

# *CALIFORNIA VOLUNTARY PROTECTION PROGRAM WORKSHOP*



**Cal/VPP Program Overview**

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**Presented by: Terry Schulte**

# *Introductions – Your presenter*

- Over 21 years working in the Voluntary Protection Program.
- First VPP certification site in 2006 and currently oversee 29 VPP star sites.
- Have mentored over 20 workplaces from a wide array of industries and currently mentoring 2 sites.
- Have been involved with Voluntary Protection Program Participants Association (VPPPA) since 2003, served 12 years as the Region IX Chairperson and currently serve as the National VPPPA Chairperson. The VPPPA is a non-profit organization that supports all of OSHA's cooperative programs.
- Routinely work with State and Federal OSHA on cooperative program initiatives (Cal/VPP workshops, Pacific Coast Safety Fest, Safety is a Core Value).
- Currently working to support OSHA Voluntary Protection Program Modernization efforts to include:
  - Enhancement of SGE Utilization
  - VPP Challenge restructuring (SHMS implementation)
  - ISO 45001- VPP crosswalk
  - VPP construction



# Overview

- Worksite Challenges in sustaining or achieving Cal/VPP certification
- Promoting the Cal/VPP program at your worksite
- The Cal/VPP Process
  - Site preparation
  - Cal/VPP Application considerations
  - Pre-visit
  - Onsite Evaluation
- Post Cal/VPP certification considerations
- Open Discussion



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# Worksite Challenges

- Sustainment of VPP requires continual site commitment and ability to demonstrate business value in a struggling economy

- Leader Turnover (Site, Division, Corporate)

- No previous VPP experience
- VPP is not a priority
- Need to “resell” value/benefits of VPP Star program

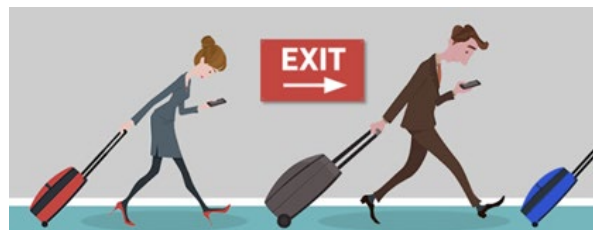


- Workforce Turnover

- Site Safety/VPP Manager
- Key site VPP support structure
- Key labor representatives

- Budget Cuts

- RIF/Layoffs
- Competing priorities for budget
- Impact to Safety/VPP budget & resources



- Others?



# *How do you handle this Question?*

If you were asked to sell the VPP program to the executive leadership or employees of your company, what would you say?



