A Supervisor’s Role in Safety

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What Purpose Do Supervisors Serve?

Set the tone
- Employees follow your lead
- You are more influential than you realize
- Actions speak louder than words

Determine what needs to be done; get it done
What Purpose So Supervisors Serve?

Enforce the rules
• Fairly, honestly and consistently

Held to a *higher standard*

Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

• Coordinate employee training sessions
• Take advantage of “teachable moments”
• Model what employees learn in training
Safety Communication - Supervisor’s Role

- Discussing changes to safety and health policies/procedures
- Completing incident investigations
- Performing safety and health inspections

Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

- Be familiar with safety and health policies and procedures
- Conduct regular inspections of your work area
- Provide feedback to employees on inspection findings
Good Supervisors

- Effectively filter and translate information
- Are flexible; adapt their methods of supervision to accommodate the situation

Employment

Employment Laws

Department Policies

City/County Policies

Contracts

Employee Handbook
How do They Interact?

In general, if rules conflict they must be followed in this order:

1) Employment law
2) Union contracts and employment contracts
3) Employee handbook/City-County policies
4) Department policies/procedures
5) Manager and supervisor rules

“Employment Practices Hotline”

- Each member of the SDPAA has access to an attorney specializing in employment law
- Entitled to 1-hour free legal advice per incident
- $5,000 deductible waived if your entity calls first and then follow the advice
- Contact SBI at (888) 313-0939 to activate the hotline
Supervisors and Safety

The term “safety” (workers compensation) includes “risk management” (liability)

• **WHY** should supervisors be involved in safety and health in the workplace?

• **HOW** can supervisors do more about safety in the workplace?

Supervisors and Safety

• Know the requirements established in policies, programs or procedures

• Be aware of the consequences of not following
  • For employees
  • For you as a supervisor
Supervisors and Safety

1. **Recognize** hazards

2. **Monitor** the acceptable level of risk for department operations

3. **Control** hazards to prevent injuries, illnesses and property damage

Supervisors and Safety

Much of the supervisor’s role in safety is and should be **PRO-ACTIVE**

- Job safety observations
- Safety training
- Workplace inspections
Why Should Supervisors Be Involved in Safety?

- Employees
- Citizens
- Finances
- Property
- Reputation

Employees

- Employees are your most important resource

It is your job to ensure:

- Employees have a healthy and safe workplace
- They have appropriate tools/equipment to do the job
Citizens

• You are responsible for ensuring citizen’s have a safe community to live and work

• Minimizing the number of claims and limiting the organization’s liability when there is a claim or lawsuit

Finances

• Claims and lawsuits can be expensive

• They can break the budget

• Multiple claims can cause your contributions for coverage to increase and that can impact your future budgets
Property and Equipment

- Not just the cost of replacing a building or equipment
- Temporary relocation or coming up with replacement equipment
- Loss of business/production

Perception

High profile claims and/or lawsuits = perception of poor management
How Can Supervisors Impact Safety?

• **Engineer** the hazard out of the job

• **Educate** management on the importance of safety in the workplace

• **Enforce** safety rules in the workplace

How do we become supervisors?
Does being a *supervisor* mean I automatically know how to promote safety?

**Supervisors Safety Development Program**
National Safety Council

1. Safety management
2. Communication
3. Safety and health training
4. Employee involvement
5. Safety and health inspections
Trends in Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trend</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Workers Compensation Laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>National Safety Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>New philosophy – Safety is everyone’s responsibility</td>
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</tbody>
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Changing Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes of Incidents</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domino Theory: Single unsafe act or condition</td>
<td>Multiple Causation: Many causes</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Approach</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>New</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management dictates, employees follow</td>
<td>Participative management empowers employees</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety Responsibility</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety department is responsible for safety</td>
<td>Safety is everyone’s responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Causes of Incidents

Acceptable Level of Risk

What determines it?
• The individual employee

What can supervisors do to change it?
• Reinforce safe behaviors
• Eliminate at-risk behaviors
What do your employees do when you aren’t watching?

“Teachable Moment”
Benefits of Effective Safety Management

Why?

Effective Safety Management

Lower Costs/Increased Efficiency

Types of Costs

Direct Costs

• Costs for which you receive a bill
• Typically covered by insurance

Indirect Costs

• Are hidden
• Have an impact on budget
• Typically not covered by insurance
Hidden/Indirect Costs of Injury

$4 of hidden costs for each $1 in direct costs

Can Affect Profit Margins

- OSHA class – 3% profit margin
- Government doesn’t have profit margins, but what about increases in the annual budget?
- Example – High Motor Vehicle Accident Rate
Numbers & Trends

Studies say safety ROI is $3 returned on each $1 spent

Your workplace:
- Track accident/injury data
- Pay attention to trends
- 3 injuries 2014 vs. 10 injuries 2015 = something changed!!

Report Card

Loss Control Credit

Loss Control Credits
Safety Management System

- An organized, structured approach to achieving and maintaining high standards of safety performance
- Based on principles of continuous improvement

Continuous Improvement Process Model

1. Management and leadership commitment
2. Assess and establish baseline
3. Plan and set goals, strategies, and tactics
4. Implement strategies and tactics
5. Review and adjust

*Repeat...*
Successful Safety Management System

Should give equal consideration to 3 areas:

1) Administrative (management)
2) Operational (technical)
3) Cultural (behavioral)

9 Elements of a Safety Management System

Administrative and Management

1. Management leadership and commitment

2. Organizational communications and system documentation

3. Assessments, audits, evaluations and continuous improvement
9 Elements of a Safety Management System

**Operational and Technical**
4. Hazard recognition, evaluation and control
5. Facility design, engineering, procedures
6. Operational safety and health programs

**Cultural and Behavioral**
7. Employee involvement
8. Motivation, behavior and attitude
9. Training and orientation
Benefits of Effective Safety Management

For the organization:
• Fewer injuries
• A healthy, experienced workforce

Plus:
• Enhanced public image
• No legal fees (no MSHA/EPA citations)
• Less spent for indirect costs such as replacing injured workers

Benefits of Effective Safety Management

For the supervisor:
• Improved attitudes of workers toward jobs and organization
• No time/energy spent investigating injuries
Safety Management Assessment

Assessing Safety Management

Is there a formal written policy to control workplace hazards?

- Safety plan (i.e. new employee training, task training, refresher training)
- Safety policies and procedures

Is it up to date?
Assessing Safety Management (Cont.)

• Are there ways to enforce safety in your workplace?

• Does your organization identify “employee safety” as a priority?
  • Is it more than just “talk”?

• Are there resources (staff/budget) for identifying and controlling workplace hazards?

Assessing Safety Management (Cont.)

• Do supervisors communicate safety and health expectations?

• How?
Assessing Safety Management (Cont.)

- Could management be more effective in communicating expectations for safety in the workplace?
- Does management set a good example by following safe work practices?
- Is management involved in identifying hazards in the workplace?

Assessing Safety Management (Cont.)

- Is overseeing “safety” formally assigned to anyone?
  - Does everyone know who?
- How do elected and appointed officials get involved in safety and health issues?
Assessing Safety Management (Cont.)

Are there written procedures for:
• Safety inspections?
• Accident investigations?
• Preventive maintenance?

Summary
• Being a supervisor is not an easy task
  • “Grass is greener on the other side?”
• It comes with a tremendous amount of responsibility
• You have a choice to make. . .
• You can either be reactive or pro-active when it comes to safety

The Choice is Yours!!
Questions

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