

***Achieving a Learning Culture***  
***“Don’t get mad – get curious”***

**DOE Accelerator  
Safety Workshop**

**Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
Spallation Neutron Source  
August 8, 2006**

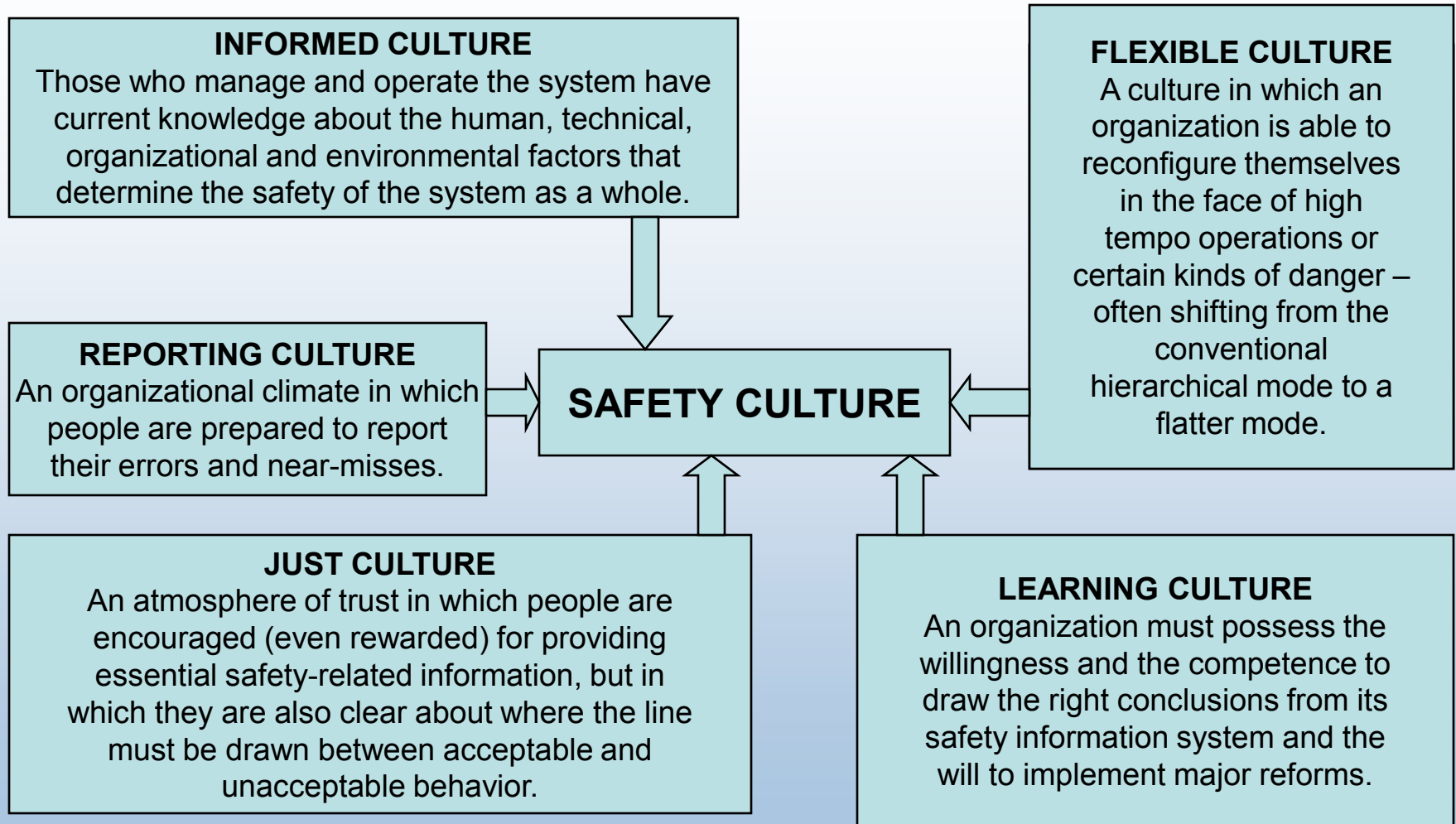
**James Tarpinian, CHP  
Director of Environment, Safety, Health and Quality  
Brookhaven National Laboratory**

# *Principles of Human Performance*

---

1. People are fallible, and even the best make mistakes
2. Error-likely situations are predictable, manageable and preventable
3. Individual behavior is influenced by organizational processes and values
4. People achieve high levels of performance based largely on the encouragement and reinforcement received from leaders, peers and subordinates
5. Events can be avoided by understanding the reasons mistakes occur and applying the lessons learned from past events

