

# “The Elusive Nature of Competency”

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# Topics

- ▶ Competency and why is it elusive?
- ▶ Competency challenges
- ▶ Competency requirements
- ▶ Fostering competency
- ▶ Conclusions

# Competency: what is it?

- ▶ Competency is having proficiency in a given area. It is synonymous with skill, ability, and capability.
- ▶ Process safety competency is the combination of knowledge, skill, expertise, and training needed to deem someone as well-qualified and capable in process safety.
  - ▶ An incompetent person may address symptoms
  - ▶ A competent person determines causal factors & ensures effective solutions are enacted

# The 2 Elements of Competency

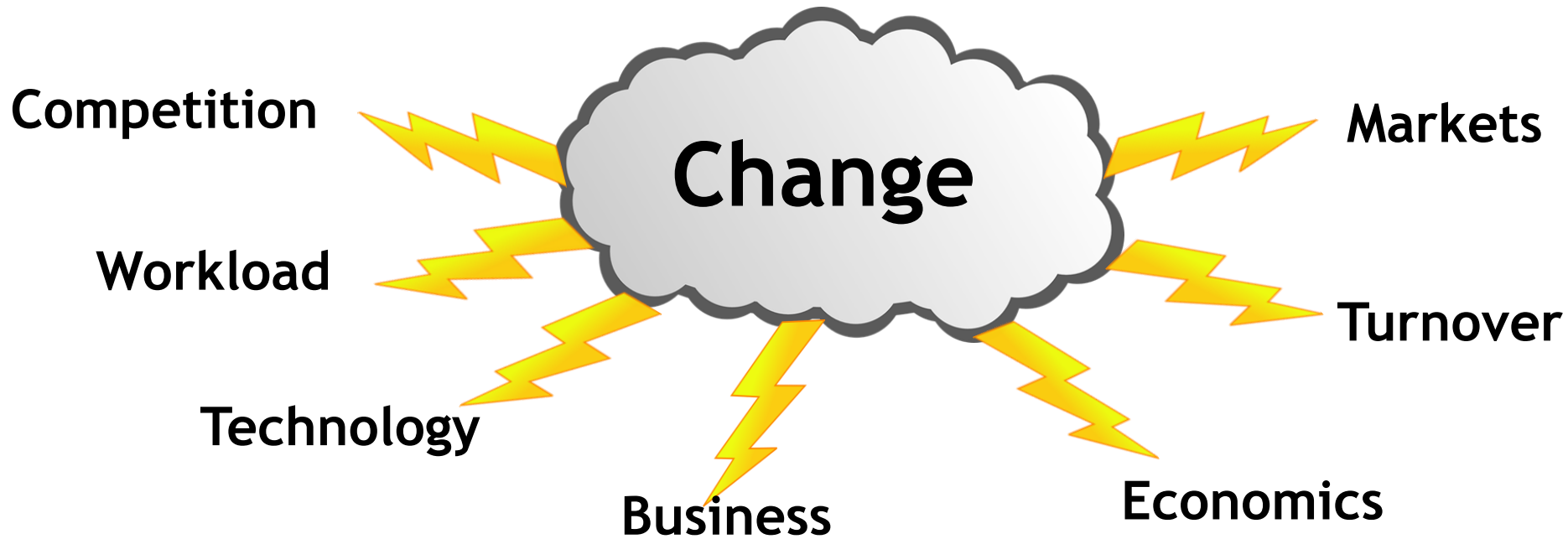
- ▶ Technical Competency -The knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage risk for an organization.
- ▶ Emotional Intelligence (EI) - The ability to perceive, interpret, demonstrate, control, evaluate, and use emotions to communicate with and relate to others effectively and constructively.

# The 4 components of EI:

- ▶ Perceiving emotions,
- ▶ Reasoning with emotions,
- ▶ Understanding emotions,
  - ▶ Managing emotions

Effective work groups need EI

# Competency: why is it elusive?



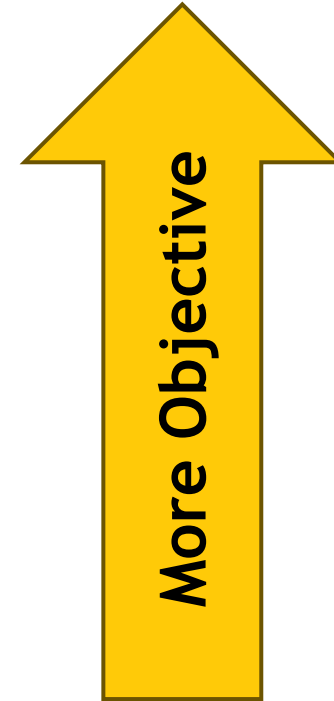
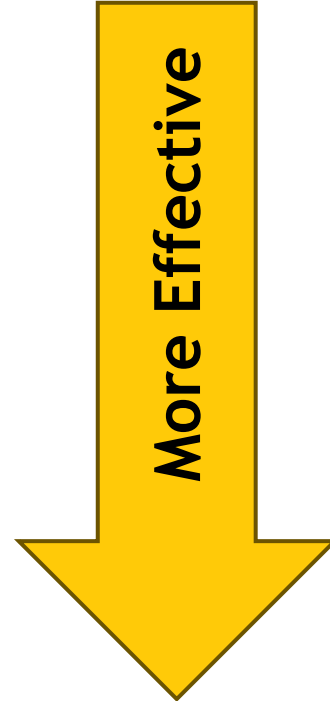
**Not all change is bad!**  
**We need to change to learn and apply new skills!**

# Other Competency Challenges

- ▶ Developing competency is a life-long journey
- ▶ Artificial Intelligence can provide a plethora of information and create the illusion of competence.
- ▶ Build vs. Buy develop internal resources or use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to provide them. (timing, cost, criticality)
- ▶ Judicious use of contractors - “Trust but Verify”

# Competency Verification

- ▶ Education
- ▶ Experience
- ▶ Course completion certificate
- ▶ Observations
- ▶ Certification
- ▶ Practical demonstration
- ▶ Actual performance





# Defining Competency Requirements

Mission: Ensure technical success of our business unit

Vision: Provide best technical service to meet business demands

Values: Responsiveness, continuous improvement of services

Strategies: Provide & maintain ready access to technical skills

Tactics: Individual development plans (Technical & EI)

A Learning Culture reinforces the value of continuous skill improvement.

“ invest in our people first, and they will deliver great service and experiences for our customers,..” Ed Bastian, CEO Delta Airlines

# Defining Competency Requirements Carrots or Potatoes??



Deep, but narrower  
skillsets  
A specialist group

Successful  
organizations  
need both



Broader, more diverse  
skillset  
A generalist group

# Fostering competency

- ▶ One size does not fit all
- ▶ Consistent direction and support
- ▶ Collaboration of career goals & business needs
- ▶ Include Technical competency and Emotional Intelligence
- ▶ Different skills require different learning methods



# Making it personal

- ▶ Be technically curious - ask questions
- ▶ Have a development plan (even if your company doesn't)
- ▶ Use readily-available resources
- ▶ Make the business case for your development
  - ▶ Show value for learned concepts in future application
- ▶ Don't forget EI development

# Conclusions

- ▶ It's journey - enjoy the scenery !
- ▶ Develop a continuous learning attitude
- ▶ Both technical skills and emotional intelligence are necessary to succeed.
- ▶ Development opportunities have many forms - use all you can.
- ▶ Sometimes it better to buy competency than develop it.

**Thank you!**

**Any Questions??**