

The safety culture ladder is a way of showing where a BU or site fits into a framework that describes how safety culture develops in an organisation. It ranges from “pathological” (people don’t want to know about safety; messengers are punished; responsibility is shirked, failure is punished or concealed, and new ideas are discouraged) at the bottom of the ladder to “generative” (actively seeking information, messengers are trained and rewarded, responsibility is shared, failures lead to far reaching reforms and improvements, and new ideas are welcomed) at the top of the ladder.

# BP SHIPPING SAFETY CULTURE LADDER

## GENERATIVE

Management knows what is really going on in the business, because the workforce trusts them and is willing to tell them. Bad news is sought out so that the business can learn from its failures and new ideas are welcomed from everyone. People are mindful of what could go wrong, even when they are not having any incidents or near-misses. Safety is seen as good business.

## PROACTIVE

People start to try to predict what the next incident might be, and resources are made available to fix things before incidents occur. Management is open to bad news but they still focus on statistics. The workforce is trusted and involved – they influence the way that work gets done.

## CALCULATIVE

Lots of data is collected and analysed, and lots of statistics are generated from them but it is mostly descriptive. People think that because they have a safety management system in place then that is enough to ensure safety and are surprised when incidents occur. Bad news is tolerated, but still unwelcome.

## REACTIVE

Safety is taken seriously, but only for a short period of time after an incident. There are lots of discussions to re-classify incidents. Managers feel they need to force the workforce to comply with rules and procedures. People say that “it’s different here” when they are told about safety. Bad news is kept hidden.

## PATHOLOGICAL

People don’t really care about safety – if the lawyers/regulator said it was okay then they can go ahead. They believe that there are bound to be accidents as it’s a dangerous business. If someone is stupid enough to have an accident then they get fired. Bad news is ignored and the messenger is punished.

