



VITALS

Medical Transport Professionals

A Weekly Safety Newsletter

Selling Safety - For Management Only



Ninety percent of the "Safety Job" is selling safety. Your customers include employees, supervisors and management. Most managers are not well versed in DOT or OSHA safety requirements, or even in their own company's safety procedures. Many see safety as simply a list of rules to be followed (unless there is a production crisis-then it's out the window). When you have the opportunity to present anything to your managers, be it a project, memo for their signature, training plan, or simply a list, take the time to prepare a smooth finished copy-never a rough draft or random notes on a scrap of paper. It is the job of the "Safety Person" to complete the research, design and execution plan for every safety task. To do this effectively, look at other similar company documents to get the "flavor and tempo" of methods that have been successful in the past. This philosophy of presenting a clean document is often referred to as "Completed Staff Work." In sales, presentation is everything.

Sell the Sizzle Not the Steak!

In addition to upper management, the most important customers a Safety Manager has are the folks that work the production lines. How do you make these "customers" aware of the benefits of your "products & services?" We have seen a great hoopla and behavior-based training. Basically, it's a new coat of paint on the old concept of behavior intervention and modification. For as long as the world has existed, human behavior has been a result of a combination of external stimulus as well as internal and associative values. Effective use of these three concepts can result in improved safety behavior.

Using Your Safety Committee Members

Make sure your new employees meet a few Safety Committee Members. Let them know the value of these new people and that they are a part of the plan for training new employees, primarily by being seen as someone they can go to when they have questions. Cultivate and train your Safety Committee to be part of the overall plan for ensuring safe behavior by all employees. All employees should see management fully supporting the committee members on the job, not just during committee meetings.

Does 100% Yield 100%?

One of the most effective techniques I have seen used during safety orientation is to tell the new employee that the company is renting their behavior. That is, the company will pay them 100% of the agreed pay and so the employee has the obligation to adhere to the behaviors requested. This includes behavior and attendance at safety meetings and following all safety rules. Believe it or not, this turns out to be a novel concept for many new workers. Tell them that you are "renting" their behavior or paying for their service. This won't work on everyone; however, those who are "convinced" will have an impact on those who hang back.

Starting Day One

The first day on the job is the most important. The new employees bring their own values to your company and this is the time that they are most willing to modify their individual value system to fit in, accepted and be seen as a positive contributor. Make sure all negative stimuli have been removed from your New hire Orientation Program. Look at what the new employee actually experiences during that first day. Is there a series of long and boring orientation lecture? Who do they meet and what impact does this have? Do they get to see the big picture communicated? Are they introduced to their employees who will also communicate positive values or will they, left on their own, meet the bad apples? Control this new experience the first day and the first week to ensure new employees are properly tuned into your performance expectations.



Understanding Motivating Factors:

Communicating positive expectations is only part of the plan. If you expect employees to adopt proper actions and attitudes, the company must overtly and continually make each employee feel accepted, needed, and known as an individual whose positive values are appreciated. Get to know the person. Only then can behavior intervention succeed.