Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz
und Arbeitsmedizin

Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

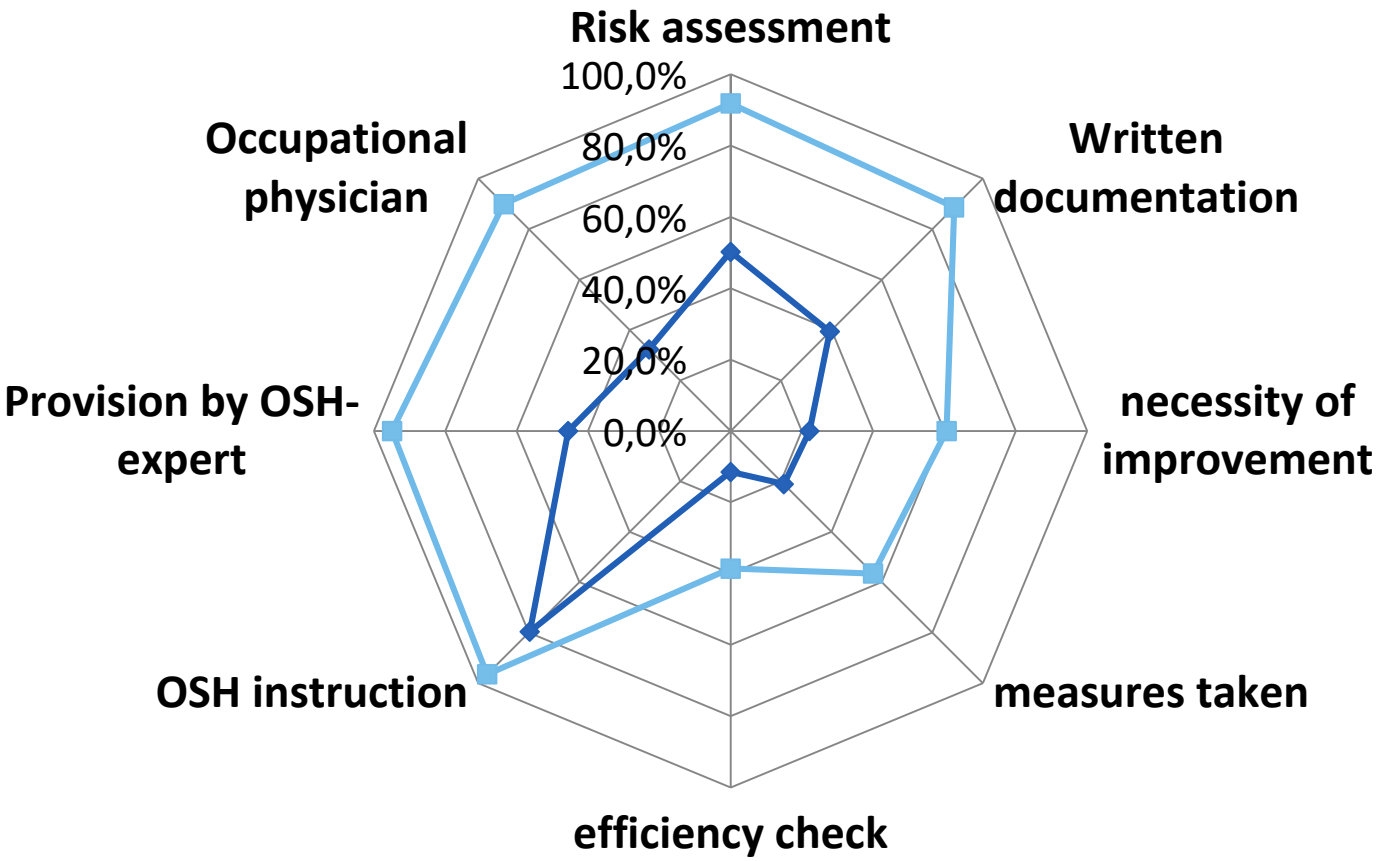
Britta Schmitt-Howe PhD:

Prevention culture as a successful approach to improve prevention?

