



Nuclear Safety and Quality Culture

Complacency and Carelessness: It's Comfortable

Complacency means we feel comfortable, and when we feel comfortable, we may make careless decisions. We may forego locking our car door when running into the store because we live in a safe neighborhood. We may check our phone when traffic has stopped because it's never caused a problem before. Each of these actions could result in negative consequences, but we might do them because we feel comfortable and "it will be okay."

Complacency at WTP makes us vulnerable to mistakes and poor quality. We may skim a document that we should be reviewing carefully. We may not use a checklist associated with a task we complete daily. Each of these actions could result in negative consequences. At WTP, complacency is intolerable because we must achieve bulletproof quality, down to the last bolt.

The Antidote

The best way to combat complacency is to identify personal rules or rituals. Maybe drive a slightly different route to or from work once or twice a week or ask a co-worker to review a product before finalizing it. Or we may make it rule to always lock our doors when we get out of our cars, no matter how brief the stop, and to stow our phones out of reach while we drive. Identifying and implementing antidotes like these can help us prevent complacency, carelessness and negative results.

Discuss It

Read the situations below and discuss them using the following questions:

1. Is the situation an example of complacency? Why or why not?
2. Is the situation an example of carelessness? Why or why not?
3. How might these be examples of someone being too comfortable in their situation?
4. What other negative consequences might be associated with the situation?
5. What if no negative consequences resulted? How might that affect your decision next time?
6. What are some possible antidotes?

Situation	Consequence
While shopping on the Internet at home, you notice a warning banner pop up at the top of your browser window notifying you that there may be a security risk. You ignore the banner, assuming it's a phishing attempt, and keep shopping.	You discover your credit card information was stolen from the website you were shopping at.

Situation	Consequence
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You are heading to a meeting but need to send an email to the customer regarding a proposed change in work scope. You work very well with the customer and interact regularly, but you are slightly frustrated about the change. You rush through the email and hit send.

You later learn that in your haste, you made several typos and were not as careful with your tone as you should have been.

Think About It

1. In what areas of your work might you be complacent or vulnerable to complacency? Why?
2. How might your complacency lead to carelessness?
3. What consequences may result from your complacency?
4. What are some possible antidotes?