# Safety Culture Components\*



\*Based on Reason (1997) The Components of Safety Culture: Definitions of Informed, Reporting, Just, Flexible and Learning Cultures

# *Just Culture*

---

## Obstacles to a “Just Culture”

- “Just” means different things to different people
- Implies that we believe the workplace can be made to be consistently fair (i.e. a noble goal but unrealistic)
- Many managers believe they already have it

# *Learning Culture*

---

## Main objective: “*Learning Culture*”

- Easier to integrate the message into Lab culture than “Just Culture”
- Views accidents and errors as providing opportunities to learn rather than providing opportunities to punish
- Appeals to creativity and problem solving skills

First steps must be to create a “**reporting culture**” of openness and healthy self criticism

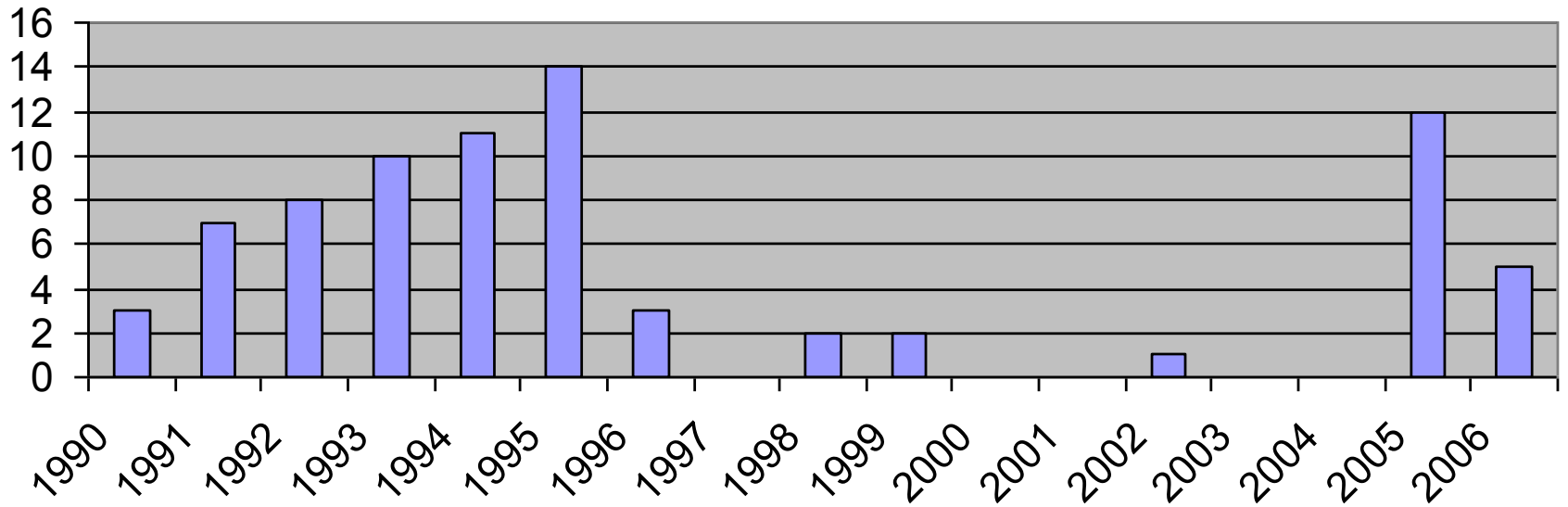
# Reporting Culture

---

## Obstacles to a “Reporting Culture”

- Our culture is not naturally self critical
- Reporting of events is not the default
- People don't want the attention
- Fear of being shut down
- Fear of losing control
- Worry about being “second guessed”
- We punish people for doing the right things
- We engage in the “drama triangle” stifling problem solving, proactiveness, and creativity