## *Facts about the VPP program*

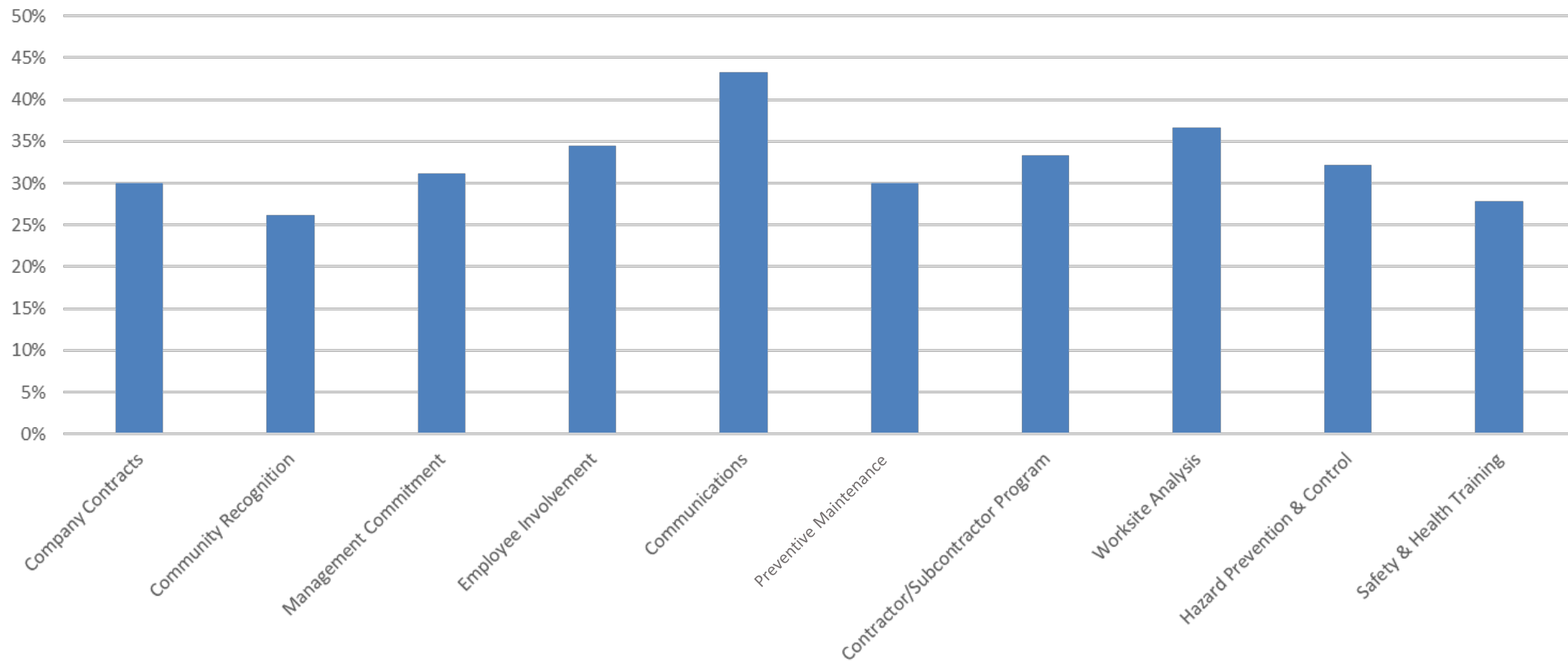
- VPP sites generally experience 50 -70% fewer lost work-day injuries than an average site of the same size.
- VPP worksites are exempt from OSHA programmed compliance inspections.
- Provides a confidential, non-punitive and cost-effective audit from a true third party (Cal-OSHA) of sites safety & health programs.
- VPP Program improves your relationship with OSHA.
- Unites the organization towards a common goal that transcends safety (i.e. procedure review).
- The VPP program makes your organization stronger by becoming more adaptable, more reliable and increasing organizational communication/engagement.
- These facts are supported by the on-going Cal/VPP Tangible benefits survey.



