

CASE STUDY

**WholeLife™
Safety
Leadership
Development**

Genii Earth | Global Engineering Client
(Confidential)



CLIENT

Global Engineering & Consulting
Organization

ENGAGEMENT START

March 2023 (Culture Strategy); November 2024
(Training Design)

SCOPE

Culture Strategy, Senior Leader Engagement &
Senior Leadership Training Design

LEAD CONSULTANT

Genii Earth's WholeLife™ Safety Team

At a Glance

2+

Years of Partnership

300+

Senior Leaders Engaged

5+

Global Regions Reached

18,500

Client members Globally

3

Phases of Collaboration

100

Original Evidence Based
Designs

ABOUT THE CLIENT



The client is a highly respected global engineering and consulting firm, with approximately 18,500 professionals operating across five global regions. Founded on visionary principles emphasizing social usefulness, total design, and being a humane organization, the firm has long held purpose at its core.

Despite this foundation of values, a 2023 internal safety culture survey revealed a fundamental tension: safety was being experienced primarily as a compliance obligation rather than a deeply held value. Leaders acknowledged that the organization's attention to the impact of its work on the world had come at the expense of attention to the impact on its own people. This was a wake-up call.

“We care so much about the impact we are having on the world that we aren’t putting as much focus on the impact we are having on our people.” —

Client Leadership Team Member



The firm’s Transformation Director and senior leadership team reached out to Genii Earth to begin a partnership aimed at reversing this dynamic—transforming safety from a compliance checkbox into a vibrant, purpose-driven dimension of organizational culture.



THE CHALLENGE

The safety culture review surfaced several interlocking challenges that could not be solved with conventional training :

What the Data Revealed

- 84% of members did not identify safety as the organization's number one priority
- Senior leaders struggled to name strong examples of safety leadership within the organization
- Only 31% of higher-grade members regularly engaged with H&S policies and procedures
- 69% of members did not believe leaders openly admitted mistakes
- 27% of members felt they were not encouraged by leaders to raise concerns

What the Culture Exposed

- Existing training was perceived as “cursory monologue- driven, and heady”—lacking emotional resonance
- Training focused on legal compliance rather than personal leadership for safety
- Deep hierarchical barriers were stifling the psychological safety needed for people to speak up
- Regional variations had created inconsistency in standards and expectations
- Safety was siloed from the organization's core identity, strategy, and values

"We claim to care about Mike who might go to site and die – but our actions tell a different story: what we really care about is liability and whether my career will go down the drain."

— Participant, Internal Safety Culture Review



This diagnosis pointed to a need far beyond curriculum refresh. It demanded a genuine culture transformation—one that could reconnect the firm's 18,500 members to a shared sense of moral responsibility and care.

GENII EARTH'S WHOLELIFE™ SAFETY APPROACH



Genii Earth is a global consultancy founded on the conviction that the seeds of transformational change are present in every person and every organization. Rather than importing external frameworks and imposing them on a client, Genii Earth's methodology begins by uncovering what leaders and organizations already hold most dear, and connecting that to the challenge at hand.

This approach was central to the engagement with the client. Each member of Genii Earth's WholeLife™ Safety Team brings over 15 years of experience in safety leadership and culture transformation — working not as a vendor delivering a product, but as a deeply embedded thought partner and co-designer.

Genii's Core Philosophy

***"We help individuals lead from what matters most to them."
Transformational change begins when people see a meaningful connection between their values, their organization's purpose, and the real-world impact of their work."***

This philosophy translated into a multi-phase partnership that evolved over two years:

Phase	Activity	Genii Earth's Role
Phase 1 2024	Safety Culture Strategy & Senior Director Engagement (Annual Global Meeting)	Served as co-designer and strategic thought partner to the Transformation Director's team; designed and facilitated a high-impact session that engaged 300+ senior directors in a meaningful, organization-wide conversation about safety culture.
Phase 2 2024-2025	Psychological Safety Programme & Conversation Guide Development	Co-created practical team conversation guides built directly from the client's own data; designed and delivered deepening and transformational sessions grounded in proven research frameworks (Edmondson, Clark, Wiseman) to drive lasting behavioral change.
Phase 3 2025	Senior Leadership Safety Training Design	Served as lead design consultant; conducted in-depth discovery, aligned learning outcomes to organizational priorities, and developed both high-level program concepts and detailed facilitator guides ready for global rollout.

PHASE 1: AWAKENING SAFETY AS A PURPOSE, NOT A COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT

Reframing the Conversation

When the client's leadership first engaged Genii Earth, the challenge was clear but the path was not: how do you shift a culture of 18,500 highly intelligent professionals from seeing safety as a regulatory burden to experiencing it as an expression of their deepest values?

Genii Earth's approach began with deep listening and discovery. Through collaborative sessions with the Transformation Director's team, Genii Earth helped the organization articulate a new frame for safety — one that positioned it not as an obligation but as a domain of contribution, innovation, and care.

The culminating moment of Phase 1 was the September 2023 Annual Global Meeting, where approximately 300 of the firm's most senior directors gathered. Genii Earth designed and facilitated a session that challenged leaders to connect safety to their own values and aspirations — not as a briefing on policy, but as a transformational conversation about who they wanted to be as leaders.