Agenda

1. **OSH-performance in statistical perspective**
2. **Research questions and design**
3. **Typology of prevailing prevention cultures**
4. **Ways to get through to those responsible in companies**
5. **Fitness of types for the future World of Work**

Compliance gap due to company size



[first number unweighted/second number weighted proportionally to number of companies of that size]

Source: 2015 Representative companies' survey of the Joint German OSH Strategy (GDA)

www.gda-portal.de/DE/Downloads/pdf/Grundauswertung-betriebsprop-Evaluation.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2 (2017; only in German)

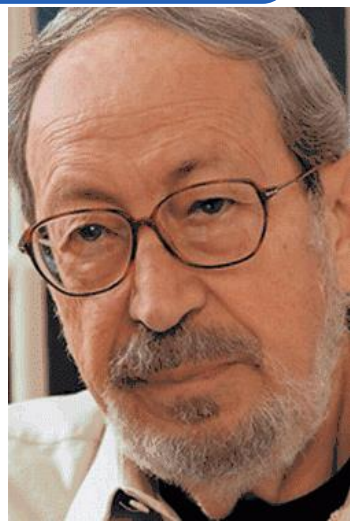
OSH not managed as required, but in which alternative way?

Research Questions:

- What makes companies become active?
- How do they become active / which aspects do they focus?
- Which patterns of orientation prevail in companies / which guidance for employees do they preset?

Getting answers from decision makers in OSH

Organizational Culture is „the way we do things around here“



Edgar Schein

“Cultural origins and dynamics **can sometimes be observed only in the power centers** where elements of the culture are created and changed by **founders, leaders, and powerful managers**.”

Schein, Ed 1990: Organizational Culture in: American Psychologist, Vol 45, No 2, 109-119

Mixed Methods Design: Single + Group Interviews + Survey

Target groups: Owners or Managers, OSH-Experts, Works councils

- **Qualitative:**
  N = 50 problem centered interviews on company ground, among them:

  28 group interviews in companies with 50 or more employees
  22 single interviews with owners of companies up to 49 employees

  Identifiying patterns of orientation
  by Dokumentary Method (Bohnsack) and Grounded Theory

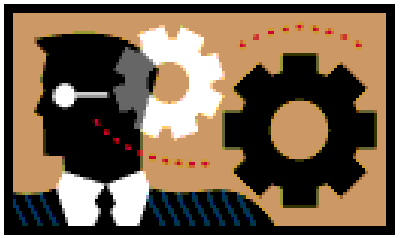
- **Quantitative:**
  N = 375 CATI-Interviews
  Descriptive Statistics and factor analysis

Item examples for CATI survey due to types (N=375)

Type	Item	++	+	-	--	?/0
„Standard setters“	**„If you stop getting better in OSH, you stop being good. “**	√	□	□	□	□
„Techno-crats“	**„If you keep machines and equipment in good order, the most is done for health and safety.“**	√	□	□	□	□
„Systema-ticians“	**„In our company the logic of management systems is also applied to OSH.“**	√	□	□	□	□
„Fault avoiders“	**„The main task in OSH is to maintain a permanent dialogue with employees on safe and healthy behavior.“**	√	□	□	□	□
„Do-it-yourselfer“	**„The competence of our employees best protects our company from hazards and accidents.“**	√	□	□	□	□

Research results: Five types of approaching OSH by…

TYPOLOGY with 3 DIMENSIONS of MEANING:



- **Different OSH strategies or „hazard framing“:**
  A) constantly learning and improving **(dynamic)**,
  B) taking up starting points **(fragmentary)**
  C) relying on employees’ aptitude **(concerning aptitude)**

- **Different focus of involvement:**
  A) involvement with employees
  B) involvement with OSH law / labour inspection

