

THERE IS NO SUCCESS WITHOUT SAFETY

BY ROD HERRICK

As I reflect on my nearly four decades in the chemical industry, safety is the thread that connects every aspect of my career. From my early days as an engineer at Covestro's New Martinsville, West Virginia site, to my current global role as Senior Vice President and Head of Health, Safety, Environment & Reliability, I have witnessed first-hand the critical importance of prioritizing safety in all aspects of operations. This commitment to safety is not just a responsibility – it is a deeply rooted value that drives me both in my professional and personal life.

SAFETY IS THE FOUNDATION

Safety is the foundation upon which all other aspects of the chemical industry are built. Without a strong commitment to safety, the potential for progress and innovation is overshadowed by the potential of risk. This understanding has guided my approach to leadership, shaping the way I engage with colleagues, stakeholders and industry partners. Collectively, our behaviors and culture build the foundation for safe and reliable operations.

OUR COMMITMENT MATTERS

At its core, safety is about people. It is about ensuring their health and well-being each and every day. It is guided by leaders that recognize that behind every process, every operation, and every decision, our commitment to safety matters. It is lived by individuals that are equally as committed to a simple goal, that each day our people go home safely to their families. It is this commitment that fosters a culture of safety in an organization, and it is a culture of safety that sets us apart. Establishing this culture requires continuous attention, like a "presence" in a control room, actively showing your people that you genuinely care about their safety and well-being. These human elements develop trust, integrity and a sense of value to many of the individuals that you reach out to. In an industry where talent is essential to success, an environment where safety is valued, where every individual feels allowed to speak up and take action, this allows us to attract and retain the best talent. It is this commitment to safety that has been my North Star for my entire career.

A SAFE AND RELIABLE PLANT IS A SUCCESSFUL PLANT

Many of us have heard the phrase, slow is smooth and smooth is fast. I believe a similar concept exists in manufacturing: safe is reliable and reliable is safe. Safety and reliability go hand in hand. In the dynamic environment of the chemical industry, the safety of our operations is mission critical. Every startup and shutdown carries risks, both in terms of safety and operational integrity. By prioritizing safety and reliability, we mitigate these risks, creating a foundation of reliability that ensures smooth operations and minimizes disruptions. We call that Operational Discipline, which means we perform our maintenance activities on-time and in full, we follow our procedures every time, even when no one is watching, and we learn from failure by conducting a root cause investigation for all incidents, from an injury to a failed rotating piece of equipment. A safe plant is a reliable plant, and a reliable plant is a successful plant, ensuring our customers also benefit with a reliable supply.

SAFETY IN ALL ASPECTS

Outside of the plant, safety is a value that I carry with me in all aspects of my life. Whether barbecuing at home or taking a family vacation to Florida, I am constantly mindful of the importance of taking precautions to prevent accidents and minimize risks. This mindset has not only helped me navigate the challenges of the chemical industry, but has also instilled a sense of responsibility towards the well-being of those around me. Ask my neighbors or contractors who have done work at my house!

LOOKING FORWARD

As I look towards the future, I am inspired by the progress that has been made in advancing safety practices within the chemical industry. However, I am also aware of the ongoing challenges that lie ahead. The journey towards continuous improvement is never-ending. We need to remember safety is never a destination. It is this ongoing search for excellence, and that is what drives me forward, knowing



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that each step we take towards enhancing safety brings us closer to a world where accidents are preventable and lives are safeguarded.

Lastly, safety is not just a job—it is a calling. My journey in the chemical industry has reinforced the fundamental importance of prioritizing safety in everything we do. From the unit to the conference room, from local communities to global initiatives, safety must always remain at the forefront of our efforts. It is a commitment that I am proud to uphold, knowing that each day brings new opportunities to make a positive impact and ensure a safer tomorrow for generations to come. Safety First! Always!

