

So What?

Why Building a Culture of Risk Awareness is so Hard and What to Do About It



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Who's the bigger hero: the lifeguard who makes a dramatic rescue, or the swim teacher whose students never need saving? In organizations, we often celebrate reactive problem-solving more than proactive prevention. Chris Clarke, LogicGate's Sr. Director of Customer Experience, asks:

Why is building a proactive culture of risk awareness, where potential problems are stopped before they start, so difficult?

The answer often lies not in processes or technology alone, but in understanding common human hurdles.

Common Challenges

1

Lack of Visibility

If people can't see a problem or don't believe it exists, they won't act. Sometimes, we're even trained to only see certain types of problems.

2

Lack of Ownership

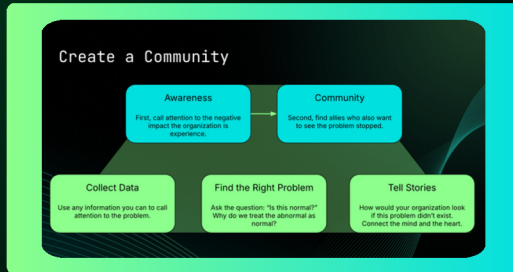
It's easy to think, "That's not my problem to solve." But this diffusion of responsibility is amplified when organizations take on an "everyone is responsible" mentality, which means no one truly is.

3

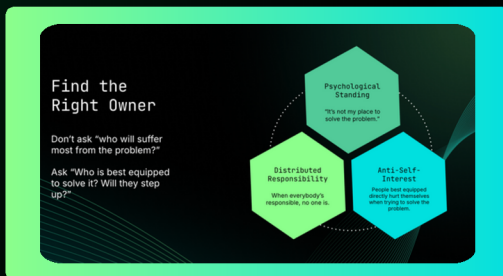
Lack of Time

Daily fire-fighting and urgent tasks inevitably push aside important-but-not-urgent risk mitigation efforts. People intend to "come back to it," but the next crisis always seems to appear first.

Cultivating Awareness



Graphic representation of creating a community



Graphic representation of ownership



Graphic representation enhancing urgency

Overcoming these deep-seated hurdles requires strategies that work with human nature, not against it.

First, make **risk visible** and **relatable** to create change.

- Use available data to highlight the negative impacts the organization is currently experiencing.
- Tell compelling stories that connect the problem (and its solution) to outcomes people care about, perhaps reframing "risk" as a "customer satisfaction opportunity".
- Challenge ingrained assumptions by asking, "Is this recurring issue really normal?"
- Find allies who also see the problem and build a community dedicated to stopping it.

Second, instill clear **ownership** and **accountability**.

- Ask, "Who is best equipped to solve this?" Then empower them to take charge.
- Assign them clear ownership, and align their performance incentives with the desired outcome.
- Focus on putting effective controls in place and measuring their effectiveness.

Third, emphasize the **urgency**.

- Move proactive mitigation from the "maybe later" pile through internal champions who advocate for its priority.
- Make the potential consequences (or the benefits of action) tangible and real.
- Setting clear deadlines and using powerful phrasing can also create the necessary urgency to drive action now.

As this culture develops, ensure you're measuring what truly matters, being mindful of misleading metrics or misaligned incentives. By understanding and addressing the human elements of visibility, ownership, and urgency, organizations can foster a culture where potential issues are surfaced and solved early, leading to smoother operations, better achievement of objectives, and a stronger reputation