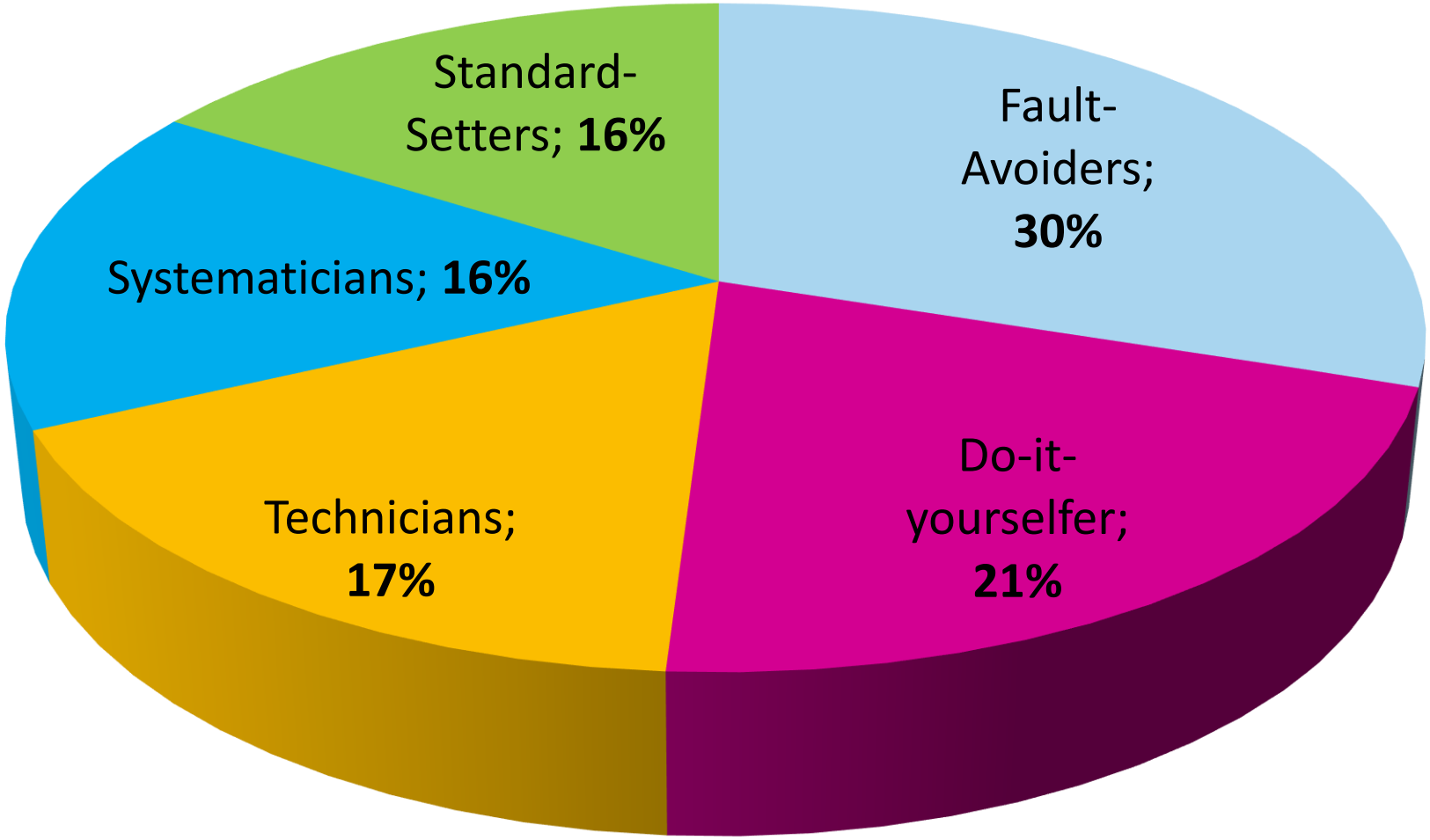
- **Different OSH understanding:**
  A) OSH primarily as a matter of **behaviour**
  B) primarily as a matter of **technology**
  C) comprehensive understanding of OSH

Typology of prevailing prevention cultures

„Hazard-Framing“(*) / Interaction-focus	Dynamic (A)	Fragmentary (B)	Aptitude-concerned (C)
on internal Integration (with employees)	„Standard setters“ (Own culture) *4*	„Fault Avoiders“ (Humans are central) *8*	„Do-it-yourselfer“ (Self-Reference) 12
on external adaption to relevant „environments“ (inspection / regulations)		„Systematicians“ (Key figures) *6* „Technicians“ (Priority Technics) *20*	

