nature.

The two most important dimensions on the subject of human barriers to safety are the cognition and interpersonal dimensions. They explain the special challenges of achieving a world class safety culture. Conformity and obedience, two powerful phenomena from social psychological research, further help to understand the individual, group, and system factors responsible for at-risk behaviour. The human barriers should prompt employees to be more defensive and alert in hazardous environments. They also show how difficult it is to find the root causes of incidents.

Constraints in the system within which people work, can also act as barriers



to safe working. Examples of these are deficient policies, procedures and standards.

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**Risk Perception** Perceptions of risk vary dramatically among individuals: one cannot improve safety unless people increase their risk perception and reduce their tolerance for risk. Changes in risk perception and tolerance will occur when individuals get involved in achieving a world class safety culture with the principles and procedures of behaviour based safety.

There are many factors, which determine whether employees react to workplace hazards with alarm or apathy. Taken together, these factors shape personal perceptions of risk and illustrate why improving safety performance is such a difficult task. This justifies a process of behaviour based intervention to motivate continuous employee involvement in safety assurance.

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**At-Risk Behaviour** At-risk behaviours by workers, supervisors, middle management, and even senior managers, contribute to most, if not all, injuries. To achieve a world class safety culture therefore requires elimination of at-risk behaviours. Organisations have attempted to do this by using disciplinary action to motivate behaviour change. This approach may be useful, but less pro-active and acceptable to workers than behaviour based approach that emphasises safe behaviours. **It will be easier to get employees involved in safety achievement if credit is given for doing the right thing rather than reprimands for doing wrong.** People work better to achieve a positive outcome than working to avoid negative consequences.

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**Visible Felt Leadership (VFL) and Coaching** **Visible Felt Leadership forms an integral and non-negotiable part of an effective Behaviour Intervention Process.** Management on all levels would schedule pre-determined sessions where they will go out as a team and Engage with the workforce in order to show that they CARE, as well as being able to identify some grass-root related barriers experienced by employees on a daily basis. This would put management in a better position to remove barriers identified during these VFL visits.

Coaching is a key intervention process for developing and maintaining a world-class safety culture. In fact, the more employees who effectively apply the principles of safety coaching, the closer an organisation will come to achieving a world-class safety culture. **Systematic safety coaching throughout a workplace is feasible in most settings.** Large scale success requires time and resources to develop materials, train the necessary personnel, establish support mechanisms, monitor progress, and continually improve the process and support mechanisms whenever possible.

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### **Pre-implementation Action Planning**

Some of the considerations before starting the development of an initial action plan for a behaviour based safety process are the following:

- How many MELRAH project managers are needed per site?
- Who will be the Customer Process Custodian?
- Who will be the Customer Main Process Champion?
- Decisions regarding the data capturing function.
- The appointment of in-house Process Champions.
- When and by whom will the site management team and line managers be trained?
- How and where will the supporting software be installed?
- What information will be used to define critical behaviours?
- How will teams receive feedback reports from the software?
- How will feedback reports be published?

The issues above are typical of those to be decided on and actioned before the start of any BBS project. We have found that due to a lack of the above, projects sometimes fall behind schedule very quickly due to the lack of proper pre-implementation planning.

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### **Customising the Process**

The implementation procedures must be customised: Organisational cultures vary widely. There must be significant input from the people affected by the process and from whom long-term participation is needed. It will take significant time, effort, and resources to implement a behaviour based safety process.

With this in mind, it is recommended that organisations start small to build confidence and optimism on small-win accomplishments; and then, with patience and dedication, long-term goals for continuous improvement can be set. Increase the impact of activators and manage the consequences [such as celebrating achievements] on the way to effectively increase safe work practices and decrease at-risk behaviours.

**Rather than adopt intervention programmes that sound good, processes that practically work are needed.** The intervention process should be founded on sound research and rigorous evaluation, not “common sense”. The need for achievement oriented methods to keep score of safety efforts is important. This enables people to consider safety in the same context as production and quality. This implies, of course, the need for evaluation data that people can understand and learn from, which will lead to continuous improvement.

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## **Evaluating the Intervention**

Many BBS consulting firms ignore several key evaluation principles. For example, their measures typically:

- Target only one of the three dimensions [workplace, behaviour, or person factors];
- Has a short-term focus;
- Focus on downstream factors (lagging indicators) such as injury rates, fatality rates, etc., instead of upstream measures (leading indicators) of cause and measures of control;
- Include statistical analyses that take substantial time to collect and complete and are not readily understood by the average person; and
- Often do not include a cost-benefit analysis.

