Evolving A Framework For Better Business

The Glass and Glazing Federation has launched a member-wide consultation on 'Evolve – a framework for better business' which sets out a set of values and principles businesses can use to improveimprove. The long term aim is to build a modern industry of socially responsible, sustainable and people-centred companies using modern, organisational culture and risk and resilience solutions.

The architect of the 'Evolve – a framework for better business' is James MacPherson, GGF Health, Safety & Environment Manager (HSE). So The Installer asked him more about this huge undertaking.

Getting buy-in

The Installer: It looks as if Evolve is seeking to build a bridge between HS&E and the business per se – can that be achieved? How do you entice all the different managers out of their silos and persuade the board to buy in?

JM: Firstly it's important to make it clear that Evolve is an Operational Risk management framework therefore health and safety is just one part. I don't think health and safety will pull all managers out of their silos when it is not relevant to them all of the time (an accounts department 's focus is on getting money in and bills paid).

However, operational risks will be part of everything we do – be that corporate social responsibility, quality, safety, health, etc. The decisions we make and behaviours we see are central to how we manage risks. Do you want to have an account with a company that is known to default on its bills?; do you want a supplier with a bad health and safety reputation which means

goods that you rely on might be held up as the firm is under HSE investigation. Both of these are operational risks.

Ultimately boards will buy into Evolve when they are ready.

The world's highest risk industries and most forward thinking brands are already thinking ahead and becoming socially responsible, sustainable and people-centred companies. So it's just a matter of time until boards in this sector buy into Evolve.

The Installer: Is Evolve people-centred or is it business centred?
JM: You can't have a business without people so to be business-centred you need to be people-centred and vice versa. People make the decisions at both the sharp and the blunt end of the business. However, I will add that we have three values within Evolve for a reason: Culture, Resilience and Human Performance. Culture is about putting people, corporate social responsibility and sustainability in our priorities and developing more caring leaders and building psychological safety.

Resilience is about improving our risk management and becoming resilient to changes, accidents catastrophes etc.

Human Performance is about being people-centred and error-tolerant (tolerant of errors so you learn by mistakes; and having a

tolerance so that if you do make a mistake if can be rectified as opposed to it being a disaster). If you run a safe company, providing no one makes a mistake, you can be safe through luck not necessarily by design. It is better to be safe by design.

So Is Evolve people or business-centred? It's both because both need to exist and to work in tandem to perform and succeed.

The Installer: Will we discover that pandemic-catch-up will compromise the desire to report near misses which is fundamental to learning from mistakes?
JM: We can't deny that Covid has stretched our businesses and our metal resilience. There is a sense that pandemic-fatigue will have set in now. Will Covid impact our desire to report near misses? Maybe. Yet I think that we were not very good at it before anyway. People reporting stuff is a behaviour and behaviours have loads of different reasons to why they are what they are. Most of the time the issue with near miss reporting is our compliance over ipact approach. We are more focused on the over formalised and complicated methods of reporting near misses as opposed to what we think we are trying to achieve – which is finding signs of issues, learn from them and react.

Evolve

We as organisations create the systems that define the behaviours.

The Installer: Psychological Safety – how do we change the perception of health and safety so that it includes workplace wellbeing and mental health; and accept health and safety as a driver for a 'safe environment' where people are encouraged to challenge the status quo?

JM: Mental Health and Psychological safety are two different things, (one of the reasons we chose not to use the term in our Evolve principles). Psychological Safety is about people feeling safe to speak up. It's about leaders listening and reacting in a productive way. It's about teams collaboratively challenging each other to achieve the same goal even though that conversation may be hard to have. The majority of Psychological Safety is about leadership and their relationship with the workforce.

Occupational Wellbeing and Metal Health are health risks and quite complex ones at that. Evolve will help members see and understand mental health as a risk to the business and their people. If they embrace Evolve and change the way they view the worker and the organisation e.g. start seeing them as all important but fallible cogs in a machine, they will start to understand the risk of mental health better and address it.

A lot of practices that we will develop as Evolve matures, especially Human Performance, will benefit mental health improvements, however, ultimately organisations need to ask themselves what are they trying to achieve? Compliance? Or impact? The GGF will continue to develop guidance and provide solutions to help members achieve compliance and Evolve is about helping them have impact.

To your other part of the question, how do you change the perception of health and safety?, well as you know I have been trying to do this for years on my podcast and YouTube channel Rebranding Safety. I have come to believe a large part of it is understanding that health and safety is but one part of our organisational risks and that the organisation is an interconnected system hence Evolve – Operational Risk framework.

The Installer: It is almost impossible to reduce the death rate as it is already so low (ergo a 1% reduction would be one-and-a-half less dead people). Meanwhile we have thousands if not hundreds-of-thousands (of the 693,000 injuries last year) life changing accidents – falls from height, transport injuries, etc. Is there an argument that we have to stop talking death and start talking being wheelchair bound as the risk to an able bodied people, from an accident at work?

JM: Ultimately it's not one or the other for me, both are unacceptable. Under Evolve, we would recommend organisations separate out their significant and fatal risks to always spend specific time and resources to focus on those life-changing risks and build that tolerance I mentioned above to make mistakes and those mistakes not be disasters. It should not be about asking what's the likelihood? or what's compliant? It should be about how can we fail (make mistakes) but still be in the safe zone? If you fail because you didn't consider the health and safety risk or you didn't allow a little leeway to make a 'harmless mistake', then you risk that someone's life will be ended or changed forever.

The Installer: So is it time to talk risk (risk management, risk & consequence and risk and reward) rather than safety?

JM: Well seeing as Evolve is an operational risk framework, I think it's clear I would say yes. Health and safety is an aspect of risk. We believe that organisations need to take a holistic approach to operational risk management and start to understand how they are all interconnected.