



RIP & SHARE SAFETY HANDOUT

Gaining Compliance with Rules and Regulations Through Positive Reinforcement



Safety alerts and hazard notification to employees are extremely important, yet we are overloaded with the same predictable messages and uninspiring images with reports, pamphlets or sound bites that come our way. Predictable slogans and shock value statistics can be found in almost any safety manual or hazard warning. The familiarity with these overused images and slogans can detract an individual from reading such important documents and retaining the pertinent information provided in safety warnings. The manner in which a safety message is delivered speaks volumes. If it is not presented right, the information can fall on deaf ears.

We become numb to statistics relaying the number of fatalities due to errors or disasters. Instead of advertisements that make employees feel like lectured-to school children, positive reinforcement should be used. Why not report numbers of fatalities or injuries avoided because employees followed safety rules? The information provided to employees should be upbeat and positive. Tell employees what a good job they are doing and encourage them to continue following through with their precautions. This small gesture may encourage them to follow procedure with more conviction. Making employees feel as

though they are appreciated and celebrated for their safety practices can do more to boost morale and make employees think twice before avoiding safety procedures and committing violations. Simply taking the time to stop and point out that an employee is working safely sends a strong message to employees.

When a safety or hazard alert needs to be communicated to employees, let one of their peers tell them about the hazard and what they can do to avoid being injured. Always keep safety messages short and to the point. Providing mountains of safety instructions all at once can seem intimidating and few people absorb what they hear when information is delivered in such a high volume. Always make it a point to show them what you are talking about. A picture of the hazard speaks volumes to employees.

Get your employees involved in their safety and health program. Run safety slogan contests and use the employees' slogans on signs, newsletters, etc. The main point is to make a big deal out of employees' input into their safety and health programs. Encourage employees to watch out for each other and to correct each other when they observe a co-worker doing something that can harm them.

One of the most important things management can do for their safety and health program is to get their employees directly involved in eliminating hazards as they encounter them. Once your employees begin to do this, your facility will become safer and employees will take ownership for the safety and health of the operation and all of the colleagues they work with. They will believe that everyone is responsible for safety and health. Fostering a culture of team safety can be accomplished simply by involving employees in the decisions made about their safety and health programs, using their ideas and recognizing them for working safely. ■

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