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Prioritizing Safety Boosts Productivity



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Are You Aware?

According to a recent survey conducted by the National Safety Council, approximately one-third of workers in high hazard industries do not believe safety is valued. Divided out by industry, 58% of construction workers and 45% of manufacturing or industrial facility workers agreed with this statement. The study further showed that at least 30% of employees are “afraid to report safety issues.” In total, 36% strongly or somewhat agreed “safety takes a back seat to completing job tasks.”

These are eye-opening statistics for those in high hazard industries. Despite the common misconception that attention to safety slows productivity, when workers are confident their environment is safe, they are actually able to increase productivity. A safe jobsite is an efficient jobsite, proving that “safety first” makes good financial sense for a company. Consider the hours of productivity lost when on the job injuries occur. In addition to time lost, workers’ compensation claims cost the company financially.

Employee morale improves in an environment where health and safety are prioritized. To promote this, workers should feel comfortable bringing safety concerns to management. When notified, management should address situations in a timely and appropriate manner.

Are You Prepared?

According to Gary Trout, President and CEO of VelocityEHS, “Effective risk management starts with identifying and addressing hazards before incidents occur.” One of those hazards may be the employees’ understanding of the company’s safety culture, as stated by Science Direct. If an employee has the impression a risk is worth taking if it gets the job done, this is a reflection of how they have interpreted the company’s safety culture.

In the Select International.Com article, “What Does Safety Commitment Mean to the Employee,” it is noted, “Although strong safety performance begins with the organization, it is actually carried out by the collective behaviors of employees. Thus, every employee’s personal safety commitment can dramatically affect safety outcomes and carry consequences not only for themselves, but their coworkers as well.”

Building trust and communication among employees and management



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fosters a culture of safety commitment. This encourages the belief that safety is everyone's responsibility, and each employee is ultimately responsible for his own personal safety.

When workers have to constantly evaluate safety, quality, and productivity with every decision made on the jobsite, performance ultimately suffers. A company culture that unintentionally asks employees to reassess each day, making a choice between safety and task completion, is not acting at its most productive—or its safest.

By conducting a job hazard analysis, management can become aware of employees' concerns regarding company safety.

What Next?

As company managers consider performing a job hazard analysis, these four tips from Convergence Training are very helpful.

1. **Involve Employees.** This is their job and they know it well. Having more than one person evaluate is always a good idea because each one may see something the other misses. Also, this helps employees understand and respect the company safety culture.
2. **Review history.** Look back at injury claims, accident reports, machine damage or malfunctions and discuss near-miss happenings. Be clear to employees you are seeking to understand what can be done to make the environment safer.



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1. Involve Employees

2. Review History

3. Ask Employees for Hazards

4. Prioritize the JHA





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3. **Ask employees for hazards.** For each task, have the employees tell what hazards they see or perceive. Keep a running list, and as the analysis is performed for each job, cross-reference the notes from the employees.
4. **Prioritize the JHA (Job Hazard Analysis).** While performing an analysis for each job is the ultimate goal, management should consider the highest hazard jobs first. Refer, again, to the information gained from employees and begin the analysis with the job that may require the greatest risk management.

Remember by making safety, not production, a company priority, employees will actually be better able to complete tasks in a timely, efficient, and safe manner.

The Berkley Industrial Comp Difference

For Berkley Industrial Comp, expertise matters. This is why we have assembled a team of former miners, engineers and technicians who understand all the industries we serve. As our R.A.M.P. (Risk Assessment Management and Prevention) Loss Control Team, these experts are available to help a company evaluate safety and efficiency.

Through a password protected portion of our website, our customers can utilize valuable training tools and information to encourage and support a safe working environment.



Building trust and communication among employees and management fosters a culture of safety commitment.



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Other R.A.M.P. services may include:

- Inspection audits and services including OSHA and MSHA
- Inspection checklists (we encourage insureds to complete their own inspections)
- Safety management program development assistance
- Safety meetings topics
- Training presentations
- Employee safety and human resources handbook (template for insured use)
- Toolbox Talks (safety documents insureds can download and customize)
- Risk management training

Talk with your agent or visit our website at www.berkindcomp.com for more information and to get started.

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