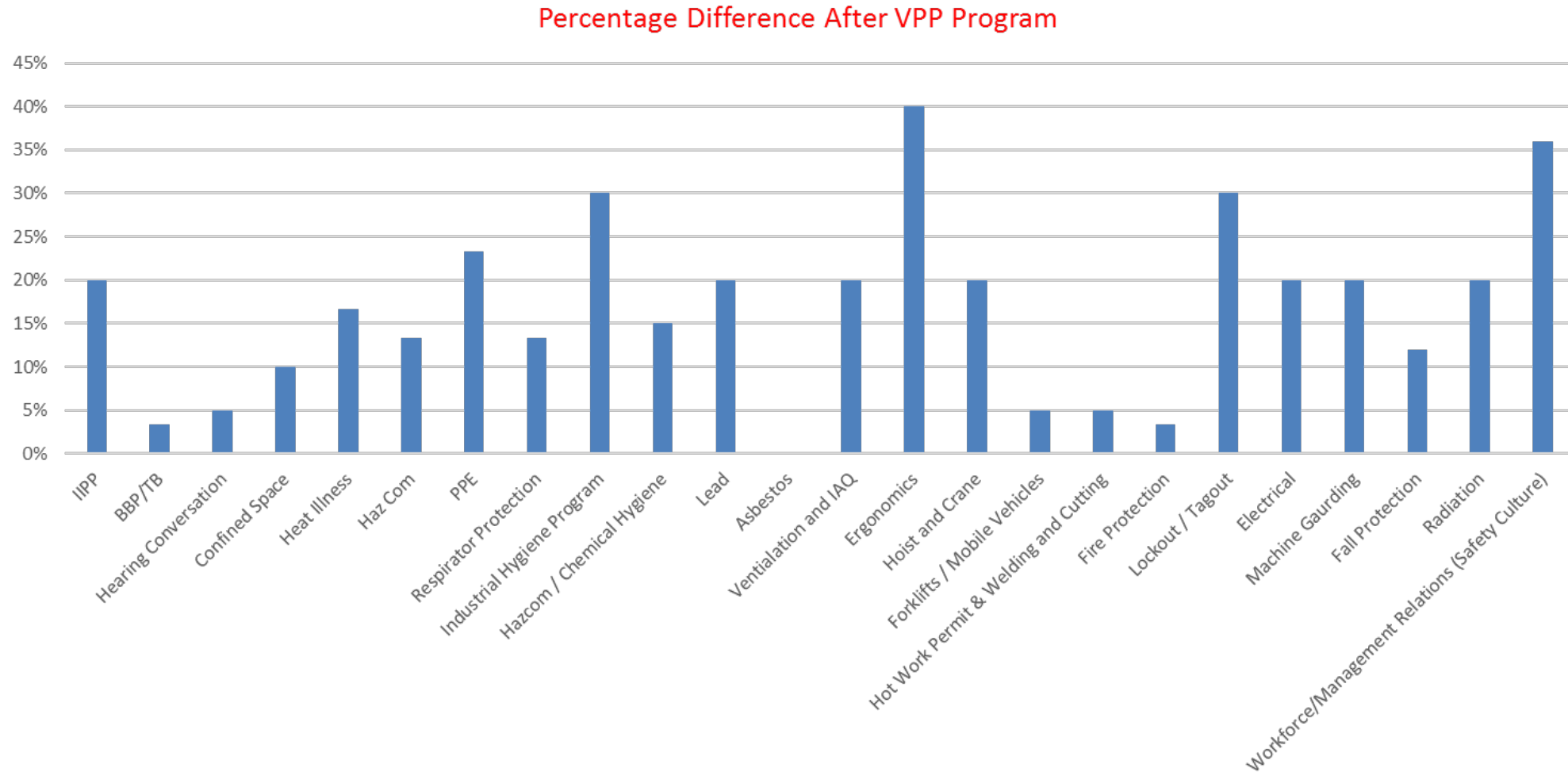


# Cal/VPP Business Values Survey Results

Percentage Difference After VPP Program



# Cal/VPP Business Values Survey Results





## *Cal/VPP Participants Cited these Benefits:*

- Reduction in overall injuries and illnesses
- Improved labor/management relations
- Improved employee morale and motivation to work safely
- Reduced absenteeism
- Higher product quality and work productivity
- Reduced Workers' Compensation and other insurance costs
- Preferred Government contract status
- Improved processes through the continuous improvement
- Community recognition and esteemed public image



# *Cal/VPP Overview*

VPP is an employee owned – management supported, highly engaging safety and health management program that leads to improvements in injury/illness rates, employee engagement and morale, reliability and product quality



# *Cal/VPP Overview*

## Congratulations!



You've sold your company leadership and employees on VPP, and they want to continue or start the Cal/VPP process.....**NOW WHAT?**



