

CHAPTER 2 (17:22)

Jeff: When you question your definition of safety and you consider the conceptual influences over the last ten years, you know, you take all these inputs in and people think about that. I think what leads us into the second chapter is that if you if you change that perspective, you change what you need to know. And I really see your second chapter as focusing on looking at operations in a new light because we traditionally just audit or inspect. And those too are findings, are also outcomes in in that regard. So how do we look at process, capacity and process in a different way? What are those learnings?

Sid: Jeff, the I think the question we should ask is when is the last time that you or your organization learned anything new through an audit? Have you ever been surprised by a single audit finding? Right? I mean literally back to Eric, 'what you look for is what you find' [WYLFIFYE](#). I mean, if anything applies to audit, that's it. Right. In fact, I know a ship's captain who went through the practice of I mean, he knew exactly what to do to pass the audit. Everybody knows what to do. And so he made sure that at least one of the fire extinguishers on board of his boat, was upside down and hung upside down on the bracket so that the auditor had something to find. Right. So and which, you know, functions as a beautiful decoy for the rest of the nonsense. But for which they don't have the [fingerspitzengefühl](#). And so in the book you haven't read the compliance capitalism book. I actually have a chapter that I called 'Auditism'. I thought that was very clever because auditors and the whole process of auditing inhabits a world that is consistent only with itself. Right. We have safety management systems that get designed and by consultants pushed into an embodiment that makes it literally auditable. Right.

Jeff: An audit passing mechanism

Sid: An audit passing mechanism. And so if you make something auditable, where's the surprise? What do you learn? It is a bunch of you know, Lenin would be proud, you know? Oh, this is a wonderful way to keep people at work. "I should have known this in 1917, you know?" And so that's not funny?

Jeff: you're doing great. You're doing great.

Sid: As if I need your acknowledgment. I'm having fun. The rest is irrelevant. Yeah.

Jeff: So, learning differently, redefining safety and learning differently about operations

Sid: So learning differently means a mindset of openness and willingness to be surprised. Right. The as Eric again, would say, given that much more goes well and goes wrong. And remember we had this discussion just before the pandemic. The word 'right' is not the right word to use because it harks back to a Tayloristic universe in which there is one 'right' method for every job, which is utter nonsense. Right?

Jeff: Right! Cheers!

Sid: Correct? So what goes well, because there is many ways in. which it goes well, hence the Gaussian, that sort of a normal curve. And you can get work done. You get work done. A couple of standard deviations away from that, from the sort of the normative, from the norm. Right. From the from the mean, and still succeed. So what that what that says is, if you want to discover about work, you've got to

study success. What we found in the lab, actually, and I think extended this idea is that if you want to predict fatalities, then don't look in your few failures, they're not going to be predictive. The way in which you kill people in an already pretty safe, complex system, it's not the way you hurt them. These things diverge. Right. And Amalberti showed this, that in a very unsafe activity, the way you hurt people is the way you kill them. Sure. Himalayan mountaineering, you know, hurting, killing. Same thing. In fact, if you hurt yourself, you probably die anyway. And so they overlapped quite nicely. In most of the industries you guys work with, those paths have diverged, right? And so this common cause hypothesis, which was peddled as late as Swiss cheese, Swiss cheese peddles the common cause hypothesis. Right. It's only how far it travels. What is it, anyway, Uncle Jim (James Reason)? You know, what is it? This arrow, this accident trajectory. What is it? I mean the ontology of what is it? Nobody has ever understood this, but so the. Do we need to edit this out?

Jeff: Oh, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. We're going to have to hire an editor now. It's all good. Keep going.

Sid: They can't fire me.

Jeff: Well, we're both unfirable. Cheers!

Sid: Sure, I have tenure, so. I was still. I wasn't done.

Jeff: Okay. Okay. Keep going. There's more chapters. But keep going.

Sid: Right, Yeah, I forget what they are.

Jeff: I know you do. They're coming

Sid: As I'm writing the next book, so I have no idea, where was I? Ah the common cause hypothesis. I got to tell you something. So. So why do. Where do you. Where do you find predictive capacity for fatalities? In success that you don't understand! Right. Right. And this goes back to Lund discussions, in fact, with JB (Johan Bergstrom) in his thesis said that what we did was found out that if you if you really want to see the biggest risk of drifting in failure, it is success.

Jeff: in the pursuit of success.

Sid: But the problem is not the success. But the problem is success that you don't understand. If you don't understand, how do we get here? How do we actually manage to get the job done on time, on budget get the crane up, not break anything, not kill anyone with the goal conflicts and all of the resource constraints and nonsense and production pressures and time constraints that we had, we succeeded! Well, what did you do to succeed? And the more important question is, what did you not do succeed? And that's where the kernels sit that's where it resides. That's where you got to look.

You've got to study success to know how you're going to kill people.