

Lessons from the Ashes: The Critical Role of Safety Leadership



Robert Sumwalt
May 9, 2017



Jim Schultz



Are the customers getting what they expect?







Thomson, GA February 20, 2013



Accident aircraft prior to N-number change to N777VG.



1993

Google earth

Imagery Date: 1/29/2015 33°31'35.58" N 82°30'06.95" W elev 490 ft eye alt 8059 ft



1993

Google earth

Imagery Date: 1/29/2015 33°31'41.29" N 82°30'08.01" W ele

Left wing at edge of tree line



ANTI SKID FAIL



- Pilot did not refer to, or comply with, Abnormal Procedure.
- With anti-skid failure, the required landing distance exceed the available runway length at Thomson.

Probable Cause

“The pilot's failure to follow airplane flight manual procedures for an antiskid failure in flight and his failure to immediately retract the lift dump after he elected to attempt a go-around on the runway.”

“Contributing to the accident were the pilot's lack of systems knowledge and his fatigue due to acute sleep loss and his ineffective use of time between flights to obtain sleep.”

Pilot activities

Night before trip		
	Went to bed	2100
Day of trip		
	Woke up	0200
	Departed home	0230
	Arrived airport	0330
	Departed for Nashville	0406
	Arrived Nashville	0459*
	Lunch	1500 – 1630*
	Passengers arrived	1918*
	Takeoff Nashville	1927*
	Crash at Thomson, GA	2005

* Times converted to EST

Pilot activities

Night before trip		
	Went to bed	2100
	5 hours	
Day of trip		
	Woke up	0200
	Departed home	0230
	Arrived airport	0330
	Departed for Nashville	0406
	Arrived Nashville	0459*
	Lunch 14 hours	1500 – 1630*
	Passengers arrived	1918*
	Takeoff Nashville	1927*
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Time	Cell phone activity
0808	Phone call - outgoing
0813	Phone call - outgoing
0902	Phone call - outgoing
1002	Text message - outgoing
1005	Text message - outgoing
1016	Text message - outgoing
1121	Text message - outgoing
1138	Phone call - outgoing
1234	Phone call - outgoing
1251	Phone call - outgoing
1300	Phone call - outgoing
1315	Phone call - outgoing
1317	Phone call - outgoing
1324	Phone call - outgoing
1330	Phone call - outgoing
1332	Phone call - outgoing
1404	Text message - outgoing
1432	Phone call - outgoing
1501	Phone call - outgoing
1503	Phone call - outgoing
1642	Phone call - outgoing

1 Incoming call

2 Incoming calls

2 Incoming calls

2 Incoming calls

2 Incoming calls

1 Incoming call

1 Incoming call

Is this what the customer expected?



Is this what the customer expected?

