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HOW TO RUN A MONEY-SAVING SAFETY PROGRAM

On-the-job accidents cost your business money every year, money that could have been additional profits! That is why it is so important to run a safety program.

Although the specifics of running a successful Safety Program vary from company to company and industry to industry, four components must never vary:

1. Get the full support and involvement of management by proving the cost benefits.
2. Develop a comprehensive program based on specific objectives and performance goals.
3. Communicate your objectives clearly and promote your program heavily.
4. Recognize accomplishments of your goals by workers (program participants) in a meaningful way.

Going through these steps very carefully will ensure a successful program for you.

Get the full support and involvement of management by proving the cost benefits. Safety programs cost money. In order to make the investment worthwhile, you must prove to management that the dollars saved will far outweigh the dollars spent.

Begin by establishing just how much accidents are costing your company each year.

The total cost picture must take into account:

- ?? Workmen's compensation claims and premiums
- ?? Legal suits
- ?? Equipment downtime
- ?? Equipment damage, replacement and/or repair
- ?? Medical insurance
- ?? Training new employees

- ?? **Slowdowns by new workers**
- ?? **Cost of temporary help**
- ?? **Loss of employee productivity**
- ?? **Employee downtime**
- ?? **Absenteeism due to injury**
- ?? **Administrative paperwork and processing**
- ?? **Damaged or improperly made product/services**

If you cannot calculate out these costs, consider agencies and organizations that may have specific accident figures in your industry: your insurance agency, the American Insurance Association, the National Safety Management Society or your own industry trade organization.

Safety (1)

A recent industry-wide survey conducted by the National Safety Council, revealed that the average cost per worker for industry related accidents is \$540. Just think, if you have 100 employees, accidents are averaging your company \$54,000 annually. That money could have been your profits!

Once you work up the figures for your company, you'll find management ready and willing to listen to the details of your program, to assign a budget and to cooperate in its accomplishments.

Develop a comprehensive program based on objectives and performance goals. Start by making a list of your biggest safety concerns. Ask for assistance from foremen, supervisors and department heads. Get them to write down safety problems in their areas of responsibility. Refer to last year's reports and tally for the types of accidents and injuries that occurred most often, or were most costly.

Once you've done this make a personal inspection. Monitor workplace and equipment conditions for all types of hazards and use the findings to develop recommendations for effective control strategies.

Now separate your conclusions into three categories:

- 1. Work conditions that need changing by management**
- 2. Safety equipment or procedures not being used or followed**
- 3. Safety attitude and awareness**

Now you are ready to plan your program, set your objectives and figure out your total budget.

Determine the savings from categories 2 and 3 above, based on the reduction of accidents by percent goal- say 20% or 50%. The bigger the goal, the bigger budget and the more time you will need.

Next, select any amount up to 50% of anticipated savings (cost-per-accident times percent reduction) and establish your working budget. Divide your budget into three areas:

1. Administration
2. Promotions
3. Awards

1. Administration

If your program does not involve hiring a special safety administrator, chances are your administrative costs will simply be part of your current costs of doing business.

If you need to set up special training or educational sessions, or if you plan to institute new reporting procedures (program time is a perfect time to set up systems that give you better control of accident/injury costs), add these items into your budget.

Safety (2)

2. Promotion

Then set aside 10% of the remaining working budget for promotion. We'll tell you what to do with this money in the next section.

3. Awards

Count the number of participants you will include in your program. Divide the remaining working budget by this number. This is the amount, per worker, you can prudently afford to spend. It is the maximum you will spend if you achieve 100% of your goal.

Chances are that not everyone will earn an award so you will probably spend less than your working budget. The amount you spend will be in proportion to your results.

Now work out a simple point system based on the value of your awards. Let's say you have established a maximum of \$50 per worker. A simple point system would earn one point (worth \$1) for every week a worker is accident free. Fifty weeks (less two weeks vacation)

earns him/her an award -and you have a worker who has not had, or contributed to, an accident or injury for a full year! On an all-industry average, you've spent \$50 and gained back \$540.

Depending on your budget, you can give bonus points in mid-program (a very effective technique for generating renewed excitement during a long-running program).

The next step is getting and keeping your program going! Communicate your objective clearly and promote your program heavily. To communicate your goals, you have to set up rules that are simple. In a safety program, your objectives are easy to state-no on-the-job accidents or injuries. But making that into a program takes a little effort on your part.

First, ask yourself what educational opportunities the program represents. Do your workers need more safety training? Do they understand how and why to use safety equipment, etc.? Perhaps you need to conduct some safety training sessions. If so, attendance at these sessions could count toward earning their awards.

Next, you should have some printed material that lists the safety measures you expect your workers to take. Once your materials are in place, you can just announce the program start and sit back and wait for results.

This is the part that most people ignore or fall short on: Promote. Promote. Promote! Begin with a bang. Announce the program at a special workers meeting. Explain the objectives, the rules and the point system clearly. Make management's support highly visible. Hang posters. Post a list every week of workers who have earned the most points. Run safety suggestion weeks, when workers can earn extra points for suggestions you adopt. Post pictures of safety awards on bulletin boards and publish them in company literature to remind workers of what they will earn. Not a single week should go by during the program when your workers are not reminded of your safety program goals.

Recognize accomplishment of your goals by workers in a meaningful way. Schedule either an awards banquet or a special awards day for your company. Remember, employees don't just work for the actual award, they work for the recognition it represents. They want to hear their names announced by the president of your company. They want the applause of their peers. They want their pictures in the company paper. Do these things, and you'll have a program that can continue successfully from year to year.

Safety (3)

If you decide to repeat all or parts of your program, be sure the awards remain constant. Continuity of awards creates a meaningful symbol to employees-the "one and only" proof of achievement within your company.

Awards should be worth the extra effort it takes to earn them. They should reflect the goals of your program (customized or designed to illustrate why, and from whom, they were earned), so the award will be a constant reminder to keep up the good work, even after the program is over! And they should be quality, brand name awards the winner will use or wear with pride, awards that others will envy and try harder to earn.

Your Hero's Salute representative can show you a whole range of extraordinary awards which will be perfect for your program and budget. Call us toll free @ 888-457-8080.

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