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Faced with a work situation where there are a variety of (potentially conflicting) requirements each of us develops an understanding of what we have to do, makes decisions, takes action and adopts behaviours.

What influences our behaviours?

The ABC model explains two determinants of human behaviour: activators and consequences.

The ABC model

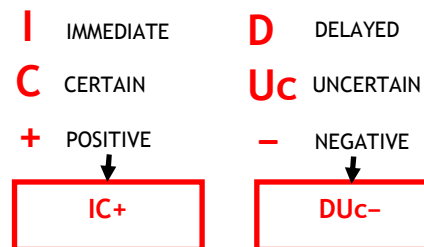
A ACTIVATORS	What precedes and triggers the behaviour
B BEHAVIOUR	An observable action
C CONSEQUENCES	The result of the action

The question is, what influences our behaviour most. The answer is that **individual behaviour is above all a function of the perceived consequences**.

Our perception of the consequences of our actions affect our safety behaviour

Individuals act once they have made a (very rapid and largely unconscious) analysis of the consequences of their actions. These perceived consequences may be positive (*e.g. reach a goal as quickly as possible, financial gain, quality of results, etc.*) or negative (*e.g., accident, injury, fatigue, sanctions, etc.*).

Some consequences carry more weight than others in our decisions. **The most sought-after behaviours are those that are perceived to have Immediate (I), Certain (C) and Positive (+) consequences.**



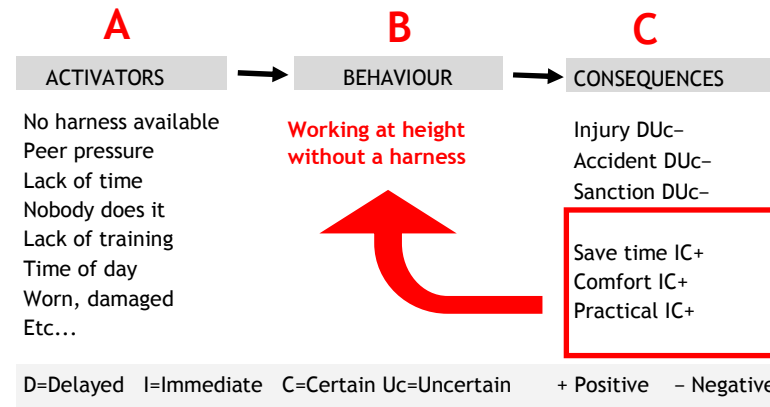
Individuals therefore act to save time, raise their comfort level or receive approval from colleagues. (IC+). This helps us to understand what influences behaviour most. It is *not* the risk of injury, accident or sanction, where the consequences are very often perceived as delayed (D), uncertain (Uc) and negative (-).

This is the great challenge for prevention. The effect of consequences may discourage compliance with safety rules:

- A non-compliant or at-risk practice can have immediate and certain consequences, (less effort and saves time): IC+
- A compliant practice has delayed and uncertain consequences (e.g. the lack of an accident): DUc-

In summary, actions can sometimes be inconsistent with prevention because the consequences that are perceived as more beneficial and more likely, do not always result from safe behaviour.





Example of a scenario where, contrary to regulations, a worker does not wear a safety harness when working at height.

How to influence behaviours?

Typically, industrial practices try to change behaviour upstream (through training, awareness, provision of equipment, technical improvements, etc.). This approach is necessary but not sufficient and its long-term effects are limited. If the organization does not act on the perceptions of consequences, safety is always the loser. As safety behaviours are not natural, they must be created.

feedback from colleagues and management. Perceptions of which consequences are seen as immediate, certain and positive (IC+) can be transformed by promoting safety behaviour. It is one way to change behaviour in ways that give safety a more prominent role.

