

Klipstone Transport & Unitrans & Blu-Prints



safety as lifestyle

A programme for the creation of a safety culture within the transport industry had a knock-on effect into staff members' personal lives and benefited their families as well.

A programme to address the negative operational and financial impact resulting from road transport accidents, changed Klipstone Transport employee behaviour to significantly improve safety and operational performance, whilst meeting the strict standards demanded by the company and its clients' approach to safety and health issues.

The initiation of a lifestyle-changing programme came about during a contract renewal negotiation, when customer Holcim (Afrisam) insisted that Klipstone Transport had to demonstrate a number of service attributes to secure the renewal. This led to the creation and implementation of a powerful, innovative and sustainable solution to formalise the company's existing and future safety initiatives.

By identifying the importance of human intervention within the supply chain, Unitrans in partnership with subsidiary Klipstone Transport and Blu-Prints introduced a programme – to become known as *Safety: My Choice* – to address the key area of negative operational and financial impact resulting from road transport accidents.

The programme is based on the premise that the choice to make safety a lifestyle decision has to start with each individual. In a 24-hour day, organisational systems can only cover a fraction of the time that an individual is compelled to adhere to safety policy and procedure; if the individual does not continue to practise safety procedures outside of working hours, it

becomes difficult to 'switch on' again when clocking in for work the next day.

A unique methodology was implemented to involve all staff at all levels in a sustainable safety programme that was to become a lifestyle commitment. The results and behaviour from this programme significantly improved the levels of safety and operational performance for Klipstone Transport, as well as meeting the strict standards demanded by the client in the company's approach to safety and health issues.

The success of the programme resulted in an LAA 2009 Gold Award for excellence in logistics for the creation of a safety culture within the transport industry.

The problem

In the contract renewal process of 2006/7, client Afrisam insisted that Klipstone had to prove it was the best in the game in terms of value; that it supported superior BEE; could show its customer service was outstanding; and also demonstrate that safety was paramount to Klipstone business practices.

The solution

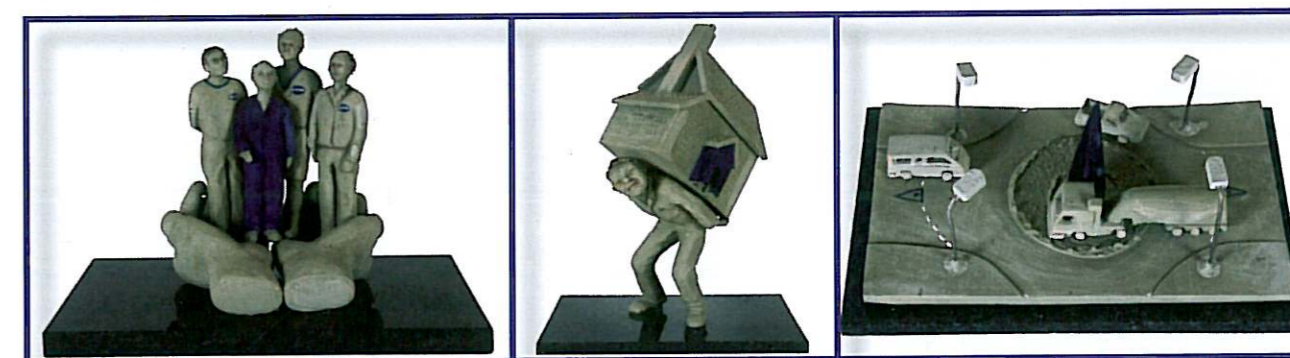
It was clear to Blu-Prints that the leadership teams of Unitrans and Klipstone were intent on delivering on the challenges set out by Afrisam and that Klipstone was seeking a partner who would be able to assist with the creation and implementation of a powerful, innovative

and sustainable solution to galvanise the company's existing and future safety initiatives.

This objective required a procedural, as well as a behavioural modification process. Blu-Prints specialises in aligning behaviour and culture with strategic intent. The focus of the Blu-Prints methodology was to:

- Define, using a mathematical approach, safety factors, behaviours, practices and principles as staff saw them
- Express these safety factors, behaviours, practices and principles, in a visual art form
- Give Klipstone a tool to measure these factors, behaviours, practices and principles statistically
- Instill an end-goal of enabling everyone to live, enact and embed the choices in the culture of the organisation.

The process was inclusive and involved every member of the organisation to contribute towards populating the mathematical formula, expressed as an art gallery in the form of sculptured icons, that defined the factors, behaviours, practices and principles that had to be maximised (things we want to do), as well as the factors, behaviours, practices and principles that had to be eradicated (things we don't want to do) to enable the staff to choose safety as a lifestyle choice rather than merely comply with predetermined, laid-down procedures – and to live by those choices beyond working hours. The use of art embeds the safety philosophy, consciously and subconsciously through its instantly recognisable visual form – on a permanent basis.



