# 8. [SAFETY PERFORMANCE THROUGH OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE (RS317-1)](https://www.construction-institute.org/safety-performance-through-operational-excellence-phase-i)

**Report Summary:** The CII deﬁnes the term ‘operational excellence’ for construction project safety as “doing the right thing, the right way, every time – even when no one is watching.” Using that guiding philosophy, this study developed a rigorous model for operational excellence in construction project safety. The Operational Excellence model breaks into several layers of detail. The thirteen aggregate-level drivers of safety represent broad categories, several based on the CII’s Zero Accident Techniques that outline policies to improve construction safety. The accompanying assessment tool allows CII members to evaluate safety at the project’s corporate level, project level, and site level. The thirteen categories of drivers of safety are:

1. Owner’s role
2. Worksite organization
3. Just and fair practices and procedures
4. Strategic safety communication
5. Shared values, beliefs, and assumptions
6. Transformational leadership
7. Personnel performance
8. Learning organization
9. Risk awareness, management, and tolerance
10. Training and competence
11. Subcontractor management

**Key Takeaways:**

## (1) Emphasize owner’s role in safety performance.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Set clear safety expectations for all project stakeholders.
* Establish a safety culture by prioritizing safety in all project aspects.
* Monitor and enforce safety objectives throughout the project lifecycle.
* Lead by example to emphasize the importance of safety.
* Provide resources and support to ensure that safety measures are implemented effectively.

## (2) Organize a safe worksite.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Establish clear guidelines for worksite organization.
* Allocate resources for implementing the 5S (Toyota production system) methodology.
* Encourage collaboration with contractors to maintain organization standards.
* Conduct regular inspections to ensure compliance with organization protocols.
* Foster a culture of safety, cleanliness, and organization among all stakeholders.

## (3) Establish just and fair practices and procedures with regard to safety protocol adherence.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Establish a just culture that prioritizes accountability and learning from failures.
* Implement procedures to differentiate between unintentional safety errors and intentional violations.
* Encourage reporting of incidents by fostering a trusting environment without fear of reprisal.
* Use incidents as learning opportunities to improve safety systems and prevent future failures.

## (4) Implement strategic safety communication.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Develop a comprehensive safety communication strategy.
* Identify key safety messages to be communicated.
* Utilize multiple channels for consistent safety communication.
* Ensure clear, concise, and regular safety communication to all stakeholders.
* Solicit feedback and encourage open dialogue regarding safety concerns and improvements.

## (5) Foster shared values, beliefs, and assumptions regarding safety issues.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Foster a culture that values safety as a core belief.
* Communicate and reinforce shared values regarding safety issues through all levels of the organization.
* Encourage open dialogue to address differences in values and assumptions regarding safety issues.
* Lead by example to demonstrate commitment to shared values with regard to safety issues.
* Align organizational policies and procedures with shared safety-related beliefs for consistency.

## (6) Reinforce transformational leadership.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Foster a culture of transformational leadership by leading by example.
* Reinvent the organization's culture to prioritize safety and operational excellence.
* Communicate clear values and desired safety-related behaviors to all levels of the organization.
* Encourage innovation and continuous improvement in safety practices.
* Provide support and resources for leadership development safety programs.

## (7) Assess human performance.

## (Project Phase: Construction through Operate Facility)

* Establish a systematic approach to influence human behavior effectively with regard to safety performance.
* Provide training programs to enhance human performance of safety-critical tasks.
* Implement processes for safety performance analysis, cause analysis, and intervention selection.
* Ensure that equipment and environments are designed to accommodate human abilities and limitations.
* Foster a culture that values continuous improvement in safety performance.

## (8) Establish a learning organization.

## (Project Phase: Construction through Operate Facility)

* Foster a culture that encourages continuous learning and adaptation with regard to safety protocols.
* Implement formal processes for sharing safety-related lessons learned and best practices.
* Encourage open communication channels for workers to share insights and provide feedback regarding safety protocols.
* Provide resources and support for safety training and development initiatives.
* Embrace a mindset of experimentation and innovation to drive safety-related improvements.

## (9) Enhance risk awareness, management, and tolerance to improve safety.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Develop a comprehensive risk management plan for the construction project.
* Identify and analyze potential risks associated with the project.
* Implement measures to mitigate identified risks.
* Establish clear protocols for managing risks as they arise during project execution.
* Ensure that all stakeholders understand and adhere to risk management protocols.

## (10) Promote safety training and competence.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Establish comprehensive safety training programs for all employees.
* Identify necessary safety competencies for each role.
* Regularly assess employee competence and provide additional safety training as needed.
* Ensure that all new hires receive safety training before starting work.
* Promote a culture of continuous learning and skill development with regard to safety protocols.

## (11) Deploy subcontractor management to ensure workplace safety.

## (Project Phase: Detailed Scope through Operate Facility)

* Establish clear safety requirements and expectations for subcontractors.
* Vet subcontractors based on their safety records and capabilities.
* Provide necessary resources and support to ensure that subcontractors adhere to safety protocols.
* Regularly monitor subcontractor performance and provide feedback on safety practices.
* Encourage open communication and collaboration between subcontractors and project teams.

## (12) Encourage employee engagement in safety programs.

## (Project Phase: Construction through Operate Facility)

* Establish a workplace culture that values and encourages employee contributions to workplace safety.
* Implement mechanisms for employees to provide feedback and suggestions with regard to workplace safety.
* Recognize and reward employee engagement and safety initiatives.
* Provide opportunities for safety skill development and career advancement.
* Foster open communication channels between management and employees to enhance workplace safety.

## (13) Promote a safety recognition and reward system.

## (Project Phase: Construction through Operate Facility)

* Establish a comprehensive recognition and reward program for safety achievements.
* Define specific behaviors and performance metrics to be rewarded.
* Ensure that rewards are given promptly and fairly to encourage desired safety behaviors.
* Regularly review and update the recognition and reward program based on feedback and performance data.