Basic principles should not be overlooked when evaluating an intervention to achieve continuous improvement. Specifically, MELRAH will ensure that:

- The performance that the intervention is intended to address is clearly specified, while allowing for the problems associated with individual versus organisational performance;
- All three dimensions of improvement are measured - workplace, behaviour, and person factors;
- A thorough cost-benefit analysis to justify the intervention is done;
- Process measures are applied periodically, especially audits of workplace conditions and work practices;
- Evaluation and feedback are done with data that are meaningful to all process participants and that provide for continuous improvement by refining interventions.

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## **Support Processes**

Guidelines to initiate and sustain a culture-change process aimed at achieving a world-class safety culture will be provided by MELRAH during the training sessions. The support processes needed to maintain long-term commitment are leadership, communication, and recognition. Each of these processes will be addressed during the intervention, and aspects that will be covered include characteristics of effective leaders; language that increases resistance and should be avoided; and levels of resistance that can be influenced by leadership, communication, and recognition.

Research has shown that the most effective leaders are enthusiastic, honest, motivated, confident, analytical, informed, and flexible. Although these characteristics are sometimes viewed as permanent personality traits, they can be increased through education, communication, recognition, and involvement in a behaviour based process. While it may be useful to look for natural leaders when selecting members of an implementation team, (Process Champions) it is important to realise that leadership qualities could have been suppressed in some people by their lack of empowerment. We often find that new processes and eventual culture change might bring out leaders you didn't know existed. Involvement and commitment are essential aspects of building a world-class safety culture, and it can be increased in many ways.

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## **Why Behaviour-Based Safety?**

Survival in this millennium requires organisational performance fuelled by growth practices that will ensure the optimum utilisation of resources. The cost of a lack of performance excellence, incidents and accidents not only causes a



break in profitability, but also puts extreme pressure on business performance, creating an even greater potential for performance impeding incidents. This demands a scientific and professional approach to the science of integrating those job variables affecting organisational performance. A well-planned, dedicated and continuous effort to ensure safety performance excellence among the total work force is therefore imperative.

The answer to the question “Why embark on a behaviour intervention process?” is as follows:

- It is the logical next step in the process of continuous improvement;
- It is an essential prerequisite for world-class safety performance;
- Analysis of injury statistics shows:
  - 87% of injuries are attributable to at-risk behaviour;
  - 11% of injuries are attributable to at-risk conditions;
  - 2% of injuries are attributable to force majeure or natural causes.

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## **Performance Excellence**

Safety performance excellence can only be realised through effective leadership, focusing on integrating relationship dynamics, process optimisation and continuous technological serviceability. This, however, should continuously be supported and guided by regulatory systems to ensure purpose and focus.

Excellence in performance depends on the manner in which the work force attains specific pre-determined goals – whether these goals are high production figures or excellence in safety.

Safety performance excellence requires a team effort throughout the organisation, which will only be realised if each hierarchical level within the organisation succeeds in achieving its purpose:

- Business Leaders. Creating a culture of safety performance excellence requires business leaders to focus their efforts on creating parameters for job orientated behaviour.
- Team Leaders. Team leaders, being closer to the action, have to stimulate co-operation between employees whilst at the same time exploit every opportunity to reinforce the company’s powerful vision of success.
- Team Members. Team leaders and team members form the front-line of any organisation. As such, they should show perseverance towards safety assurance at all times, and show pride in striving towards performance excellence in safety.

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## **What does MELRAH offer?**

The MELRAH behaviour intervention process is cutting-edge technology that focuses on the so called third dimension of safety assurance. Its primary focus is on the behaviour of persons to eliminate non-caring and at-risk behaviours from the workplace, resulting in substantial improvements in safety performance to world class levels.

The behaviour intervention process offered by MELRAH will build on your current efforts and will maximise the investment you have already made in training, equipment and other improvements.



## Implementation methodology

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**A seven Phase approach.** MELRAH works with each client to tailor an implementation plan to meet their unique needs and goals. An implementation plan comprising of 7 (seven) phases forms the foundation of our BBS process.

- Phase 1: Project assessment and planning.
  - Phase 2: Management overview and alignment.
  - Phase 3: Line management orientation and training.
  - Phase 4: Training of all the role players.
  - Phase 5: Process design and implementation.
  - Phase 6: Assistance with process roll-out.
  - Phase 7: Long term support and process evaluation.
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## In Conclusion:

It is a non-disputable fact that the number one Human Psychological need is: **THE NEED TO BE RECOGNISED FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS** or put differently: **TO FEEL VALUED** by other people. This obviously includes and applies to the workplace as well. Given the above, MELRAH base their total BBS implementation philosophy and methodology on principles, activities and strategies that assist Organisations in adopting a culture that supports this mantra, in order to achieve **LASTING** behavioural changes in order to **MAXIMIZING HUMAN POTENTIAL** and ensuring **SAFE PRODUCTION** that is sustainable over a period of time.