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Leading with Safety
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Leading with Safety
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International metals and mining company
International energy and utilities company
Gulf coast chemical company
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In my 30 years of professional practice I have seen many organizations struggle in trying to find the right mix of corporate statements, organizational structure, policies, practices and training techniques for improving workplace safety and health. While these are critical steps in reducing hazards and reducing injuries and illnesses, they do not provide the complete answer to achieving superior performance. The key to moving from the current status quo to a higher performance level just might be within the covers of this text. *Leading with Safety* provides some critical insight into understanding the relationship between the behaviors of leaders and organizational culture and making the move to a truly high-performance organization — an organization that excels in workplace safety and health as well as other business performance indicators such as quality, productivity and profitability.

Having served as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA), I saw four types of organizations: those that exercise blatant disregard or indifference to worker safety and health; those that are just plain ignorant of workplace hazards and relevant laws and regulations; those that are committed to worker safety and health and trying to improve their performance but have fallen short of expectations, and; organizations that have the right stuff and have achieved true superior performance.

The first group, those that blatantly disregard the law, are and should be the focus of OSHA’s enforcement efforts. They represent a small percentage of workplaces in this country in my view and should remain on the Agency’s enforcement priority list until there is a change in organizational culture, behaviors, management systems and performance.