## NREL ORPS REPORTS



# ***Safety Culture***

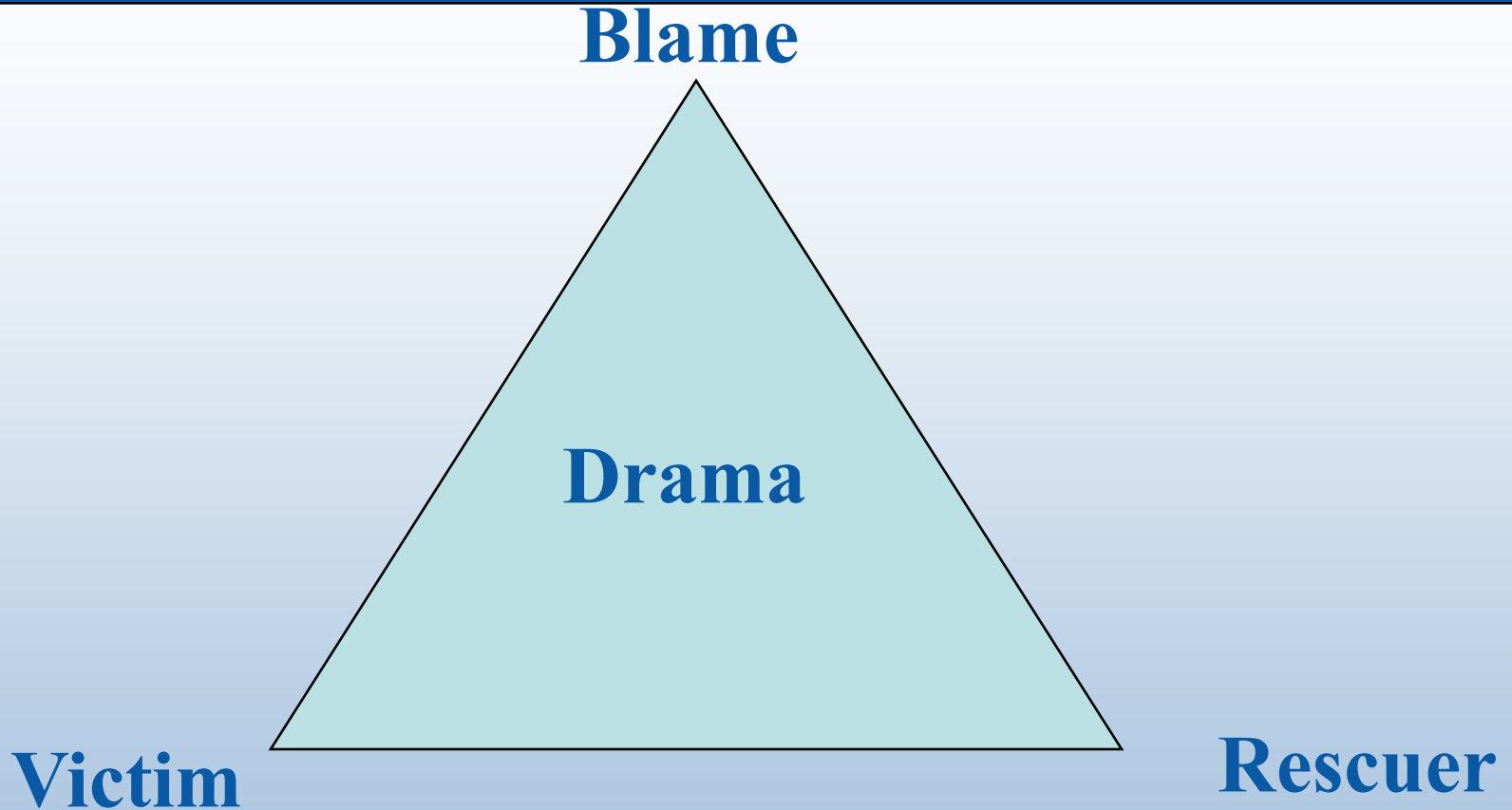
---

A fundamental key to excellence in safety performance is....

...everyone takes their ***full share*** of responsibility – no more and no less.

# Drama Triangle\*

---



# Drama Triangle

Blame

Victim      Rescuer

Some examples:

- *“That guy should have known better”*
- *“Training/procedure inadequate”*
- *“When (fill in) stepped in, we lost control of the situation”*
- *“DOE will conduct a Type B investigation”*

## *Behavior change for all of us*

---

When something goes wrong (or when you discover a mistake)

- Stay out of the Drama Triangle
- Own your part of the problem
- Don't get mad – get curious

# *Achieving a Reporting Culture*

---

- Leadership must state and reinforce their expectations for reporting events and conditions
- Create an atmosphere that values reporting
- Create a new approach for identifying and classifying “events”
- Create and publish leading metrics for identifying and reporting events

# Key Messages

---

- Safety is a shared responsibility and everyone must do his or her part
- We cannot eliminate all mistakes - our goal is to reduce their frequency and severity
- In order to learn from our errors we must encourage open reporting
- Work to establish trust
  - Don't punish people for making honest mistakes
  - Do what you say, say what you mean

# Key References

---

*“Tools for Conscious Leadership & Responsibility,”* Dan Miller & Associates, 1999, <http://www.dan-miller.com>

*“Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents,”* James Reason, 1997

*“Roadmap to a Just Culture: Enhancing the Safety Environment,”* Global Aviation Information Network, 1994