

# The Power of High-Performance Habits

Six key habits can help continuously improve both productivity and safety.

This is the second of three articles about establishing high performance habits that can help crane owners, operators, and support teams improve both productivity and safety.

To paraphrase the Greek philosopher, scientist, and educator, Aristotle: We are what we repeatedly do, so excellence is not an act, but a habit.

Also true: Actions that are rewarded get repeated, and things that are measured get done.

That's why instilling good habits throughout a company must start from the top. Executive management's leadership and support are vital in driving ongoing cultural change toward continuous improvement and excellence in productivity and safety.

## Six Key Habits

The High Performance Institute (HPI) is an organization that researches effective training techniques and that coaches executives on how to improve performance. Its program lists six critical habits that every member of a company can use daily to improve long-term performance.

When each member of a team practices those six habits in their daily work, the whole company can build and sustain excellence in both safety and productivity.

The resulting improvements can help a company boost profitability and reduce insurance costs over the long haul.

Excellence in crane operations is not a destination. It's an ongoing journey. Here are HPI's six high-performance habits

that can help crane owners and their workers build a company culture of excellence.

### High Performance Habits

1. *Seek Clarity*
2. *Generate Energy*
3. *Raise Necessity*
4. *Measure Performance*
5. *Develop Influence*
6. *Demonstrate Courage*

**1. Seek Clarity** of purpose between senior management, workers, and customers. Letting everyone know that safety is a top priority will help build trust within the entire company and in the crane marketplace.

This is a constant endeavor. People don't just "get clarity" once and develop ongoing mission statements that last for all time. You need to clearly and consistently remind workers and customers that safety and productivity are top priorities.

This "clarity routine" establishes self-monitoring among all stakeholders. As they learn that safety and productivity are top priorities, they will focus on them. Consistency and clarity are cornerstones of improving safety and productivity.

**2. Generate Energy** so you can maintain focus and effort on improving safety and productivity. To stay on your "A Game," you must actively care for your mental stamina, physical energy, and positive emotions. High energy helps generate productivity in colleagues, subordinates, suppliers, and even customers. To infuse



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energy effectively, you must continually be present and communicating with all stakeholders. Encourage them to maintain the mental stamina, physical energy, and enthusiasm needed to stay focused on what's going on around them so they can avoid risks and overcome challenges.

**3. Raise the Necessity** for each person to maintain continual situational awareness on every project. *This simple habit could have the highest impact in improving safety and productivity.* It's about making sure your workers always know the "why" behind procedures, and continuously feel the need to be keenly aware of what's going on around them every day in all facets of crane operations. Staying aware of things like load weight, placement logistics, site conditions, wind, and pedestrian traffic will maximize both productivity and safety.

**4. Measuring Performance** should be a core objective and be integrated with crane safety and quality control activities.

Becoming safer and more productive depends on setting specific goals while measuring focus, energy, and output. Having no goals, focus, energy, or measurement will sink your efforts to improve productivity and safety.

It starts with goals. Clear and

challenging goals keep people focused, and better focus leads to workforce engagement. Research consistently shows that group goals inspire people to work longer, pay more attention to tasks that matter, be less distracted (maintain situational awareness), and increase overall effort.

Lastly, one of the basics of making quantifiable improvement in productivity is figuring out which outputs matter most in each area of your crane operations.

Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) that continually measure the most important outputs will form a basis for continual improvement in both safety and productivity. Measuring Performance Quality Outputs (PQOs) in each area of operations can transform your company culture to deliver better results.

**5. Develop Influence** with your workforce and customers about your company focus and continual improvement in safety and productivity.

Influence will make you and your company better at getting people to

believe in and support your efforts. Unless you consciously develop the habit of influence, sustained improvements in safety and productivity are all but impossible.

To be influential, you must consistently encourage workers to maintain the habit of high performance in safety and productivity. Consistently building your influence with workers lets you be more effective in instilling the beliefs and behaviors that help them improve safety and productivity. In turn, their consistently safe and productive performance will develop influence with your customers.

**6. Demonstrate Courage** by consistently expressing your ideas for establishing a safer and more productive working environment.

By taking bold action to protect your workforce, and by standing up for your company and others in the face of uncertainty, threat, or changing working conditions, you can measurably improve safety and productivity. Courage is not

an occasional act, but a trait of choice and will. High performers are courageous people. The research data shows that courage correlates significantly with high performance. In fact, the data shows that demonstrating courage is the cornerstone habit of high performance.

## Conclusion

These suggested six high-performance habits are designed to establish a solid foundation on which crane company owners, project managers, operators, and support teams can build a robust transformation to improve safety and productivity.

The third part of this series will define various steps crane owners can take to integrate these high-performance habits with crane safety culture elements to measurably improve company safety and productivity results.

Combining these high performance habits with proven safety culture principles puts crane owners in a better position to consistently improve their operations' safety and productivity. ■

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