

Safety First!

Reimagining the Safety Framework of Our University Community

Reima Kallinen

Safety Officer, HAMK UAS

Freezing Week 2025

The Relationship Between Safety and Security



- *Safety* is often defined as a state free from hazards caused by natural forces or human factors, or as the means of preventing them.
- It is closely linked to *security*, which are active and technology-oriented, aimed at mitigating human or system threats.
- However, a completely risk-free, safe, and secure state does not exist in the real world.
- Often, safety and security are seen as competing solutions to addressing risks.
- This tension can significantly shape the organization's approach to handling risks and hazards.

The Risks of Overemphasizing Security



- If security (or especially defense) take precedence over safety, safety culture risks becoming defined by them.
- This can create a spiral, where safety culture is transformed into a *security-driven culture*,
- This may result in chronic negative effects, such as:
 - *The Seat Belt Effect* – Over-reliance on specific safety measures at the cost of holistic safety awareness.
 - *Risk Normalization* – Hazards becoming routine and overlooked.
 - *Security Theater* – Ineffective measures (e.g., excessive ID checks) creating only an illusion of safety.
 - *Over-Compliance Paralysis* – Bureaucracy and rigid rules discouraging proactive safety actions.

The Value of a Strong Safety Approach



- A *safety-centric* approach aim to foster a genuine sense of safety within the community.
- While security and defense maintain an essential role in risk and hazard mitigation, many organizations benefit from prioritizing key aspects of safety, such as:
 - *Safety culture*
 - *Psychological safety*
 - *Sense of safety*
 - *Occupational safety*
- Safety is fundamental to everyday well-being and helps build tolerance for uncertainty at both individual and community levels

Towards a Safety-First Mindset



- Our process began with a deliberate shift away from an emphasis on security and defense, moving toward safety-first thinking.
- Through research, discussions, and reflections, we recognized that:
 - *A genuine sense of safety* is essential for building a strong safety culture.
 - Most safety situations arise in everyday life and can often be managed within routine activities.
 - People need the competencies to handle these situations themselves rather than relying solely on an organization to delegate them to.
 - Many aspects of a strong safety culture also contribute to resilience.
 - Instead of focusing primarily on crisis response, the focus should be on recovery and learning

Setting Our Safety Thinking Model



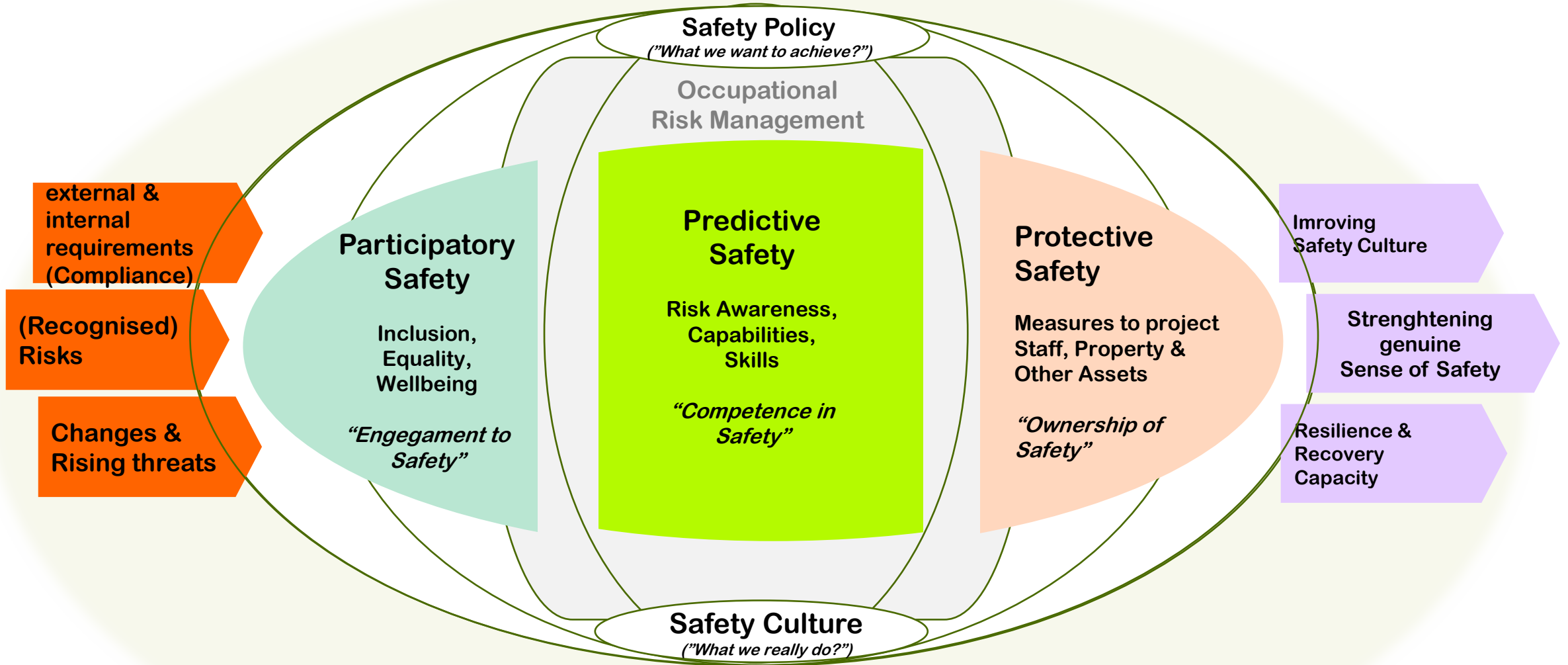
- This insight led us to define two essential focus areas: **Everyday Safety** and **Resilience**.
- By reexamining the relationship between safety, security, and defense, we reshaped these concepts with a stronger focus on both individuals and communities, leading to three core areas.
- This approach, now framed as **Community-Centric Safety Thinking**, guides how we apply these principles to:
 - Competencies and training
 - Safety organization
 - Safety metrics

