

# LEADER



## TECHNOLOGY IN SAFETY:

How AI & Mobile Applications  
Will Shape the Future

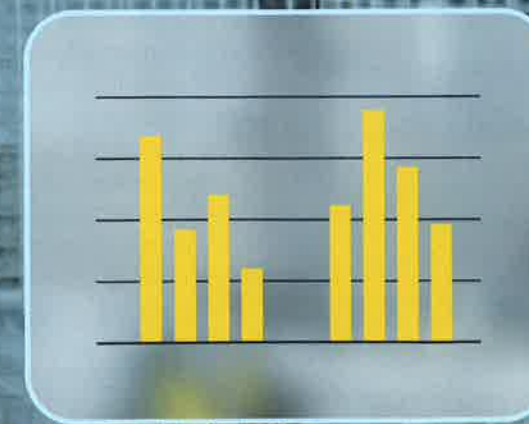
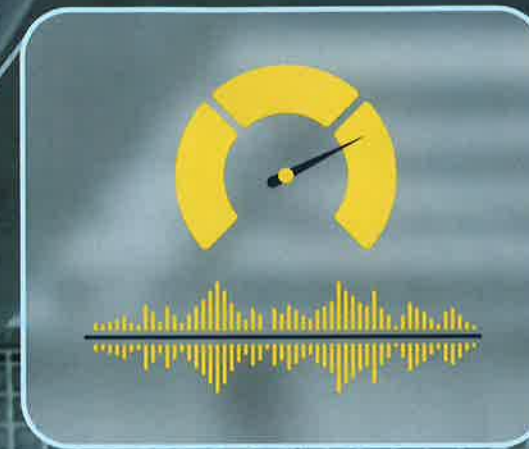
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## THE FUTURE OF EHS EMBRACES

# TECHNOLOGY AND NEW MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

By Tom West, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, COSS



In the ever-evolving landscape of workplace safety, the future of Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS) management is now. It's time to shed outdated practices and embrace innovation to ensure the well-being of workers while enhancing operational efficiency. This article explores the pivotal role of data, technology, and new management approaches in shaping the future of EHS, highlighting the imperative for organizations to adapt or risk falling behind.

### Embracing Innovation in EHS

Gone are the days when safety management operated in isolation from technological advancements. Today, the convergence of cutting-edge technology and progressive management philosophies is driving a paradigm shift in EHS practices. Organizations must recognize the interconnectedness of safety, productivity, and efficiency, moving away from siloed objectives towards holistic approaches that prioritize worker well-being without compromising operational excellence.

### Harnessing the Power of Data

One of the most significant developments in modern EHS is the ability to gather, analyze, and utilize data to optimize operations and ensure worker safety. Consider sensor-gathered data from wearables providing real-time notifications to leaders about where potential hazards or imminent risk lies. Imagine safety intelligence that's personalized, unique to each individual worker's experience

or exposure, alleviating one size fits all actions. Visualize an advanced manufacturing facility where systems and equipment adapt in real-time to the workers interacting with them, fostering a symbiotic relationship between safety and productivity. It is unfortunate but common concerns regarding technology persist, including worker receptiveness, privacy issues, and potential impacts on organizational culture and morale. Today's reality is that innovative technology is readily accessible, can be easy to implement, economical, provides actionable insights previously unavailable, and with the right approach can be very human-centric while protecting worker privacy. Potentially game-changing results are attainable using new tools now. All that's required is leadership and willingness.

### Human and Organizational Performance

Central to the evolution of EHS is a shift towards human-centric approaches that focus on understanding the realities of work as it's performed on the front lines. Safety luminaries such as Todd Conklin, Sydney Dekker, and Bob Edwards emphasize the importance of moving beyond blame and punishment towards cultivating a culture of learning and resilience. The new view of safety, HOP, safety 2.0, or safety differently . . . No matter what name you choose to use, these frameworks all underscore the need for organizations to build capacity for people to fail safely, resilience in our systems and processes, so everyone goes home safely even on days when things go less than perfectly.



**IL Ian Lawrence**  
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The electrical panel on the vacuum sealer is hanging open and there's exposed wires in there. I think maintenance needs to get down here and get that closed up before somebody shocks themselves

Archive Create Hazard

**MĀKUSAFE**

### Towards Strategic Transformation

Ultimately, the goal of modern EHS management is to facilitate organizational transformation and sustainable competitiveness. By embracing technology and adopting progressive management approaches, organizations can move beyond traditional metrics of success towards achieving strategic objectives. From reducing incident rates to enhancing operational efficiency, the integration of technology and new management paradigms holds the key to a safer, more resilient future.

In conclusion, the future of EHS management is characterized by innovation,

collaboration, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Organizations must embrace technology, leverage data-driven insights, and prioritize human well-being to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic world. By doing so, they can not only ensure the safety and well-being of their workforce but also position themselves for long-term success in a rapidly evolving business landscape. As we move forward, let us remember that the journey towards a safer and more sustainable future is ongoing, and it is through collective efforts and a shared commitment to excellence that we can truly realize the full potential of EHS in the 21st century.

### About the Author



**Tom West** is Vice President at MakuSafe, as well as being a SHRM & HRCI Senior Certified Human Resources Professional, and a Certified Occupational Safety Specialist. Over the years, Tom has held executive leadership roles with many companies providing learning & development tools, technology, and services. Tom also served as a College Management Professor for nearly 30 years. Tom is an Avetta Fellow and a professional member of the National Speakers Association, in addition to being an active member in the AIHA, National Safety Council, ASSP, and VPPPA.

MakuSafe is an award-winning connected worker wearable technology and safety data analytics solution deployed across the globe. Our mission is to improve worker health, safety, and productivity by reducing injuries and mitigating workplace hazards and risk exposures. The company was founded based on the simple premise that every individual worker's experience is unique to them and that data gathered about environmental exposures and ergonomic motions from each individual is critical to understanding risk in the workplace. This data includes industrial hygiene and environmental concerns, slips/trips/falls, strain and exertion, ergonomic risk, and location/proximity. This approach provides a more complete picture of workplace risk, the trends and changes in those risks over time, and integrates the worker into connected advanced manufacturing environments to accelerate industry 4.0 initiatives. In addition, the push-to-talk capability on the wearable improves communication by enabling real-time reporting from the front-line worker. Enhancing communication contributes positively to organizational culture, participation, and engagement. More at [www.makusafe.com](http://www.makusafe.com)



**By embracing technology and adopting progressive management approaches, organizations can move beyond traditional metrics of success towards achieving strategic objectives.**

### Data-Driven Decision Making

The advent of wearable technology and advanced analytics empowers organizations to gain real-time awareness of risks and potential hazards. By harnessing leading indicator data with predictive value on factors such as heat index, sound exposure, air quality, and ergonomic risks, organizations can proactively implement controls and improve mitigation efforts. Case studies and white papers are now being published by our clients, not us as a vendor, demonstrating significant reductions in incident frequency and severity, claims and losses avoided, quantifiable impact to productivity, safety KPIs, and significant ROI within a few months, illustrating the

tangible benefits of data-enabled decision making.

### Elevating Frontline Voices

Effective EHS management goes beyond compliance, amplifying the voices of frontline workers and fostering inclusion. Technology can serve as a tool for engagement and empowerment, enabling workers to actively participate in safety initiatives and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement and transformation toward strategic direction. Moreover, initiatives aimed at enhancing ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) measures can bolster organizational performance, attracting and retaining top talent in an increasingly competitive landscape.

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