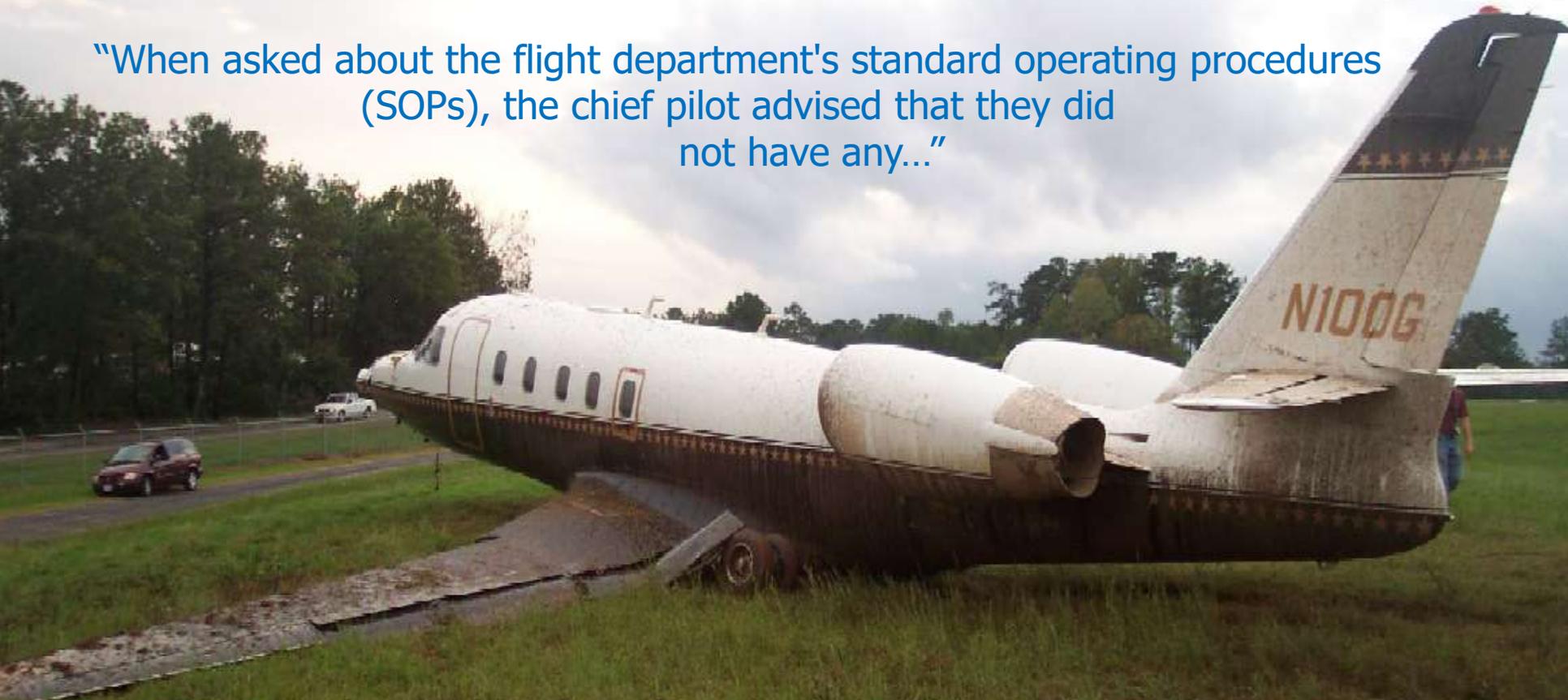
Manteo, NC
October 1, 2010



“The pilot told NTSB investigators that the company advised him that they had no immediate need for an airplane and they did not intend to buy a replacement.”

Is this what the customer expected?

“When asked about the flight department's standard operating procedures (SOPs), the chief pilot advised that they did not have any...”



“... the flight department had started out as just one pilot and one airplane, and that they now had five pilots and two airplanes...”

09 14 2007

Is this what the customer expected?

- ½ mile from displaced threshold = 194 kts GS
- 2150 FPM
- GPWS warnings
- Touched down with appx. 2970' remaining



“Contributing to the accident: ... flight crew's poor crew resource management and lack of professionalism.”

Lake Michigan June 2007



Is this what the customer expected?



Is this what the customer expected?





NTSB Investigation Found

- The flight crew failed to disengage the gust lock.
- No complete flight control check for 173 of the past 175 flights.
- None of the five manufacturer specified-checklists were verbalized on the accident flight.