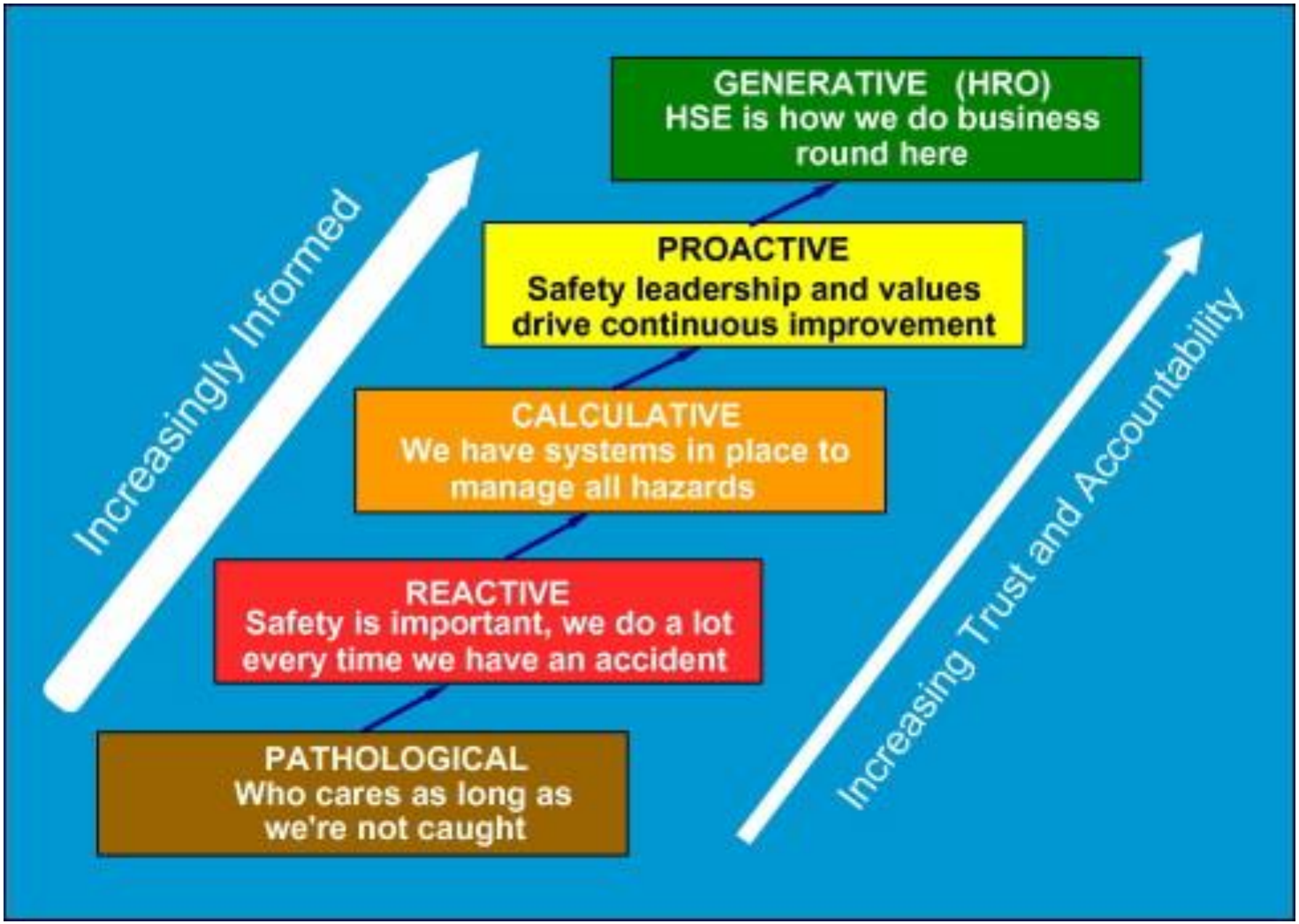
(*)„Hazard-Framing“ = accepted strategy how to cope with hazards

Estimated Frequency of Typs in Basic Population*



* = all enterprises in D; estimation on the basis of BAuA-companies-survey, N = 375; documented in: Schmitt-Howe, B., Hammer, A.: Formen von Präventionskultur in deutschen Betrieben, ed.: BAuA, 2019 (F 2342)

Safety culture ladder according to Hudson



Hudson, P. 2007. Implementing a safety culture in a major multi-national, in: Safety Science 45, 697–722

BAuA-Types and DGUV-Step Ladder

Company Size \ DGUV-Step	indifferent	reactive	rule-gov.ned	proactive	value-adding
250+ employees	--		Technicians	Systematicians	Fault Avoiders	Standard Setters
50-249 employees	--					
10-49 employees	--	„Do-it-yourselfer“				
1-9 employees	--					

How to get through to different types?