Whilst the individual's decision to choose safety is paramount in the creation of sustainable safety systems, the role of the organisation is equally important. Companies need to ensure that the drive for safety goes beyond fear of failure or statistical success, and is moved towards a genuine concern for people.

Blu-Prints engaged the hearts and minds of the entire organisation to define the personal and individual choices that had to be taken into consideration to make safety a lifestyle choice. The process was focused on:

- Individual choice and self actualisation

- Understanding the imperatives of business efficiency and productivity
- Creating a sense of ownership and accountability
- Making safety real and relevant
- Enabling employees to get inside the organisational objectives of safety
- Enabling them to engage with the strategic intent of safety
- Converting safety strategy into meaningful day-to-day tactics
- Enabling every employee to do their bit to achieve the safety objectives on a daily basis
- Moving safety from being a discretionary effort to it becoming an emotional objective with meaningful tangible benefit to every individual
- To spreading the lifestyle even further to the home environment, to family members and even friends.

What's in it for the individual?

The *Safety: My Choice* programme was designed to give every member of the organisation the opportunity, and ultimately the choice, to contribute and be part of a collective creation. The programme engaged with every member of the organisation and gave them a voice,

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gave them the opportunity to express their thoughts, ideas, fears, and aspirations and be part of building a culture that was both safe and productive.

The end objective of the *Safety: My Choice* programme was to empower the employees to see safety as their responsibility, where each and every employee is their own safety officer and where people choose safety as a lifestyle decision. Whilst noble in its corporate aspirations, the *Safety: My Choice* programme has a knock-on effect into each employee's life outside of the working environment. The individual choice to

elect to be safe will have a positive impact on every other person with whom they come into contact.

Behaviour improvement

Too often managers and supervisors alike manage by reacting to emerging situations and issues. Optimising human performance requires a proactive system that generates high levels of employee engagement and emotional buy in.

Using peer-to-peer involvement and positive reinforcement aimed at increasing the number of safe behaviours, the adoption of safe behaviours can be influenced and productivity and work quality can be improved.

The *Safety: My Choice* programme is a systematic approach focused on changing and then aligning acceptable behaviour. The safety Blu-Print focused on identifying the causes of behaviour, and uses behavioural principles to optimise performance. The process is based on a key behavioural science concept: behaviour is a function of its consequences and the work environment. Changing consequences is necessary to increase the probability of desired behaviour.

Klipstone initiatives

In an endeavour to ensure that all employees strive to meet the commitments made in the *Safety: My Choice* formula, a number of actions were implemented:

- The Klipstone leadership team members have each created personal commitments to live the *Safety: My Choice* formula and these commitments have been circulated and are freely available to all staff
- The employees have nominated and voted for *Safety: My Choice* commitments they have made, and guide management and employees on progress that needs to be actioned to achieve the desired results. They do this by discussing progress achieved and indicating to employees and management the focus areas on a periodical basis. They also have a mandate to guide any person on company premises whose conduct is not in line with the commitments outlined in their formula for success
- Each *Safety: My Choice* champion has been trained and accredited

- A passport, that serves as a *Safety: My Choice* 'dictionary' has been issued to all employees. This enables the employees to be reminded of the commitment that each icon represents
- The *Safety: My Choice* dictionary is further used by the employees and *Safety: My Choice* champions to guide fellow employees in case any of the commitments are misunderstood or are being undermined

An alignment workshop was held with representatives of all employees, which produced an alignment document that spelt out the agreements that govern all employees in this programme.

This set of agreements outlines the permissions and obligations granted to all employees. The objective here is to ensure that all possibilities of conflict among employees and between first-line management and employees are eliminated

Blu-Prints carries out independent progress assessments on a quarterly basis.

Tangible results

Whilst the Unitrans and Klipstone leadership teams understand that *Safety: My Choice* is a long-term safety and employee engagement strategy, rather than a project or work initiative, a number of benefits of the approach have emerged:

- There has been a 48 percent year-on-year reduction in the number of accidents
- There has been a 50 percent year-on-year reduction in the total cost of accidents
- Year-on-year, Klipstone has managed to improve a key group success indicator, being accident costs as a percent of turnover, by 41 percent
- On the same key indicator, Klipstone is 59 percent better than the divisional safety plan.

Not only has there been a marked improvement in safety statistics, there has been a significant improvement in Klipstone's ability to deliver against the service level agreement that it has entered into with Afrisam. Klipstone continues to exceed the client's expected performance level of 95 percent every month. •