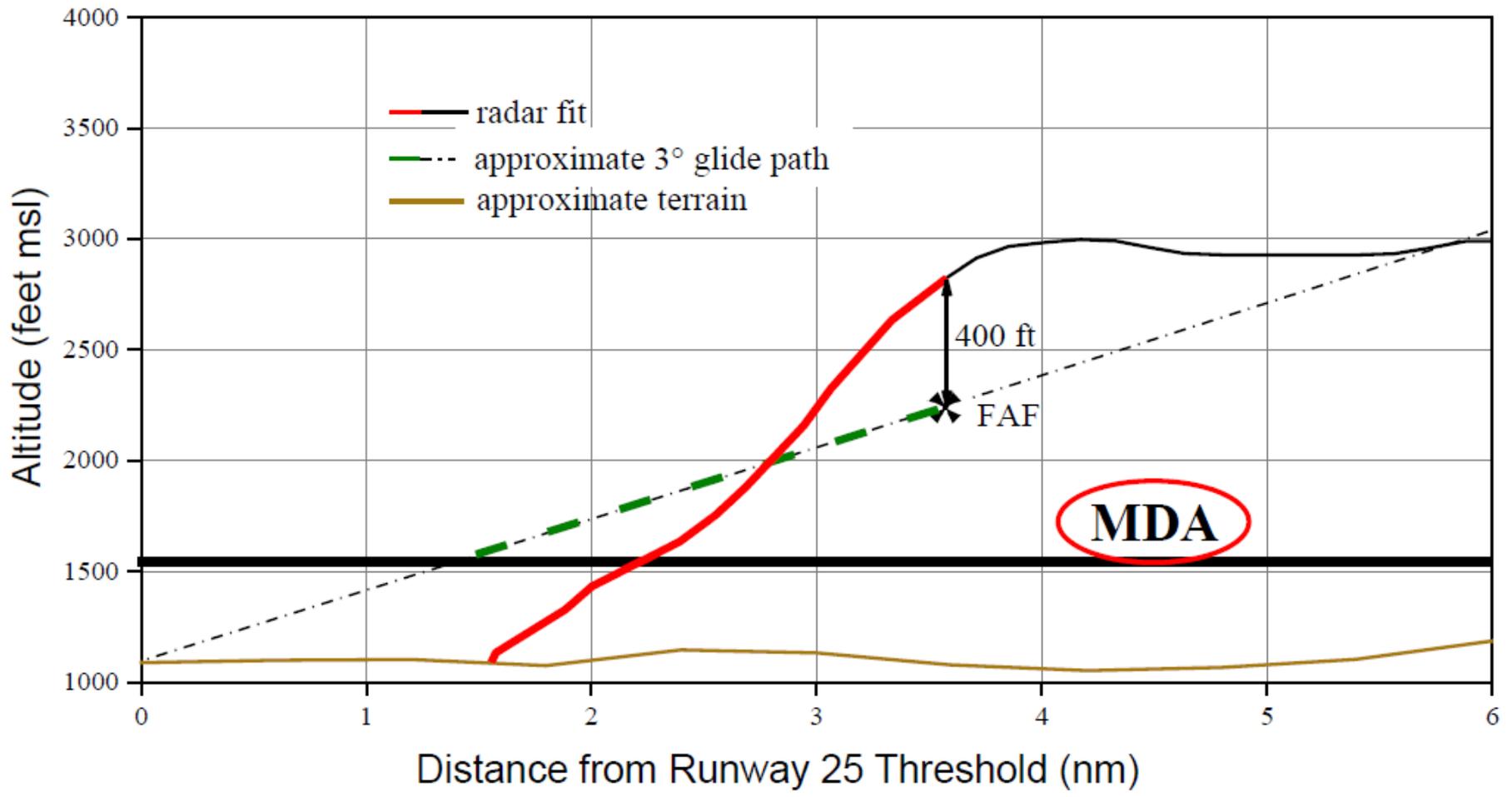
Is this what the customer expected?

- The NTSB determines that the probable cause of this accident was the flight crewmembers' failure to perform the flight control check before takeoff...
- Contributing to the accident were the flight crew's habitual noncompliance with checklists ...

Akron, OH

November 2015







Runway
25
Threshold

Accident
Site

Aerial View of Destroyed Building

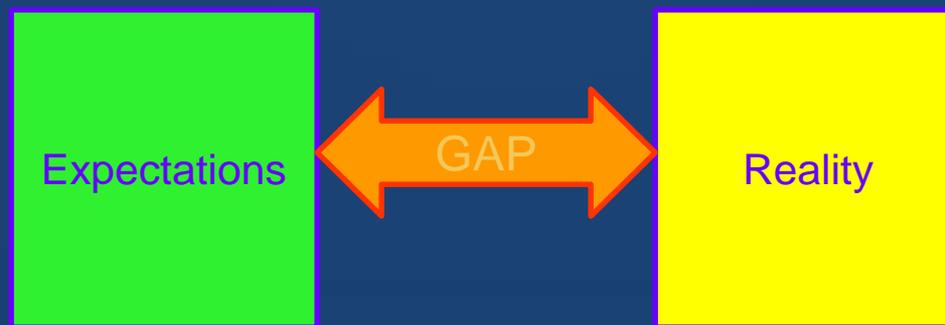


Are customers getting what they expect?

