



**“Culture eats policy for breakfast. And in the OR,
it can eat patient safety.”**

Never Events: A Cultural Crisis Hiding in Plain Sight

The acceptable number of never events is still zero. Yet they persist — and not just due to bad systems or poor checklist compliance.

Let’s talk about something far more treacherous: cultural blindness.

Hofstede in the OR: A Crash Course

Geert Hofstede’s research identified 6 dimensions of national culture. These dimensions silently shape how surgical teams behave:

- **Power Distance** – Silences nurses and junior staff
- **Uncertainty Avoidance** – Punishes deviation from flawed norms
- **Individualism vs Collectivism** – Rewards lone heroes over collaboration
- **Masculinity vs Femininity** – Prioritizes dominance over discussion
- **Long-Term Orientation** – Prefers quick wins to sustainable outcomes
- **Indulgence vs Restraint** – Undervalues protocols that "slow things down"

Sound familiar? These cultural traits aren’t just traits — they’re triggers for catastrophic communication failures and procedural errors in surgery.

👁️ When Culture Becomes a Risk Factor

In many Operating Rooms, teams operate in environments where:

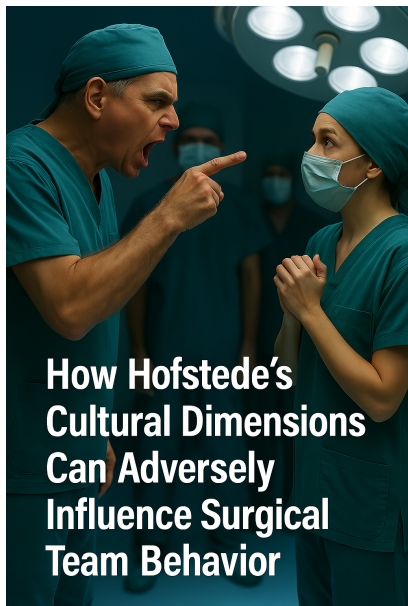
- Speaking up is punished
- Hierarchy trumps scrutiny
- Checklist use is performance, not protection

The result? Never events that feel inevitable. I've seen it. You've seen it.

It's time we do something about it.

✅ What's the Solution? Culture Compensation

SafeStart by SafeStart Medical Inc. is built to compensate for cultural blind spots. It creates role-based, transparent communication and a structured safety net that doesn't rely on behavior change alone.



When hierarchy overrides respectful communication, safety is the first casualty.

💬 Ready to Lead?

CEOs, CNOs, and Board Members

This is your call to action.

SafeStart isn't just a checklist. It's your frontline defense against the cultural drivers of never events.

🔍 Learn more about cultural dimensions: [Hofstede's 6D Model](#)



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We Can Fix This — But Not with Silence and Inaction

The most dangerous risk is the one you don't see.

And in far too many operating rooms, cultural inertia is the silent saboteur of patient safety.

We've normalized:

- **Silence from nurses when they spot inconsistencies**
- **Deference to surgeons, even in the face of uncertainty**
- **Checklist theater instead of checklist performance**

**Healthcare
Risk, Quality & Safety**

**Richard Vazquez MD FACS
CEO SafeStart Medical, Inc**



If you're relying on policy alone, you're already behind. It's time to stop assuming your policies are enough. They're not.

Culture will always find a way around a weak process. Learn more: [Hofstede's 6D Model of National Culture](#)

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Let's eliminate never events — for good.

SafeStart isn't just a tool — it's A digital, structured, and transparent safety system that offsets cultural failure points before harm occurs. It's your frontline defense.

 ***A Final Thought***

Please feel free to share any interesting stories of informed consent contrivance. We will protect your identity and the identity of your facility. We can share your contributions with other professionals on LinkedIn.