Rony Jabour Introduces The Cultural Safety Gap at National Safety Council Congress

United Safety Net Founder & CEO Rony Jabour highlights how culture, communication and leadership shape safety in multicultural teams.



Rony Jabour, Founder and CEO of United Safety Net, speaks at a workplace safety event. Jabour is the creator of The Cultural Safety Gap™ and focuses on helping American leaders build safer multicultural teams.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, UNITED STATES, September 15, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Rony Jabour, Founder and CEO of United Safety Net, brought a deeply personal and increasingly important workplace safety issue to the national stage at the 2026 National Safety Council (NSC) Safety Congress & Expo in Indianapolis: what happens when companies deliver a safety message, but workers understand, interpret or act on that message differently.

On September 14, 2026, Jabour presented “Why Safety Programs Fail Immigrant Workers — and How Leaders Can Fix It,” introducing The Cultural Safety Gap™, a framework focused on how culture, communication, authority, education and trust can influence safety in multicultural workplaces.

Jabour is the creator of The Cultural Safety Gap™, a framework developed from nearly two decades of work with multicultural and immigrant workforces.

For Jabour, the subject is deeply personal.
“Safety is personal to me,” Jabour said. “My father died in a workplace accident when I was six years old. I understand what happens to a family when someone goes to work and does not come home.”

That experience ultimately shaped a career spanning nearly two decades in workplace safety. Jabour is an OSHA Authorized Outreach Trainer and international speaker who has trained more than 50,000 workers. Through United Safety Net, his work increasingly focuses on helping American leaders build safer multicultural teams.

The issue is particularly significant as the American workforce becomes increasingly diverse.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 5,070 workers died from occupational injuries in the United States in 2024. Hispanic or Latino workers accounted for 1,229 of those deaths — more than 24 percent of all workplace fatalities. Asian workers accounted for approximately 4 percent.

Among Hispanic or Latino workers who died on the job, 68.5 percent were foreign-born.
Foreign-born workers also represented 19.2 percent of the U.S. civilian labor force in 2024, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Rony Jabour shares insights on safety leadership and building safer multicultural teams during a professional speaking engagement.

For Jabour, the numbers raise an important question for American employers:
Are safety systems designed for the workforce America actually has today?
“The American workforce has changed,” Jabour said. “We have workers coming from different countries, educational systems, cultures and life experiences. If the workforce changes, leadership has to understand how to change with it.”

Safety Can Get Lost Without Being Lost in Translation

> Companies should not only evaluate the message they delivered. They should evaluate the message the worker received.”
>
> *Rony Jabour*

A central argument behind The Cultural Safety Gap is that translation alone does not solve the challenge.
“Language matters, but language is only one part of communication,” Jabour said. “Two people can speak the same language, hear the same instruction and still understand that message differently.”

One common example occurs every day in workplaces across the country.

A supervisor explains a task and asks:
“Do you understand?”
The worker nods and says:
“Yes.”
The supervisor may hear confirmation of understanding.
But the worker may simply be expressing respect.

The employee may not want to disappoint the supervisor. The worker may be uncomfortable admitting confusion, afraid of appearing incapable or reluctant to challenge someone in authority.

This is particularly important in multicultural teams because attitudes toward authority can vary significantly based on culture and previous life experience.

“A nod is not a competency assessment,” Jabour said. “If somebody says yes, a leader still needs to determine what that person actually understood.”

The Cultural Safety Gap focuses on the space between what leaders believe they communicated and what workers actually understood, trusted and felt empowered to act upon.



Rony Jabour delivers a keynote on workplace safety, leadership and the challenges of leading multicultural workforces.

What Is “Obvious” — and to Whom?
Jabour also challenged safety professionals to reconsider the concept of common sense.
What appears obvious to an American safety manager who attended college, studied workplace hazards and has spent years working within U.S. safety systems may not be obvious to someone with a completely different educational and professional background.

“The question I ask leaders is: obvious to whom?” Jabour said. “Something may be obvious to you because of your education and experience. That does not mean the person standing in front of you has had the same exposure.”
Jabour emphasizes that the difference is not intelligence.

It is experience.
Some immigrant workers arrive in the United States after working for years in environments where formal safety systems, training expectations and attitudes toward risk were very different.

A leader who assumes everyone begins with the same reference point may unintentionally leave critical gaps in understanding.

Authority on Paper vs. Authority Under Pressure
Another major issue presented by Jabour involves stop-work authority.
Many American companies formally tell employees they have the right to stop work when they

identify an unsafe condition.

But The Cultural Safety Gap asks a different question:
Will they actually use that authority?
Will a worker challenge a supervisor when production is behind schedule?
Will an immigrant employee who highly respects authority feel comfortable saying, “No, I am not doing this”?
Will a worker who depends heavily on the job speak up when everyone else remains silent?
“Authority assigned by policy and authority used under pressure are not always the same thing,” Jabour said.
That distinction places frontline leadership at the center of multicultural workplace safety. Companies can have strong policies, extensive training and detailed procedures, but supervisors ultimately translate those systems into daily behavior.

How leaders respond when workers ask questions, make mistakes or raise concerns can determine whether employees speak up the next time something appears unsafe.

Closing The Cultural Safety Gap
Jabour developed The Cultural Safety Gap after years of observing a recurring challenge while working with employers and immigrant workers: organizations could provide training, policies and procedures and still experience a breakdown between what leaders communicated and what workers understood and acted upon.

Through United Safety Net, Jabour works with employers and workers in English, Portuguese and Spanish, combining safety education with a growing focus on multicultural leadership and workforce communication.
His message to American safety leaders is straightforward.

Organizations should move beyond asking:
“Did we train them?”
Instead, leaders should ask:
“What did they understand?”
“Can they explain the hazard?”
“Do they feel safe asking questions?”
“Can they challenge an unsafe decision?”
“And will they actually stop the work when something is wrong?”
“The goal is not to ask one culture to become another,” Jabour said. “The goal is to help leaders understand the people they are responsible for leading.”
For Jabour, closing The Cultural Safety Gap begins with a fundamental change in how organizations measure communication.
“Companies should not only evaluate the message they delivered,” Jabour said. “They should evaluate the message the worker received.”

About Rony Jabour
Rony Jabour is the Founder and CEO of United Safety Net, an OSHA Authorized Outreach Trainer and international speaker focused on helping American leaders build safer multicultural teams. He has trained more than 50,000 workers and is the creator of The Cultural Safety Gap™.

Jabour is also the founder of Build Safe Connection, an initiative that brings together members of the business, construction and safety communities.

Learn more about Rony Jabour at RonyJabour.com.

About United Safety Net

United Safety Net is a U.S.-based workplace safety training and consulting organization providing safety education in English, Portuguese and Spanish. The company works with employers to strengthen workplace safety, communication and leadership across diverse and multicultural workforces.
Learn more at UnitedSafetyNet.com.

For information about the National Safety Council, visit NSC.org.

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