- The company
- The pilots
- The regulatory oversight
- Industry audits

Different Expectations

- There is sometimes a “disconnect” between the expectations of the “customer” and what they are actually getting.



What do your customers want?

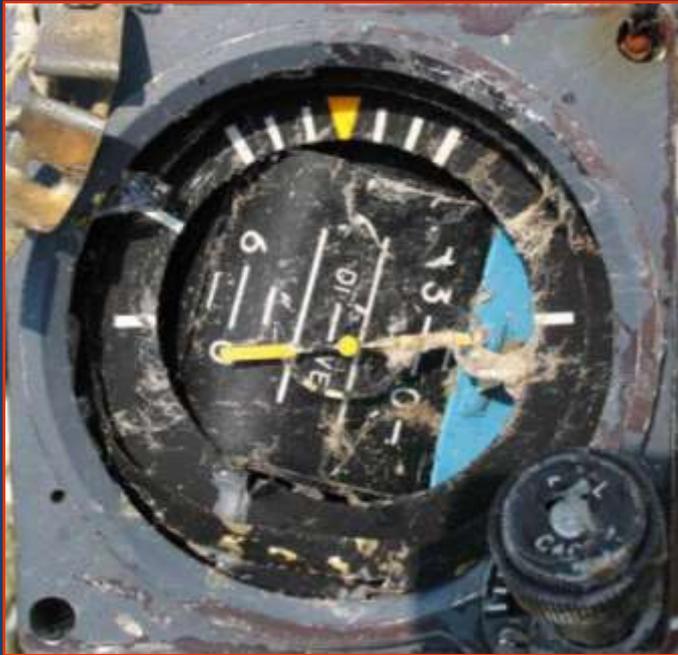
- **World class**
 - Top 3 - 5 percent of the industry
 - Organization thrives in seeking to be the very best
- **Best practices**
 - Adopts and implements procedures above and beyond regulatory requirements
- **Basic regulatory compliance**
 - Meets spirit of regulations, but no higher
- **Sub-standard performance**
 - non-adherence to regulations, cutting corners are the norm

Adopted from Pete Agur

What are they getting?

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Adopted from Pete Agur



What is the future
of your business
aviation operation?

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

- Peter Drucker

Creating a Future of Safety: Three Leadership Questions

1. How strong is our safety culture?
2. Are we really living our values?
3. Are we truly providing safety leadership?

Creating a Future of Safety

HOW STRONG IS OUR SAFETY CULTURE?

Safety Culture is:

“Safety culture is the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment.”

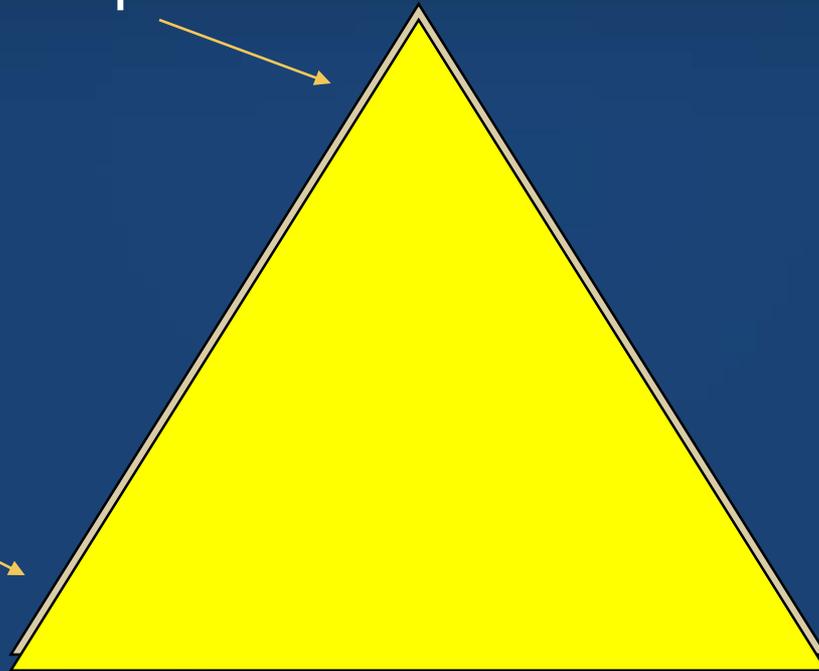
Source: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Safety Culture is:

Triggered at the top



Measured at the
bottom



Safety culture starts at the top of the organization and permeates the entire organization.

