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4

Secrets

of a

Successful **Safety** Program



Quick facts on BLS.gov

- ❖ *They provide annual reports on the rate and number of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatal injuries*
- ❖ *Information is available for the specific industry classification*
- ❖ *Many companies are required to report details on their worker injuries directly to BLS.gov*

Learn about safety trends and worker injuries here..
<http://www.bls.gov/iif/>

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statics (BLS.gov) there are approximately 3 million non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses reported by private industry employers every year. Small businesses, contractors, and service companies who make up a large part of our workforce should pay close attention to this statistic as their workers make up a big part this number. Because of this startling fact it is increasingly important that small businesses owners incorporate worker safety into every aspect of their business.

Safety, often thought of as a luxury for only large construction firms and manufacturing plants, is needed at every stage in the life of a service business, small manufacturer, or construction company. Which means that the founder, owner, or president of that small business should be informed and engaged in worker safety at their level and set the tone for the importance of workplace safety for their specific business.





Quick facts on OSHA

- ❖ *OSHA makes and enforces federal rules for the safety of workers*
- ❖ *There are 21 states that have adopted State Specific OSHA programs and sometimes they're even more strict*
- ❖ *OSHA has requirements for businesses with even just one employee*
- ❖ *Recordkeeping and reporting regulations require companies to notify OSHA online when they've had certain types of serious injuries happen on the job*

OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, charged with the development of safety regulations for worker safety, is often looked at as solely an enforcement agency. This is only partially true.

OSHA has what are called Compliance Safety and Health Officers (CSHOs) whose main purpose are to actually inspect job sites and discover possible safety violations. However, this isn't all that OSHA does.

OSHA has a wealth of resources for small business owners to help them implement great safety programs to reduce, eliminate, or prevent injuries and illnesses on the job.

The purpose of this report is to guide small business owners through one of the best concepts OSHA has developed for owners in their efforts to improve safety at their companies.

The 4 secrets of a Successful Safety Program

1

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

2

Worksite Analysis

3

Hazard Prevention and Control

4

Safety and Health Training

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

The elements of management commitment and employee involvement are complementary and form the core of any occupational safety and health program.

- OSHA.gov

What this simple statement means is that in order for employees to get involved **Management** has to set the tone.

As a business owner or manager who has reached any level of success, you know how to get your team motivated. Pay raises, good hours, great benefits, a friendly atmosphere, maybe a free barbeque once a month...

The best part of a small business is getting to know your folks and what gets them excited about the work every day. **Management Commitment to Safety** should be no different.

If the owner or president cares about safety and takes the key steps to demonstrate that to the team then they will follow through and make it happen in the field. **Building safety into the culture of the company** is accomplished by showing that the owner, the managers, and the field supervisors all take safety just as serious as the build schedule.

Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

Here are a few of those key steps to help develop or improve **Management Commitment and Employee Involvement** in your company:

- *State clearly a worksite policy on safe and healthful work and working conditions. Put this in writing, signed by the boss!*
- *Provide visible top management involvement in implementing the program so that all employees understand that management's commitment is serious. Slogans and posters are great to reinforce the message but put your money where your mouth is and that will let the team know you are sincere.*
- *Hold managers, supervisors, and employees accountable for meeting their responsibilities so that essential tasks will be performed. Start with the Managers and Supervisors – if you hold them accountable for every accident, every injury then they will get the message to the employees.*
- *Arrange for and encourage employee involvement in the structure and operation of the program. Here's where you bring in the boots on the ground. Give the employees in the field a voice to tell you about their safety concerns and then follow-up on them. That lets them know that the safety program isn't just pile of paper sitting on the shelf collecting dust.*

Effective management actively analyzes the work and worksite to anticipate and prevent harmful occurrences.

- OSHA.gov

As a business owner or manager, you are doing this analysis already... it may not be specifically for safety but I'll guarantee you're looking at your job site, facility, trucks, office, or customer worksite and making sure that things are getting done.

You are involved and checking. You're not a babysitter because who has time for that. But you are looking over their shoulder, just in case. This is worksite analysis in action!

Now incorporate the Safety component. You may need to get a little help to know what the safety regulations or rules are that apply to your specific business. You may also need a starting point, such as a checklist. But worksite analysis does not need to be exhaustive or complicated.

