

Governing Energy



Informed

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I just completed a very interesting LinkedIn request. The post asked readers to provide one quality a safety professional should possess. The idea is the development of a set of abilities all who work around critical infrastructures should embrace. I wish him well in his endeavor and am anxious to see the results.

I chose the word *Informed*. As shown in the graphic (taken from another LinkedIn post) both the forklift driver and the individual depicted are not informed.

Not informed about how to load and certainly not informed about the fallacy of standing underneath 'any' cargo. One could also surmise that the supervisor and perhaps even the organization's safety policy are not informed either.

There is a substantial body of work regarding safe operations and individual behaviors at the job site. One such tool, the Job Safety Analysis (JSA) is designed to help assure that prior to the start of any task(s) individuals are informed about the risks and how to perform the job safely.ⁱ

KSAs are also about being informed. Knowledge or the understanding of the task(s) at hand. Skill at the task(s) performance and Ability or the observable behavior that results in task(s) properly completed.ⁱⁱ

So why are so many seemingly uninformed about job site risky behavior? Perhaps they are not as informed as management believes.

The concept of complacency and its challenges have been discussed in detail in an earlier blog.ⁱⁱⁱ While a routine helps human stay on process, it can also lead to a level of smugness that must be guarded against.

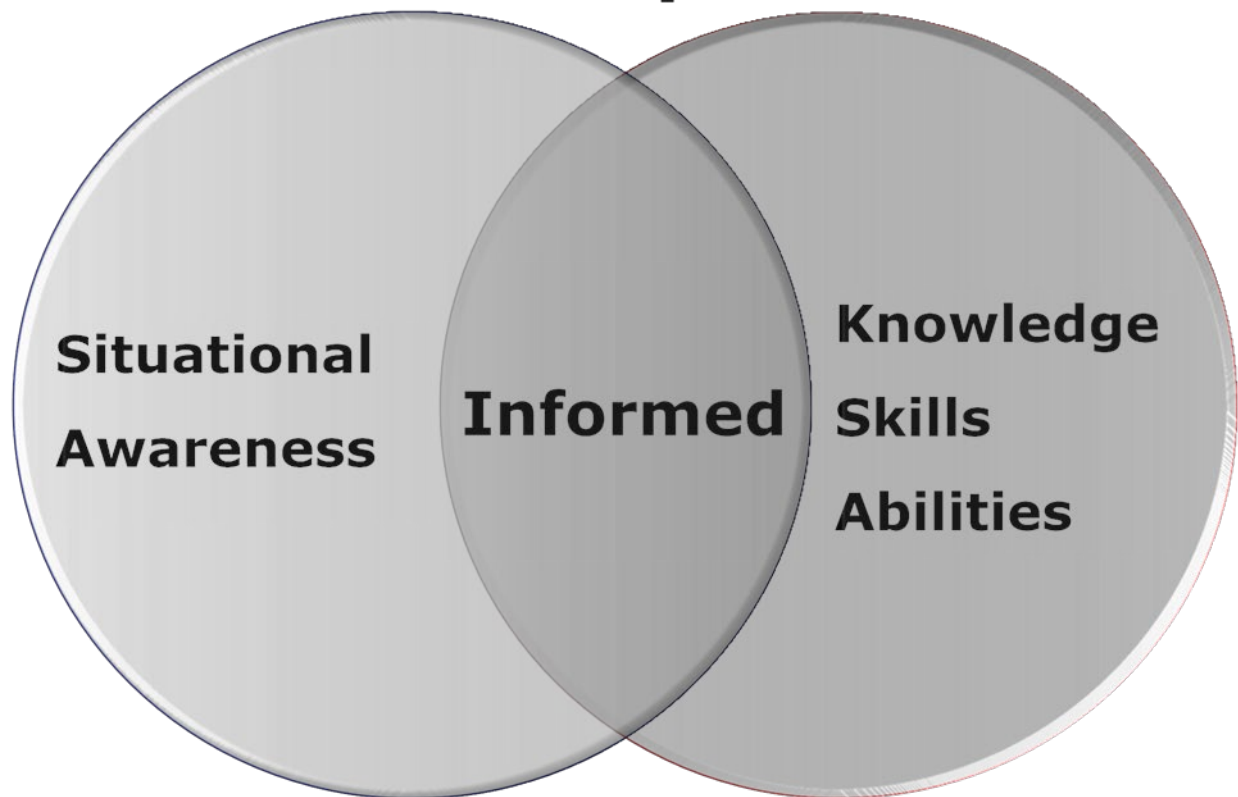
Aviation, military and others commonly use the term 'Situational Awareness' which can be defined as, "the perception of environmental elements and events with respect to time or space, the comprehension

of their meaning, and the projection of their status after some variable has changed, such as time, or some other variable, such as a predetermined event.”^{iv} Implied in this definition is *competency*.

However, implicit capabilities must be made explicit in today High Reliable Organization. Only then can KPIs be put in place to assure a top level of operational performance, aka Operational Excellence.

This relationship is depicted in the following graphic. Informed field operations require both a high level of *awareness* and the *capability* of performing individual tasks as well as the overall project. Clearly, the characters depicted in the forklift cartoon had neither.

Informed Operations



Source: The Rapid Response Institute

We have previously commented in this blog, at conferences and in meetings that for many firms the JSA has become simply a mandatory form. Once completed it is filed away. When this is the case, management, field superiors and individual workers are no long informed and its purpose is lost.

However, informed field operations is not sufficient. Senior management must behave in an informed manner as well. Informed Operations requires that from 'Suits-to-Hardhats' all be *Informed* as required to assure safe operations and high performance.

How Informed are Your Management, Field Personnel and Contractors?

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Additional details are available from the author.

About the Author

Dr. [Scott M. Shemwell](#) has over 30 years technical and executive management experience primarily in the energy sector. He is the author of six books and has written extensively about the field of operations management. Shemwell is the Managing Director of The Rapid Response Institute, a firm that focuses on providing its customers with solutions enabling Operational Excellence and regulatory compliance management. He has studied cultural interactions for more than 30 years—his dissertation; *Cross Cultural Negotiations Between Japanese and American Businessmen: A Systems Analysis (Exploratory Study)* is an early peer reviewed manuscript addressing the systemic structure of societal relationships.

End Notes

ⁱ https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/oilandgas/job_safety_analysis_process.html

ⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge,_Skills,_and_Abilities

ⁱⁱⁱ Shemwell, Scott M. (2016, August 5). Awareness 101. *Governing Energy*. PennEnergy.

^{iv} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Situation_awareness