Do you have a good safety culture?

Do you have a good safety culture?

- “... it is worth pointing out that if you are convinced that your organization has a good safety culture, you are almost certainly mistaken.”
- “... a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained...”
- “... the process is more important than the product.”
 - James Reason, “Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents.”

Creating a Future of Safety

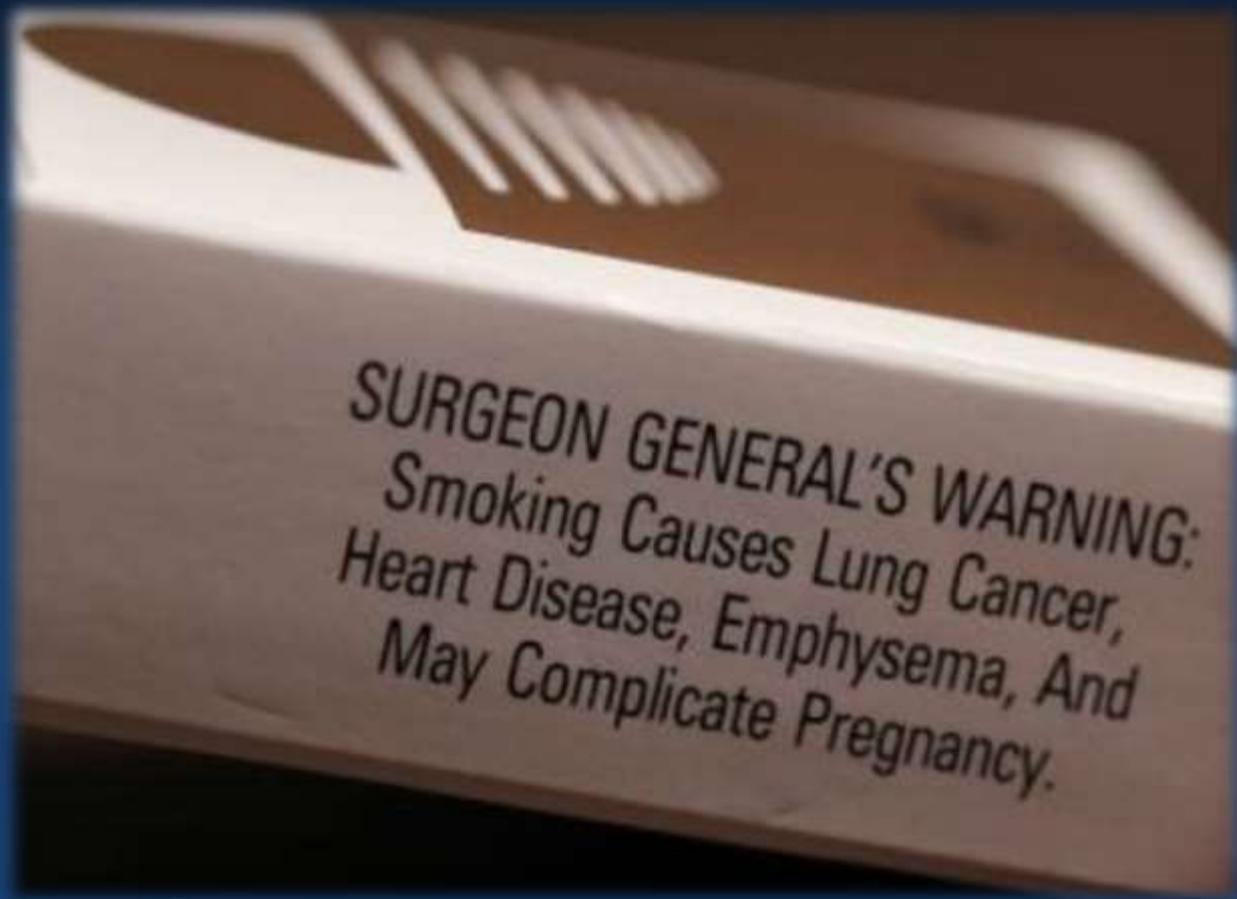
**ARE WE REALLY LIVING OUR
VALUES?**

Values

- Is safety the top priority of your organization?
- Don't make it a priority – make it a core value.

