

Corporate Driver Training

Recently Corporate Driver Training Australia facilitated training for DKI Malaysia and Thailand. It was an extremely satisfying experience for both trainers and participants. It was particularly interesting to observe that drivers in countries with less dependence on "the rules" embraced the "Low Risk" model without the usual resistance we sometimes experience in Australia. In fact, I am sure some of the DKI personnel in Malaysia and Thailand are surprised at how trusting Australian drivers are towards each other, and how dependant we are on the "the rules". To them, it seems so obvious to check right and left before proceeding through a green light as they do not expect other drivers to give way. They absolutely embrace:

CDTA is a privately owned, road safety education and training company. CDTA's company's mission statement "is to reduce road trauma" Since the company's incorporation in 1996, they have steadily built a robust business with a reputation for delivering the highest possible quality products and services. As a result, they have a client list that includes some of the world's most prominent and discerning clients including Diamond Key International. These companies have discovered the benefits of their sophisticated "Low Risk Driving" model which aligns with these companies safety ethos: Safety First.

Many driver training and education programs are based on the faulty assumption that drivers crash because of a lack of knowledge, skill, or both. They have learned that organisations that have safety cultures that can be described as primitive, unsophisticated or developing typically prefer traditional defensive driving programs delivered in a race track environment where simulated emergency avoidance techniques are taught. Research suggests this "control skill" type of training is reactive and will encourage risk taking behaviour and will probably increase optimism. While such optimism can contribute to an increased feeling of well-being, it encourages risky decision making in activities such as driving.

For any 'training' program to succeed, two key factors must be addressed:

- Programs must aim at, or be just slightly ahead of, the existing safety culture.
- To some significant degree, programs must meet the expectations of the participants.

It is possible of course, that a driver who is both knowledgeable and skilled could have a nose-to-tail crash even if they have a good attitude to road safety. Many knowledgeable and skilled drivers, with good attitudes still crash. One explanation is that they don't really believe that they will crash. The vast majority of drivers believe they are safer than average.

Effective road safety interventions must address issues such as objective-risk-perception, optimism-bias, and ownership to mention a few. In addition, learning should be set in a context that acknowledges and honours existing knowledge, skill and motivation.

Unfortunately most drivers blame the other driver for a collision. Drivers do this because it is easy. It shifts the blame away and this makes them feel better. However, this is not useful because they lose control of their own safety, they accept risk and collisions as inevitable, and most importantly they miss a valuable opportunity to protect themselves in the future. In other words they do not learn from their mistakes and continue driving without changing their behaviour.