- **make it compatible with already existing orientations:**
  appreciate the existing approach, then draw the full picture of OSH

- **add what is disregarded so far:**
  technical views in case of the behaviour type „Fault Avoiders“;
  psychosocial issues in case of „Systematicians“ and „Technicians“

Thesis: *OSH performance correlates more intensively with type of approaching OSH (=prevention culture) than with degree of risk*

Type generated Role Assignment and Flexible Forms of Work

Prevention Culture Type	Employees as….	Fit for future?
Standard Setters (Owns Culture)	Co-Creators	**Mindful, interconnected**
Systematicians (Key figures)	Executives, Mandatees	**Without Influence** ☹
Fault Avoiders (Humans are central)	Self-responsible Learners	**Few Ressources**
Technicians (Priority Technics)	Inhabitants of a Work Environment	**Indifferent** ☹
Do-it-yourselfer (Self-Reference)	Allrounders	**Often isolated, precarious**

Impressions of BAuA – Thank you for your attention!

Dortmund

Berlin

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Chemnitz

Dresden

Research Report „Forms of Prevention Culture in German Enterprises“

doi:10.21934/baua:bericht2019
www.baua.de/dok/8752192

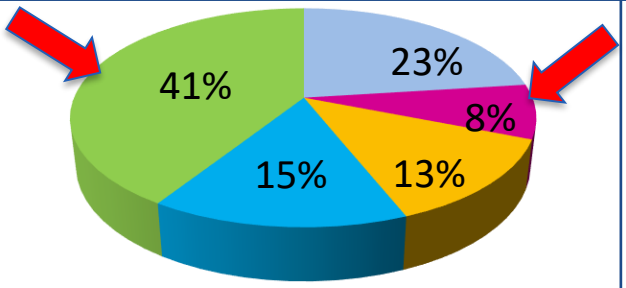
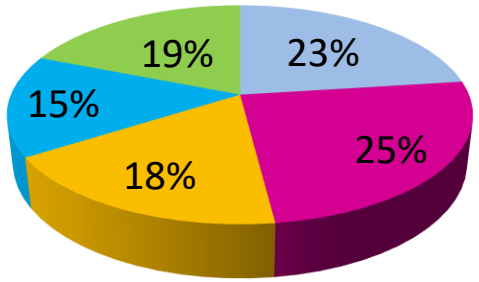
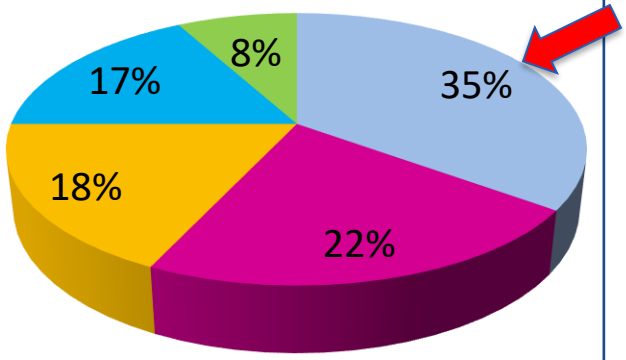
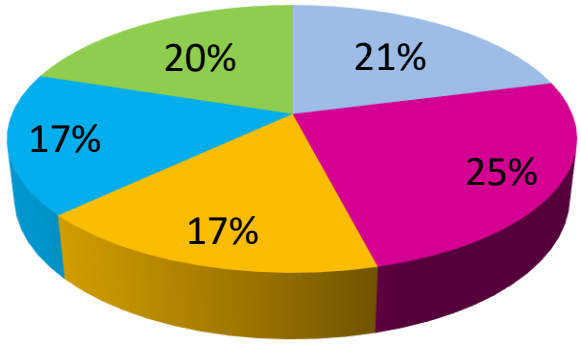
Distribution of Types due to „Hazard-Quadrant“

← lower **Visibility of Hazards** higher →

↑ higher

Compliance-Requirements

lower ↓

Health Care and Nutrition Industries	**Capital goods, Chemistry, Waste and Construction Industries**
	
IT- und Finance-Services Retail, Hospitality	**Traffic and Logistics**
	

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