Living the Values

- In a successful organization, everything you do is run through the filter of your core values to make sure you are being true to them.
- And, most importantly, you must live those values.



SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:
Smoking Causes Lung Cancer,
Heart Disease, Emphysema, And
May Complicate Pregnancy.



CVS Stops Tobacco Sales

Tobacco Announcement by President and CEO Larry Merlo

This move will cost CVS an estimated
\$2 BILLION in revenue

“The sale of tobacco products is inconsistent with our purpose – helping people on their path to better health.”

- Larry J. Merlo, CEO, CVS Health

“This move is clearly in-line with their stated purpose and values, a move we don’t see often enough today in corporate America. Relying on a strong foundation of values is often what sets market leaders apart from the pack.”

- Michael Woody, Ph.D. for Fox Business

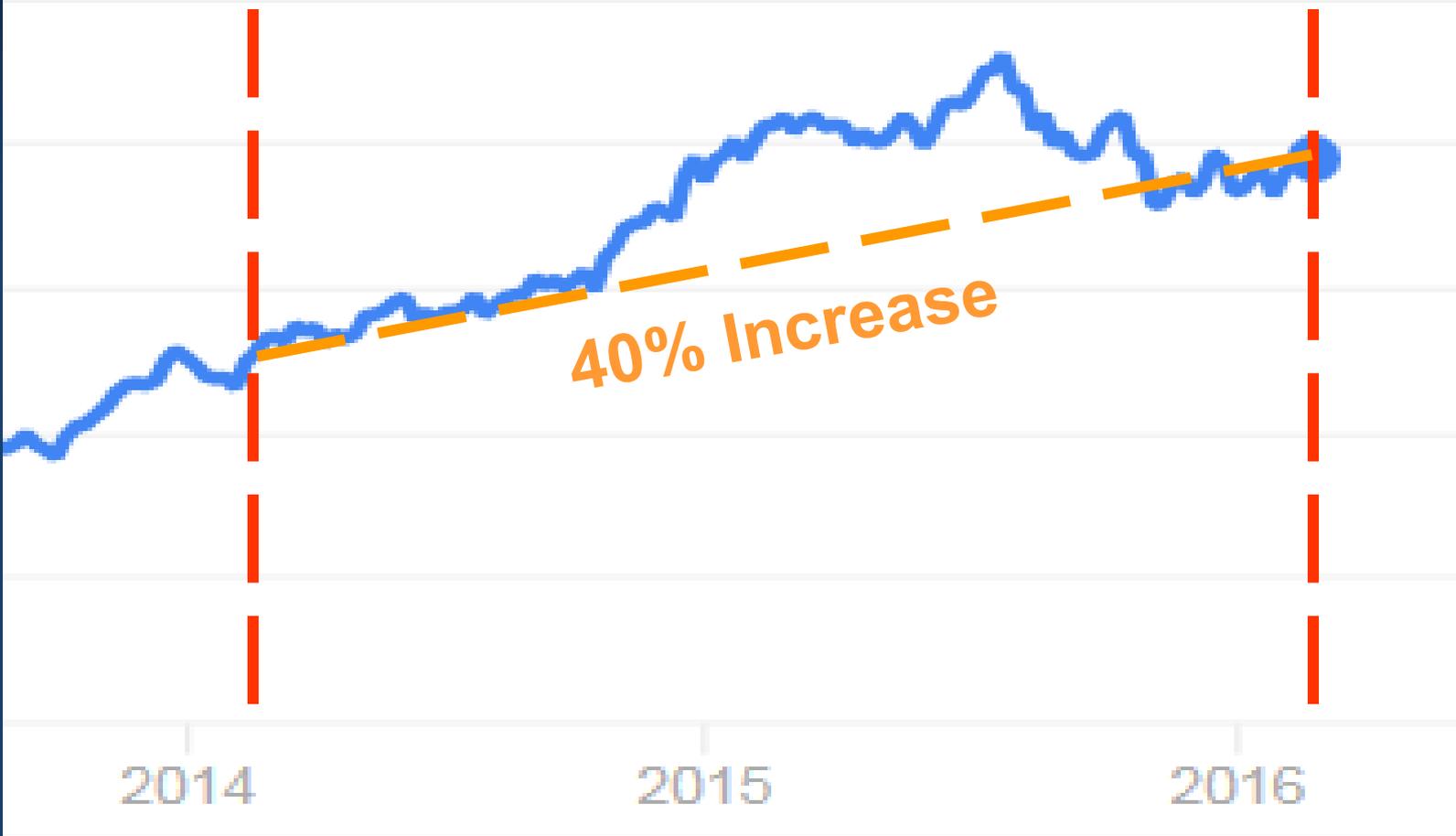
“Think of values as the core guiding principles that act as the foundation of your organization. These principles should guide every decision and serve as your fallback in times of uncertainty.”