# *Steps to Achieving or Maintaining Cal/VPP certification*

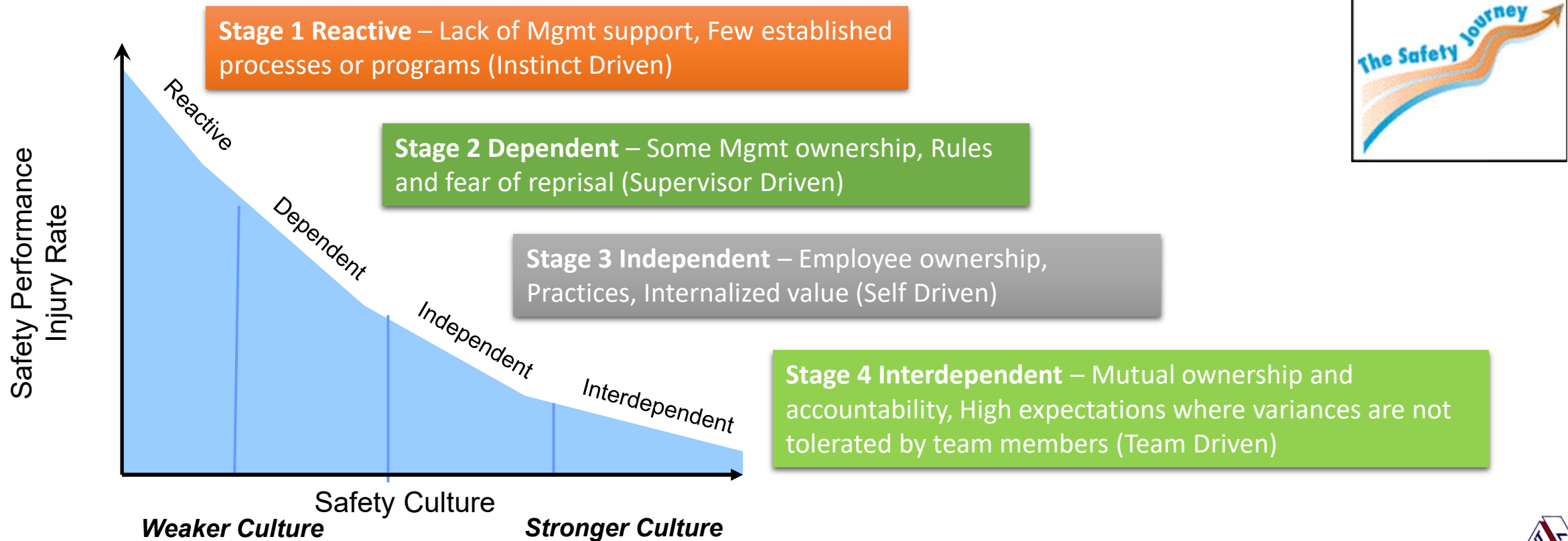
1. Site Preparation
2. Application Submittal- Initial Only
3. Pre-visit – Initial Only
4. Onsite Team Visit
5. Punch list Report
6. Follow up Visit
7. Final Report
8. Celebration

**Sites improve simply just by going through this process regardless of VPP certification!**



# *VPP is not just a Safety & Health Management System (SHMS), it's Culture!*

Using the Bradley curve as an example, culture moves from Reactive to Interdependent as employee ownership and accountability increase and outcomes become more predictable



# *Step 1- Understanding where your site is at:*

## **Are production goals often valued equal to if not greater than safety goals**

- Safety and environmental incidents normalized as a “part of doing business”

## **Safety performance viewed as the responsibility of the Safety Department**

- Little ownership at employee level and supervision more concerned with production

## **Incentives and rewards to work safely being utilized to influence safety performance**

- Can drive reporting underground to maintain record (Gift Cards, Rewards Programs)

## **Emphasis on lagging indicator safety metrics**

- Reactive and not much learning for near misses





# *Step 1- Understanding where your site is at:*

## **Often the “way we have always done it” model**

- Normalization of deviation
- Lack of critical thinking and risk analysis

## **Reactive approach to hazard recognition**

- Typically utilized following significant incidents
- Limited preventive or proactive programs

## **Punitive approach to unsafe behaviors**

- Limited recognition for positive behaviors
- Drove reporting underground

## **Management Systems **developed by management** and **implemented by employees****

- Expectations and accountability without ownership and authority
- Generally reactive culture



## *Step 1-Site Preparation*

- **On-Going Considerations:**

- Get or keep employees, supervisors, managers aligned and supporting each other as soon as possible. Establish employee/management groups.
- Get a mentor and if needed a consultant.
- Perform a gap analysis or self-evaluation that includes as much of the organization as possible.
- Programs initiated as management systems through this process will achieve automatic buy-in by employees and can be readily implemented if included.