"Once the domain of safety is awakened as one of contribution, innovation, and service, people will run with it — 18,500 very intelligent professionals. It's about unlocking their brains — and hearts and bodies."— Client Leadership Vision

The session was designed to ensure that every director left with a clear mandate to ignite an awakening of safety in their own teams, and with a clear sense of why it mattered — not just as a leader, but as a human being.

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PHASE 2: BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Evidence-Based Conversation Guides & Team Toolkits

Research conducted in FY2023 provided an evidence base specifically grounded in the organization's own experience. This was not generic psychological safety content—it was the client's own story, told through the voices of their members.

Genii Earth partnered with the client's internal learning team to translate this research into a practical toolkit: a series of facilitated team conversation guides organized around three critical areas of psychological safety leadership.



Three Areas of Focus

Area 1: Practicing Empathy to Foster Openness *Building relational trust across difference and hierarchy*

Area 2: Discovering Your Ways of Speaking Up *Equipping people at all levels with the language and courage to raise concerns*

Area 3: Leaders Visibly Taking Action *Modeling accountability, admitting mistakes, and demonstrating that speaking up matters*



Design Principles

- Grounded in the client's own data and direct employee quotes
- Built on proven frameworks: Edmondson's psychological safety, Timothy Clark's Four Stages of Safety, and Theresa Wiseman's empathy model
- Leader-facilitated, modeling vulnerability and openness
- Actionable: each session concluded with individual commitments to specific behavioral changes

Each guide was designed to be facilitated by team leaders themselves — not external trainers — embedding psychological safety as a lived leadership practice rather than an imposed program.

PHASE 3: TRANSFORMING WHOLELIFE™ SAFETY AT SCALE

Senior Leadership Training Design

By late 2024, the client engaged Genii Earth to redesign their mandatory safety leadership training for senior operational leaders across all five global regions — accelerating the project and significantly raising the quality of the final deliverables.

Genii Earth's Lead Consultant conducted a rigorous discovery phase: observing existing training, interviewing key stakeholders, and reviewing audit findings. The verdict was clear — the existing program was monologue-driven, compliance-focused, and disconnected from the people it was meant to serve.

Audit Insight: The Gap in Existing Training

The existing training lacked emotional resonance, failed to connect leaders to their personal why for safety, and treated participants as recipients of information rather than leaders of change. It was producing compliance, not transformation.

The New Design Vision

The redesigned program shifted the central question from "What do leaders need to know about safety?" to "What needs to be true for a leader to show up as a genuine safety leader?" The answer was a blended learning solution with three components delivered across a structured learner journey:

Component	Content	Design Intent
Pre-Event (Self-Directed)	Policy context, legal responsibilities, leadership styles, psychological safety principles, risk management basics	Build the cognitive foundation; reduce in-session exposition
Face-to-Face / Virtual Event (Core)	Real-world scenarios, leadership identity, psychological safety in practice, safety culture, systemic risk analysis, peer conversation	Drive engagement and connection; shift mindset through experience
Post-Event (Reinforcement)	Scenario-based assessment, stop /start /continue commitment exercise, action planning	Anchor learning in personal accountability and visible action

Key Design Innovations

Genii Earth's distinctive contribution went beyond program structure — it shaped the design principles that made the training genuinely transformational. Several design principles set the new training apart:

Purpose before compliance: Leaders were asked to connect safety to what they care about most — their people, their legacy, their values — before any legal framework was introduced.

Making it personal: The training was designed to create dissatisfaction with the status quo by connecting leaders directly to the human cost of safety failures — not through statistics, but through story and reflection.

Leadership vs. management: The program explicitly distinguished safety leadership from safety management — asking what it means to model safety as a value, not just to enforce a policy.

Psychological safety as the foundation: Drawing on both Edmondson's research and the client's own data, the program positioned psychological safety as the precondition for physical safety culture.

Commitment-based close: Every participant completed a personal commitment exercise — creating accountability and signaling that safety leadership is an ongoing practice, not a one-time event.

"The people love their colleagues more, love working here more. This work created a dissatisfaction with the way things were and a satisfaction towards knowing how things should feel." — Team Leader

RESULTS & IMPACT

The partnership delivered measurable organizational change and a program built to last. Early indicators already point to the effectiveness of the approach:

Organizational Shifts

- *Unified global safety leadership program replacing fragmented regional training*
- *Team-level ecosystem of psychological safety tools for everyday leadership practice*
- *Senior directors re-engaged with safety as a core leadership identity*
- *Training built from deep diagnostics: audits, surveys, and observation*



Design Quality Markers

- *Blended learning combining pre-, live, and post-event components for lasting behavior change*
- *Facilitator guides enable co-delivery by HSEQ and business leaders, building internal capability*
- *Assessment framework ensures completion and 3-year recertification*
- *Iterative design with piloting and refinement — first delivery treated as a learning phase*

WHY GENII EARTH

Genii Earth brought three things the client could not easily generate internally:

Deep Expertise in Safety Culture

Deep experience in safety leadership and culture transformation meant Genii Earth could interpret the data — and precisely what the training needed to do.

Creative & Conceptual Design Capacity

Genii Earth elevated the program from information transfer to genuine transformation through design principles that balanced emotional resonance with intellectual rigour.

Partnership, Not Consultancy

Genii Earth worked alongside the client at every stage — building internal capability and ensuring the solution was genuinely owned by the organization.