- Michael Woody, Ph.D. for Fox Business

CVS Health Corp

Feb 7, 2014
\$66.44

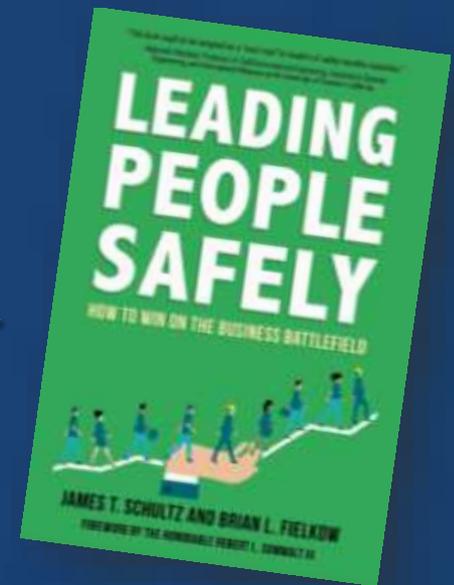
Feb 5, 2016
\$93.10



“Organizations with strong leaders are those organizations that ensure their values are aligned and lived throughout the organization.”

“They do the right things by caring for the safety and health of their employees and customers.”

“Because of their commitment to values and caring, they have greater potential to perform well.”