Here are a few tips to get started with a **Worksite Analysis** program at your business:

- Leverage existing information available to your industry on OSHA websites or through local Workers Compensation programs for Small businesses.
- *Conduct baseline worksite survey for safety and health...* Do this as part of a normal job site visit. Build it into a normal site visit to start out and observe the safety of your team in the field.
- *Conduct regular site safety and health inspections...* Let your team know that you'll be looking for good safety behavior with every visit by you, your management team, and supervisors. Use a checklist, if possible, with each of the visits and discuss the findings with both management and employee teams.
- *Investigate accidents and "near miss" incidents so that their causes and means of prevention can be identified.* Accident investigation should be part of your regular business duties and a critical component to keep up with OSHA required recordkeeping rules too!

Employers should establish procedures to correct or control present or potential hazards in a timely manner.

- OSHA.gov

The truth is that this is much more than a "should" statement. Safety really does come as part of the responsibilities of owning and running a business.

OSHA reminds us of this in what is called their **General Duty Clause** which states – *each employer shall furnish to each of their employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to their employees...*

In other words, it is your job and duty to provide a safe place to work. As if small business owners and managers don't already have their hands full!

The good news is that you are not alone! There are a ton of low-cost and sometimes free solutions that you can use to help you get your safety program started. And if you have a program in place they have great resources to help you improve on your existing safety program.

Hazard Prevention and Control

Here are some critical aspects to consider when developing your company's **Hazard Prevention and Control** system:

- *Use engineering techniques where feasible and appropriate.* Build safety into your processes. If you can avoid creating a hazard then you can avoid having a lot of headaches. Not to mention you can avoid the cost associated with dealing with the hazard.
- *Maintain the facility and equipment to prevent equipment breakdowns.* Whether it is maintaining your fleet, heavy equipment, hand-tools, or extension cords - maintaining them in good condition is cheaper and safer than having an incident.
- *Establish a medical program that includes first aid onsite...* There are some specific OSHA standards that require a trained first aid provider. However, consider having at least one person trained in First Aid/CPR for every site and on every crew. Catching a minor first aid injury in time and treating it correctly can prevent an OSHA visit, insurance claim, and loss of production.
- *Provide personal protective equipment when engineering controls are infeasible.* In most circumstances, owners are required to pay for and provide PPE for employees. Even when you don't have to, it may be better to pay for it than leave it up to the worker to pay for themselves. OSHA rules make it clear that the owner is still responsible even if the worker uses their own safety equipment and tools.

Employee training programs should be designed to ensure that all employees understand and are aware of the hazard to which they may be exposed and the proper methods for avoiding such hazards.

- OSHA.gov

Here's the truth that business owners and managers need to know - construction rules don't make this an option... See for yourself below:

29 Code of Federal Regulations 1926.21(b)(2)

The employer shall instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and the regulations applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate any hazards or other exposure to illness or injury.

Workers need to have a chance to really be exposed to right and wrong examples of safety practices. Train them in the classroom or at a tailgate meeting and model the right behavior in the field. Workers need to see and hear from their foreman, supervisor, and owner how good safety means good business. Training doesn't have to be expensive – reach out to free resources locally but always remember that every dollar invested in safety is an investment in your business.

Here are a some important issues to keep in mind as you implement or improve your **Safety and Health Training** program:

- *Employee training programs should be designed to ensure that all employees understand and are aware of the hazards to which they may be exposed...* Training has to be relevant to the work, timely for the tasks being performed, and targeted for the right employees. Use pictures of the types of hazards the workers could be exposed to in the field.
- Training should be timely and frequent. Tailgate meetings, toolbox talks, and weekly safety meetings are foundational to great safety programs.
- Employee training programs must ensure that they address *the proper methods for avoiding such hazards*. It isn't enough to talk about what not to do, training has to provide tips and recommendations on how to do it right. Use pictures of the workers performing work in the correct way.
- The OSHA rules are an important and even a missed component of the safety training program. Workers need to know the "why" behind the training presented. Showing them the actual written rules and OSHA laws is a great technique to answer the "why" question.

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