Key Aspects of Community-Centred Safety



1. **Everybody's Business:** Everyone has the duty and right to contribute to the safety of our community.
2. **Community and Inclusion:** Safety work supports the well-being of the community and promotes a sense of togetherness.
3. **Proactive Measures:** The main goal of safety work is to identify, prevent, and mitigate safety risks to the community and its members.
4. **Safety Culture:** Building a strong safety culture where safety is part of everyday (work) life
5. **Training and Competence Development:** Strengthening the safety competence of the staff and students through continuous training and practicing.
6. **Resilience:** The community's ability to recover from disruptions and crises is a key part of safety thinking.

Community-Centred Safety Framework



Competences Across the Safety Spectrum

EVERYDAY SAFETY

RESILIENCE

Participatory

Predictive

Protective

Participatory

1. Expertise & Professional Skills

2. Risk Management Skills

3. Safety Skills

4. Co-Operation Skills

5. Resilience

6. Prepradness

Engagement

Competence

Ownership

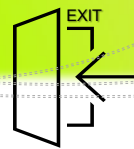
Engagement



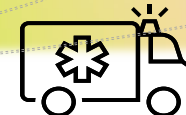
Everyday



Risks



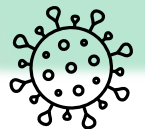
Incidents



Accidents

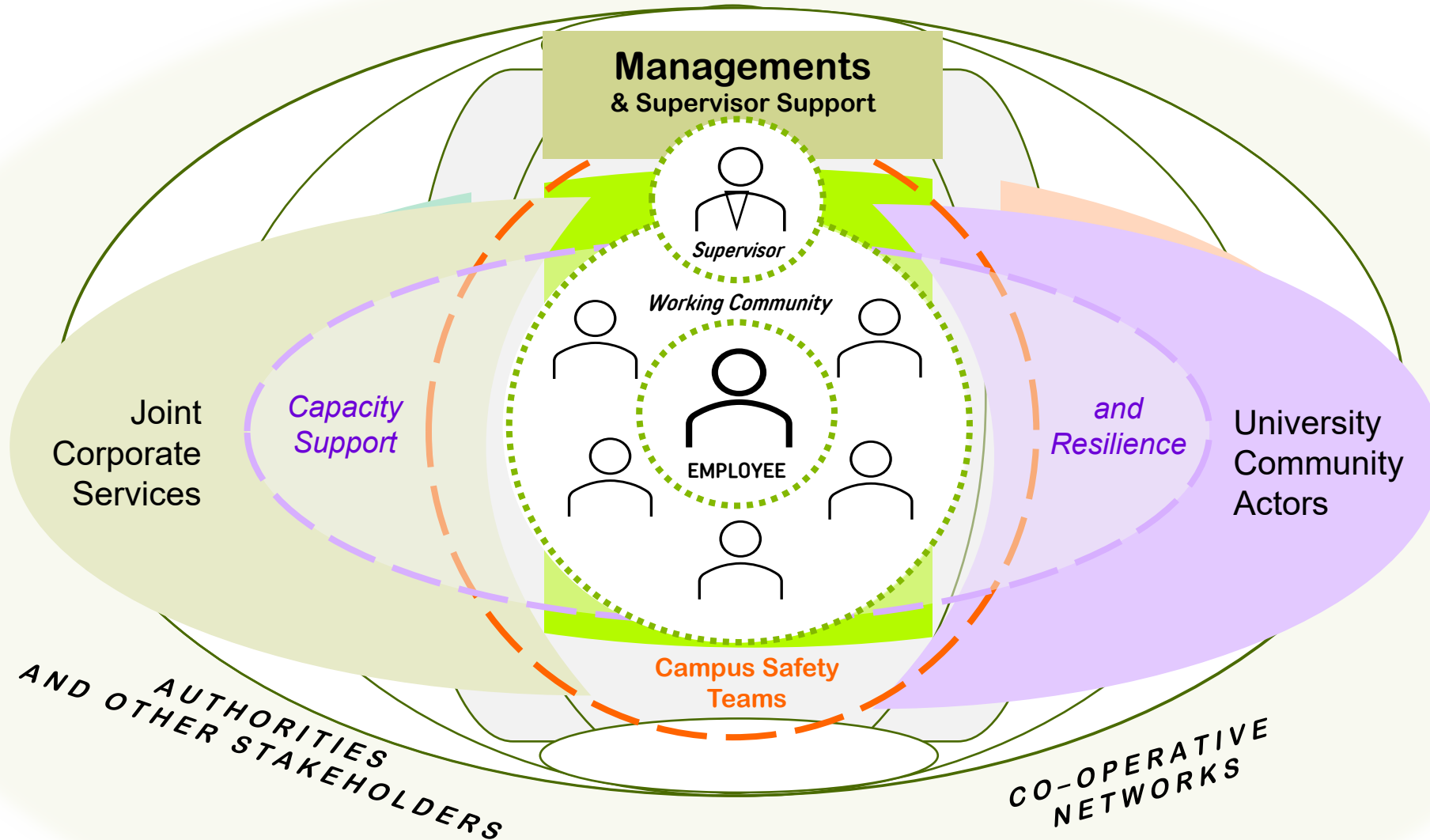


Crises

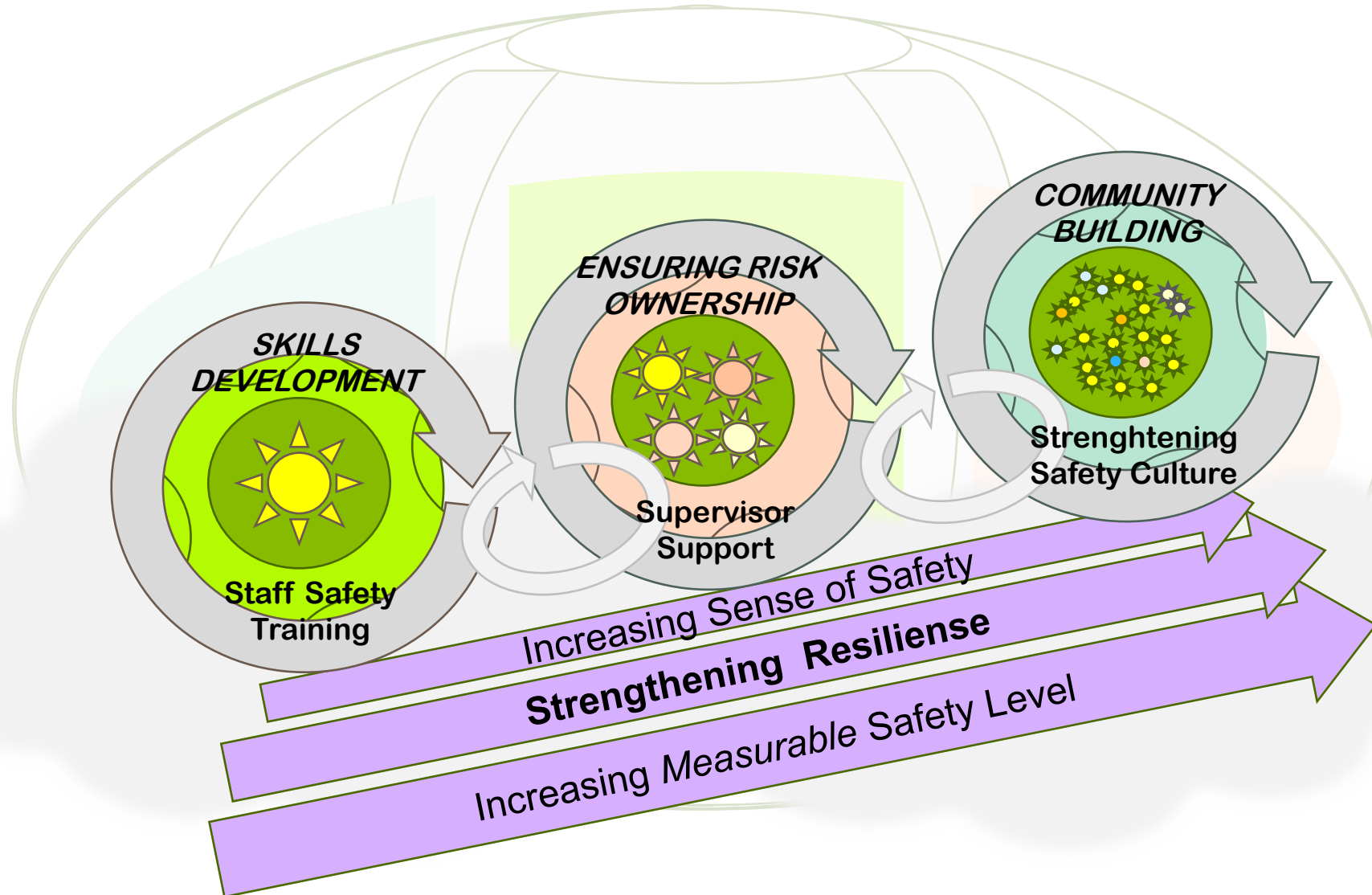


Catastrophes

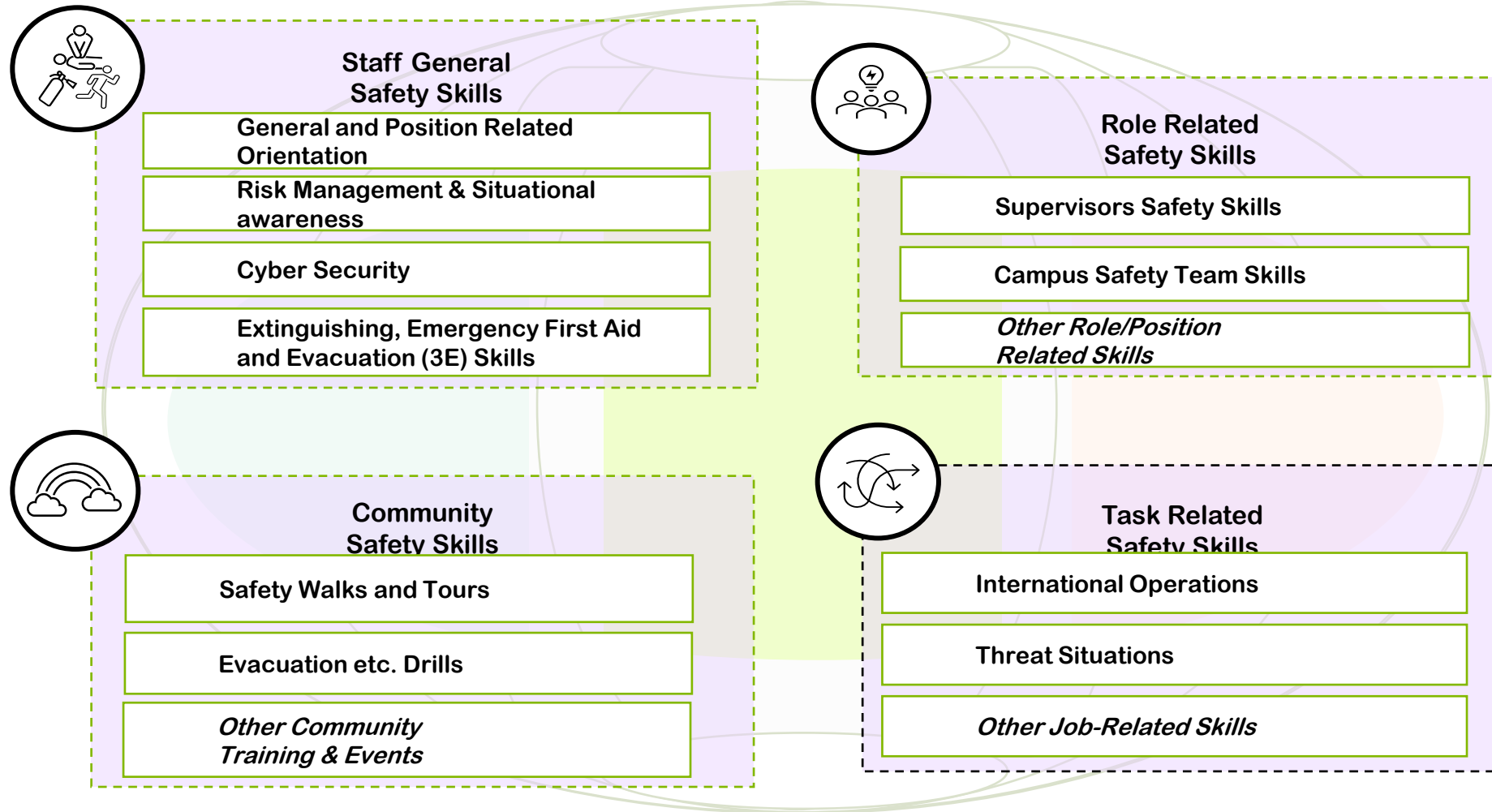
Safety Organisation with Employee at the Core