- “Leading People Safely,” p. xxvi

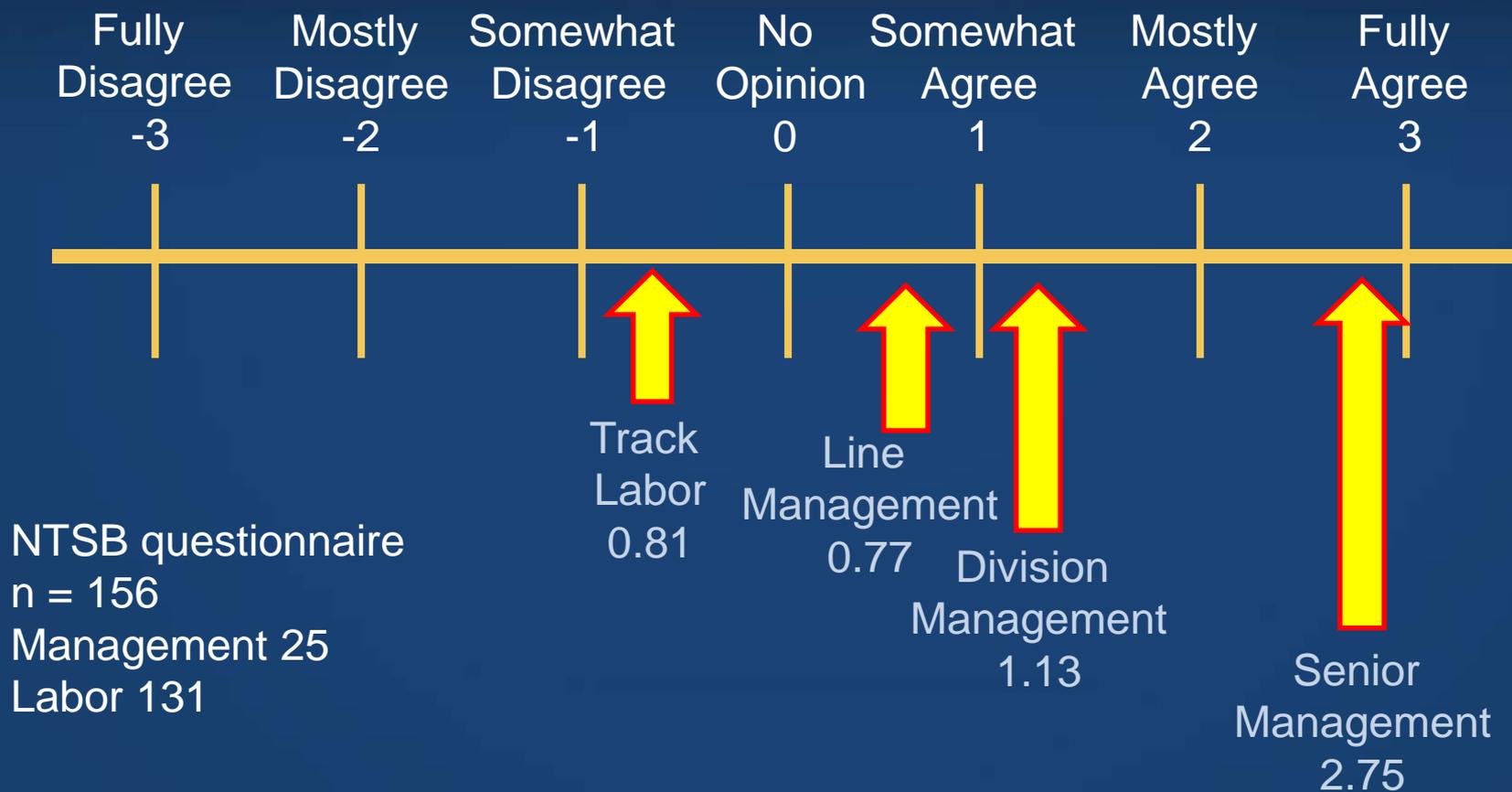
Creating a Future of Safety

ARE WE TRULY PROVIDING SAFETY LEADERSHIP?

Metro-North Railroad



Metro North management is committed to workplace safety and participates regularly in safety events.



Management does not pressure staff to maintain service or operations, potentially at cost of safety.



Employee Comments

- “Sometimes I feel safety is priority one as long as it's convenient.”
- “Metro-North pays lip service to safety. On time performance & budgets take precedence over safety.”
- “The railroad only cares about the on-time performance.”
- “It’s all about on-time performance and safety rules are thrown out the window to keep on time performance. Management has no clue.”

How leaders influence safety

“The safety behaviors and attitudes of individuals are influenced by their perceptions and expectations about safety in their work environment, and they pattern their safety behaviors to meet demonstrated priorities of organizational leaders, regardless of stated policies.”

- Dov Zohar, as cited in NTSB accident report

Sometimes the Message gets Distorted

Safety
Quality
Timeliness
Efficiency
Honesty & Respect



Managers



Supervisors



Coworkers



MOST IMPORTANT – Output!!!!

Cut corners to save money

Fear of retribution

Get job done at all costs

Unfair discipline

Work sucks

Call in sick for extra vacation day

WORD OF THE DAY
Tuesday, May 9, 2017

align-ment *noun* \ə-'līn-mənt\
Where the leaders and front line employees, and everyone in between, share and practice the same values.

Alignment

Safety
Quality
Timeliness
Efficiency
Honesty & Respect



Managers
Supervisors
Coworkers



Quality
Honesty & Respect
Efficiency

Safety
Timeliness

“Good can be Bad”

- With good safety performance, people/organizations can easily become complacent.
- Don't ever believe that a lack of accidents means you are “safe.”
- To counter this complacency, there must be a leadership obsession with continuous improvement.

- Courtesy of Jim Schultz

Positive IS-BAO Audit Comments

- “The SMS of this operator is well-developed”
- “Best practices are consistently employed in all facets of the program”
- “Continuous SMS improvement is actively pursued”
- “The FOM is remarkably well-written and comprehensive”
- “Safety culture within the department is shared among all team members”
- “Open reporting of hazards is consistently encouraged by management”
- “Solid safety program, maturing nicely”

Bedford, MA

May 2014



**“You can fool the auditors,
but never fool yourself.”**

- John Fenton

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