The social structure and dynamics of NZ Forestry crews are unique.

However, they share characteristics with numerous male-based groups...

Rugby Teams
Hunting Parties
Combat Units
These groups work closely together.

They are often inches or seconds away from danger and injury.

Team members depend on each other for their success and their survival.

My background is group dynamics, crisis management, sport psychology, and peak-performance.

Performing Under Pressure
Performing When Fatigued
Performing When a Lot is at Stake
When I think about current Forestry Safety issues –

I think in terms of performance –

and human nature.

For example, in Sports –
success factors are a combination of the plan *and* implementation.
All plans work well on paper.

It’s consistent implementation that’s the hard part.

Implementation.

Successful safety implementation requires REAL TIME investment of –

Thoughts
Actions
Emotions
In sport this creates “Peak Performance” or “The Zone”. This means it all works.

What We Know...

about human safety factors in potentially dangerous environments...
1st —

We form groups to do things that are more difficult – or more dangerous – then we can do individually.

2nd —

This has an interesting psychological effect regarding safety in the workplace.
Basically –

Men in groups are naturally more likely to engage in higher levels of “risk taking behaviours” – because that’s why they’ve come together.

Simply being part of a male-based group raises the likelihood of more risk taking and less pragmatism.

Just look around – examples are everywhere.
This isn’t a bad thing.

And we aren’t going to change it – because this is how we survive.

Often we call it “courage”

The question is –

How can we use it?
Some answers…

One thing we can learn from applied sport psychology...

We all believe this...

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Also, getting it right is simply a formula.

The Inverted U Theory of Arousal

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But getting it right can be tricky.

One challenge – what motivates your people?
Well functioning teams –
ARE “OTHER INVESTED”

If team members are “Other Invested” –
you will often take care of each other
and watch out for their mates
more carefully than you will for yourselves.
We see this in war.
We see this in sports.
We see this in families and with close friends.

We see this in our language.

Right, bro?
Question.

How good are we at getting the investment and high level of safety-follow-through we need?

Implementation.
What else do we know?

Teamwork + Clarity + Consistency = Effectiveness

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“Irregular Reinforcement Patterns” will kill you.

And finally...
Team management & leadership doesn’t depend on clear communication.

It depends on
PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION.
“Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.”

- Margaret Mead