

Case Study.
Norfolk Southern.
USA.
Railway.

Recommitting to safety excellence

Affectively engaging employees to develop a sustainable corporate safety culture

Safety is first priority at Norfolk Southern

Norfolk Southern Corporation is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. It operates approximately 20,000 route miles in 22 states and the District of Columbia, serves every major container port in the eastern United States, and provides efficient connections to other rail carriers. Norfolk Southern operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East and is a major transporter of coal, automotive, and industrial products.

Norfolk Southern is dedicated to the safety of employees, customers and communities, and works toward continuous improvement of its safety efforts.

Whether developing or improving safety tools and programs for customers and communities, or creating new safety processes for employees, Norfolk Southern strives to make a positive impact on safety for all.

The Norfolk Southern vision: be the safest, most customer-focused, and successful transportation company in the world

Norfolk Southern believes having a vision helps create prosperity. It pushes boundaries, creates new possibilities, and challenges people to roll up their sleeves and do what it takes to achieve its goals.



Norfolk Southern puts safety first always and includes safety in its corporate vision. And while Norfolk Southern has succeeded in being an industry leader in safety - earning numerous safety recognitions - winning awards isn't the goal. Safety is. Providing company employees with an injury-free work environment is what matters most.

Even after years of industry recognition of its low injury rate, the management team decided to engage outside help to achieve even greater safety performance. They turned to dss⁺ for assistance based on its experience in safety management systems, both at dss⁺ and with other clients.



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As a first step, dss+ conducted an assessment of Norfolk Southern's safety culture which revealed an underlying perception of some employees that the organisation's commitment to safety had changed. This perception was partly driven by a shift within the organisation to combine operational efforts and safety efforts, but also a shift in focus from safety incentives to the use of behavioural science techniques for safety and leadership. The assessment also found that some employees felt the current safety message did not address their personal safety concerns, and that they were looking for a safety message they could take pride in.

In addition, dss+ conducted a leadership workshop where it was concluded that a new, compelling message was needed to re-energise the entire company on safety. The challenge would be how to communicate best with a diverse and dispersed employee population to demonstrate a real recommitment to safety at Norfolk Southern.

dss+ then worked with a Norfolk Southern committee to create a more effective communications platform for safety, and as a result, developed a branding campaign with the theme 'I am Coming Home™'. The overall goal was to engage employees and increase the credibility of leadership by reinforcing the company's commitment to the safety of its employees. "I am Coming Home" demonstrates to employees that the company cares about their life outside work, and it acknowledges that for most of us, the most significant reasons we work safely are the ones we go home to every day.

The branding campaign's videos were distributed via QR codes and streaming technology available to the majority of Norfolk Southern employees. To reinforce the branding campaign, the dss+ team coached leadership on how to create and deliver their own internal "I am Coming Home" messages. dss+ experience shows that a great, multi-channel communication strategy and platform can become a vehicle not only for a company's safety and service message, but also for other critical areas of focus for the company – fuel conservation, team work, and operational efficiency.

Using affective psychology to reduce unsafe decisions & behaviours

In order to further increase employee engagement, dss+ developed an 8-hour workshop based on its Risk Factor offering. This personal safety awareness program uses the principles of affective psychology to systematically improve safety, health, and well-being by reducing the occurrence of behaviours that involve elevated and unnecessary levels of risks.

The workshop focused on decisions versus actions and on influencing the decision making process versus managing behaviour. This approach is concerned with motivation and persuasion to improve safety performance and culture with a focus not on WHAT is said, but HOW it is said.

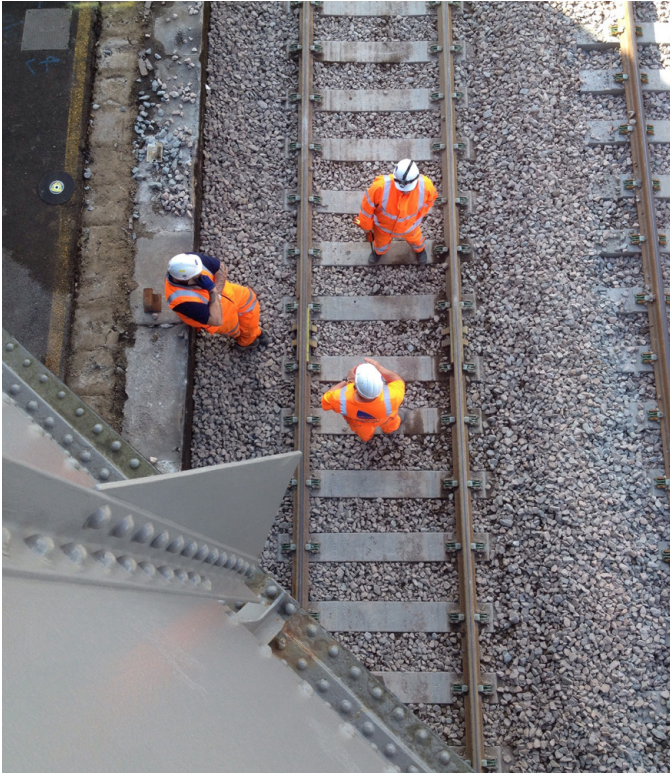
Why Choose The Risk Factor?

Improves personal accountability for safety by helping employees understand how they interpret and respond to the world around them.

- Addresses the human element, helping identify and influence how individuals feel and act when it comes to risk.
- Provides the tools to help your employees make safer decisions and elevate safety performance to the next level.



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Results show safety is not just part of the job, it's a top priority

According to Norfolk Southern management, the biggest impact on the company so far has been the improvement of employee engagement. The implementation of the dss+ Risk Factor™ workshops across the organisation and the rebranding of the safety message to 'I am Coming Home™', has broken new, fertile ground at Norfolk Southern, and has been positively received by the vast majority of employees.

Former Chief Operating Officer Mark Manion noted, "I am Coming Home™ is a message with real meaning to every one of our employees. I want our employees and their families to know that at Norfolk Southern, safety means that you are coming home. Nothing is more important than this."

As Former Vice President Safety and Environmental David Julian puts it, "'I am Coming Home' is more than a catchy slogan; it is the personal reason why all employees at Norfolk Southern commit our energies and attention daily to making ourselves and our workplaces injury-free." Julian said the 'I am Coming Home™' campaign reinforces the principles of behaviour-based safety and leadership familiar to all employees and strengthens the practice of peer-to-peer communication.

Additional results include:

- When completed, 25,000 employees will have been trained in The Risk Factor and 250 employees certified as Risk Factor Workshop facilitators and 30 as Master facilitators.
- Leading metrics have been identified and approved by Norfolk Southern management for implementation in Phase II of the project.
- Employee engagement has improved by using a powerful communication platform.

Phase II is focused on analysing and improving the risk management process. In addition, improvements are being planned for the performance management review process through the use of new dashboards and databases.

We invite you to contact us today to learn how we can collaborate together to help your organisation become safer, more efficient and more environmentally sustainable.

dss+
Protect. Transform. Sustain.

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