

Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents

James Reason



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Major accidents are rare events due to the many barriers, safeguards and defences developed by modern technologies. But they continue to happen with saddening regularity and their human and financial consequences are all too often unacceptably catastrophic. One of the greatest challenges we face is to develop more effective ways of both understanding and limiting their occurrence. This lucid book presents a set of common principles to further our knowledge of the causes of major accidents in a wide variety of high-technology systems. It also describes tools and techniques for managing the risks of such organizational accidents that go beyond those currently available to system managers and safety professionals. James Reason deals comprehensively with the prevention of major accidents arising from human and organizational causes. He argues that the same general principles and management techniques are appropriate for many different domains. These include banks and insurance companies just as much as nuclear power plants, oil exploration and production companies, chemical process installations and air, sea and rail transport. Its unique combination of principles and practicalities make this seminal book essential reading for all whose daily business is to manage, audit and regulate hazardous technologies of all kinds. It is relevant to those concerned with understanding and controlling human and organizational factors and will also interest academic readers and those working in industrial and government agencies.

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