## *Step 1- Site Preparation*

- **On-Going Considerations with new processes:**



Utilizing a “check the box” approach to “comply”

- Often quickly implemented and lacked sustainability

Primarily focusing on occupational safety rules

- Lack of understanding for site safe work practices

Lone person “In a Vacuum” policy writing

- Little organizational input leading to policy confusion and adherence

Early supervisor and employee buy-in difficulty

- CAVE People
- Lacked complete buy-in at all levels



# Step 2- The Cal/VPP application

## Things to consider when writing an Application:

- Do not write the Application until after you have closed the gaps from your gap analysis.
- If using a VPP application template (especially Federal) or starting with another site's application, ensure it addresses the Cal/VPP format and is specific to your site. [Application format](#)
- Ensure the Union (if applicable) and management commitment letters are signed and available. The auditor(s) may want to meet with them also.
- Do not exaggerate about your programs or systems.
- Provide examples or information on the effectiveness of your programs (include pictures).
- Consider taking an Application workshop from the VPPPA before writing it.
- Have your mentor or consultant review it before submitting to the Cal/VPP team.
- Existing sites should consider periodically reviewing their application for new employees.



# Step 3- Cal/VPP Pre-Visit

Once the Cal/VPP team has accepted your Cal/VPP application, the site will be scheduled for a pre-visit assessment.

**This is to ensure the site meets Cal/VPP criteria before scheduling a full assessment.**

The pre-visit is normally conducted in one day and consists of 1-2 consultants.

Things to consider for the pre-visit audit:

- Make sure all information provided in your VPP application is readily available to the consultants.
- Ensure site hourly representatives (especially if union) are available to meet with consultants. They may want to meet the signers of these commitment letters.
- Be prepared to give a site overview of the operation.
- Be prepared to provide a tour of the site.
- Have key personnel that were involved establishing VPP at the site available to meet with the consultants.
- Feel free to ask questions of the Cal/VPP consultants during the visit.



**Historically, sites that have successfully gone through the pre-visit evaluation process have achieved Cal/VPP certification.**





## Step 4 Evaluation Process

- **Onsite official letter** sent to the site's contact
- **Onsite team evaluation** conducted by 3 to 8 Cal/VPP consultants & STMs over 3 to 5 days
- **Cal/VPP Report** consists of; *Strengths, Opportunities, S&H Issues, contractors, and PSM*
- ***Special Team Members (STM) are trained volunteers from Cal/VPP Star sites and assist during evaluation process***





# Onsite Evaluation



*First day: Introduction by site management and team leader, quick tour of site. Compliance Support Person may attend.*

*Daily; Each team member based on assignment:*

*Last day; Closing conference*

*- Documents review*

*- Interviews*

*- Walk around (Guide with digital camera & note taking materials)*

*- Participate in debriefing meeting*

# Post Cal/VPP Certification Considerations



## Susceptible to post certification “let down”

- “Winning the Super Bowl” effect
- Lack of sustainability can lead to resumption of many former practices
- Mixing efforts with results

## False sense of “arrival”

- False assurance of safe workplace (Guaranteed incident free belief)
- Resting on the laurels that the site is now SAFE!
- Little incentive to continue to seek ways to improve further

## Keep the VPP Process as a positive change

- Find ways to increase employee empowerment and ownership
- Continue to move culture towards a more proactive approach
- Avoid “**management system**” that was expected to be “**implemented by employees**”



# Post Cal/VPP Certification Considerations



## Need to continue the culture of true employee empowerment, ownership and accountability

- VPP Processes highlight positive change with programs that engaged employees – create ways to continue to foster that across all levels of the organization and develop interdependent culture?
- Models like the DuPont Bradley Curve can provide ways to measure and modify the culture from dependent to interdependent
- Continue or adjust the model to an “***an employee-owned process that was supported by management***” vs “***a management process implemented by employees***”
- Sustainability required an overarching strategy that employees had a strong ownership stake in
- Employees have stay engaged and trust leadership to achieve true employee commitment to the process
- Leadership has to be fully committed and trust employees to drive engagement, empowerment and ownership



# Conclusion

- Be prepared to always sell the Cal/VPP program to leaders and employees.
- Continually assess your sites SHMS and culture as they go hand and hand.
- Keep the VPP application simple and factual. Consider using it as an on-going training tool for employees.
- Don't underestimate the importance of preparations for the Onsite visit (especially the Pre-visit).
- Ensure the site is ready with all documents, subject matter experts available, interviews and site inspections for the onsite evaluation by the Cal-OSHA consultants as explained prior to the evaluation.
- Avoid the “Let Down” factor after the worksite has been certified or recertified. This takes a lot of effort to maintain a Superbowl winning team every year!







# QUESTIONS?

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