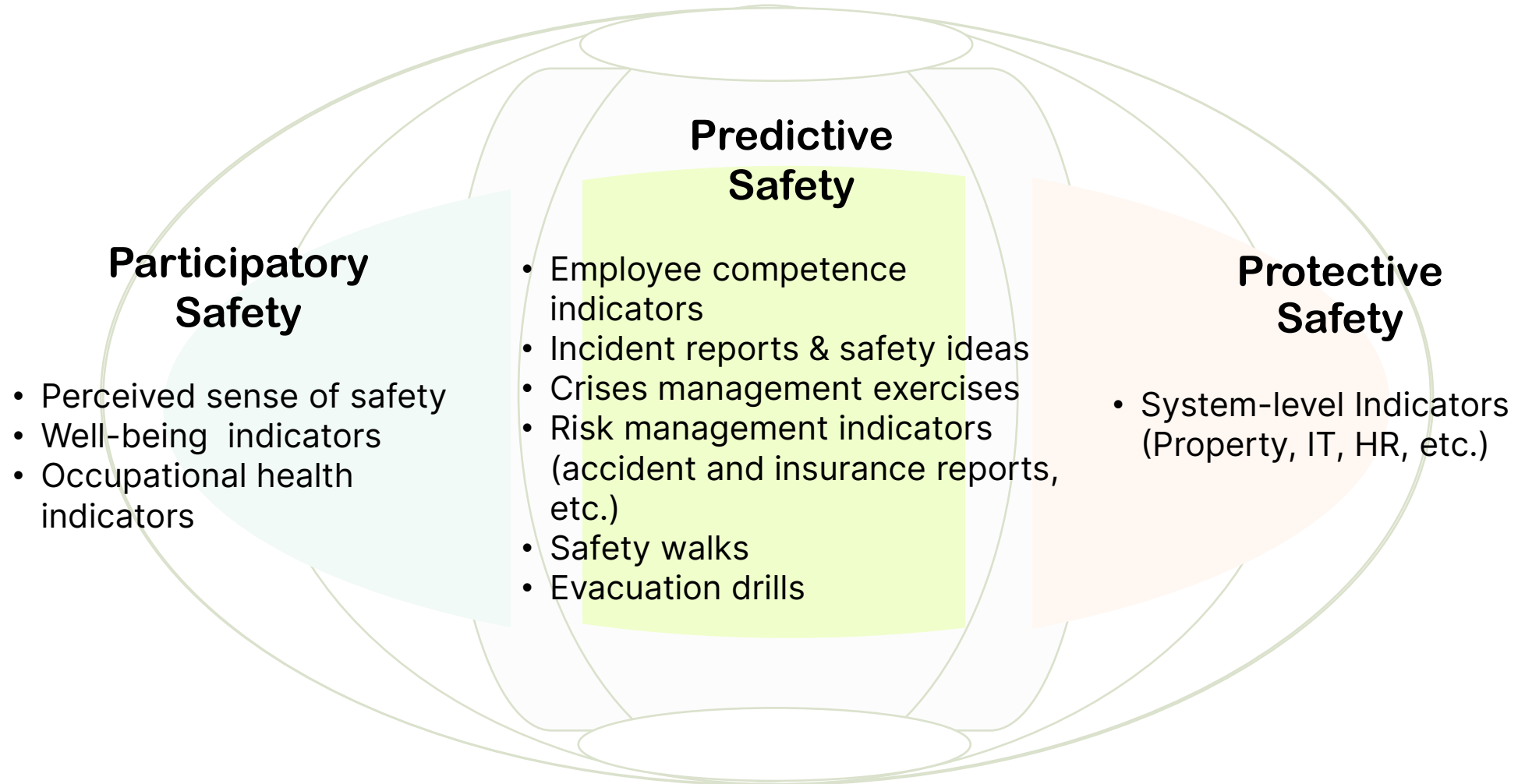
Accelerating Safety Competences of Employees, Supervisors, and Community



Training Across Competency Levels: General, Community, Role, and Task



The Metrics for Community-Centered Safety



Sources & Literature



Edmondson, Amy C.: The Fearless Organization (John Wiley Sons Inc, 2018)

Gilbert, Daniel et al: The Surprising Power of Neighborly Advice (Harvard, 2015)
link to source: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:3110937>

Hopkin, Paul: Fundamentals of Risk Management (the 4th Edition) (Kogan Page Ltd, 2017)

Kallinen, Reima: Turvallisuuden tunne Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulun korkeakouluuyhteisössä (Laurea, 2021)
Link to source: <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-202102242624>

Laitinen, Heikki, Vuorinen, Marko & Simola, Antti: Työturvallisuuden ja -terveyden johtaminen (Tietosanoma 2021)

Levä, Kirsi: Turvallisuusjohtamisjärjestelmien toimivuus - vahvuudet ja kehityshaasteet suuronnettomuusvaarallisissa laitoksissa. (TUKES-julkaisu 1/2003)

Rikander, Henri: Yrityksen työsuojelujohtaminen (Edita Lakitieto 2023)

Suojanen, Ilona: Onnellinen turvallisuus - Turvallista arkea etsimässä (Gaudeamus 2022).

Teperi, Anna-Maria: Ihminen turvallisuuden tekijänä (Gaudeamus 2023)

Kiitos! Thank You!

Häme University
of Applied Sciences
www.hamk.fi



Safety Officer Reima Kallinen
reima.kallinen@hamk.fi

Feel free to connect on LinkedIn!

Save the Date

Savotta Staff Week: Exploring HEI Safety & Resilience

18 – 22 May 2026

Hämeenlinna, Finland

hamk.fi/savotta

Savotta Staff Week Highlights

Core themes:

- **Sense of Safety & Resilience**
- **Applied Learning (DBE)**
- **Collaborative Solutions**

Programme will include

- **Insight Sessions**
- **Co-Creation Sprints**
- **Synergy Building**

www.hamk.fi/savotta

Targeted for HEI safety and security professionals, open for all HEI staff

Registration opens in May 2025, A maximum of 40 places are available.

**Registration Fee 450 €
(Early Bird 395 €, valid until January 2026)**