

Safety Committees: Assessing Your Existing Program, Identifying Gaps, and Taking it to a World-Class Level

Presented by:

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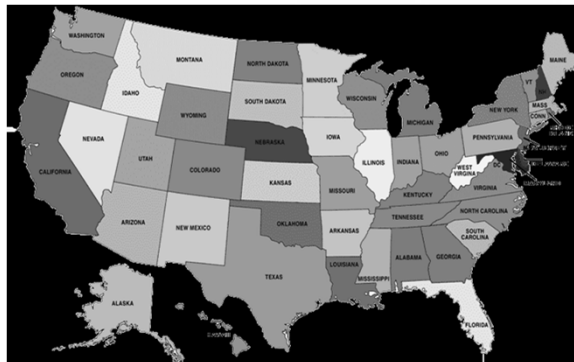
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State Requirements for Safety Committees

- <http://www.blr.com/Workplace-Safety/Safety-Administration/Safety-Committees>



Some Interesting State Requirements

- 32 States have no requirement for Safety Committees
- Alabama requires a safety committee upon the written request of ANY employee
- California is not required to; but if an employer does there are very specific requirements
- Colorado allows possible workers compensation premium discounts for employers with specific cost containment programs

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Connecticut's Employment Regulation law requires all private and public sector employers to develop safety committees at each worksite with 25 or more employees
- Maine requires any employer members of an association or organization that obtain workers' compensation insurance as a group must establish a safety committee that will, by means of education and otherwise, seek to reduce the incidence and severity of accidents or claims

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Minnesota law requires all private and public sector employers with 25 or more employees to develop safety committees at each worksite.
- Montana requires employers with five or more employees must have a safety program that includes a safety committee.
- Nebraska states every public and private sector employer subject to the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act must establish a safety committee

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Nevada requires an employer with more than 25 employees at each worksite, and any manufacturer of explosives regardless of the number of employees, must establish a safety committee for each worksite
- New Hampshire states that private and public (state and local governments) sector employers with 15 or more employees (formerly five or more employees) must establish a joint loss safety committee (Committee).

Some Interesting State Requirements

- New York - There are no regulations in New York that require private sector employers to create safety and health committees. County governments under certain circumstances must create a labor-management safety committee.
- North Carolina states that employers with poor safety records, as evidenced by a workers' compensation experience rate modifier of 1.5 or higher, must establish and implement safety and health programs to reduce hazards and prevent injuries and illnesses

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Ohio requires employers may be eligible for workers' compensation premium discounts if they maintain an employee safety committee or similar organization.
- Oregon - Most private and public sector employers are required to establish either a safety committee or hold safety meetings to communicate and evaluate safety and health issues in the workplace. Many employers with 11 or more employees do not have this option and are required to establish and maintain a safety committee.

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Pennsylvania employers can reduce their workers' compensation premiums by 5 percent each year for up to 5 years by setting up a workplace safety committee that meets the requirements for state certification. An employer with a certified workplace Safety Committee is eligible to receive a 5 percent insurance premium discount annually
- Rhode Island employers insured under workers' compensation rules may be required, in cooperation with its insurer, to establish and maintain a safety committee

Some Interesting State Requirements

- Tennessee law requires all private and public (state and local government offices and operations) sector employers subject to the state's workers' compensation law and whose claims experience places them in the top 25 percent of all covered employers to establish a safety committee
- Utah does not require employers to establish safety and health committees in their workplace. State rules recommend that employers establish a safety committee composed of management and employee representatives.

Safety Committees: Proven Strategies for Long-Term Success

- Why safety Committees are a valuable tool for safety program success
- Integrating your safety committee into your management development program
- How safety successful safety committees can affect costs and impact the bottom line
- Safety Committee Design
- Best Practices / Proven Strategies

The value of Committees

“In matters of either crisis or routine, it is always wise to ask for the ideas, opinions, or suggestions of others. Indeed, this practice often improves action taken and reinforces consensus between an officer and those he commands.

Moreover, I believe that restricting your choices, to the confines of your own knowledge is self-limiting. This is especially so when others possess knowledge and ideas that will allow you to improve upon your course of action.”

**Captain’s Journal: “Lessons on Resilience”
Stardate 42968.3
Captain Jean –Luc Picard**

Polling Questions

- **How many people have safety committees?**
- **Of those that have safety committees, do you feel they are successful?**

Safety Committees and Safety program Success

- Safety Committees provide an **active and proactive** vehicle for employee involvement –
- Form of **Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)** encouraging interaction and creation of synergistic relationships with other departments – Collective Problem solving
- Coordination of **regulatory implementation** such as training, inspection, program and accident reviews

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Safety Committee As Role Model

- Setting a Good Example / Be Approachable
- Walking the Walk
- Being Visible and Viable
- Peer Coaching - “Silence is Consent”
- Eliminate Hazards when Found

Safety Committee As Leader

- Approach Peers on Sensitive Issues
- Participate in Safety Trainings / Viable Topics
- Coordinate recognition of employees / Celebrate Safety
- Inspire / Motivate / Believe things will get better

Safety Committee As Manager

- Conduct accident investigations / Root Cause
 - Share Lessons Learned
- Conduct safety inspections collaboratively not punitively
- Hold regular meetings and post minutes for all employees to see, understand and make comments
 - Let employees know that safety is a “value”

Safety Committee As Protector

- Understand how injuries affect the company bottom –line
- Know “how insurance works”, the true cost of accidents, experience modification rates, and revenue required to pay for injuries.
- Be an employee advocate, listen, gather data, communicate and follow-up

Integrating your safety committee into your management development program

The Ultimate Purpose of Safety Leadership

- **To Save Lives**
- **To Prevent Injuries & Illnesses**
- **To Keep your company from Financial Harm**

- **Moral Obligation**
- **Legal Obligation**
- **Financial Obligation**

Safety Management - 101

Safety in the workplace must be managed the way any other critical business function is managed.

In addition to the cost factors, safety issues have major bearing on the perception of your company to the public.

Safety Should Not be Considered a Priority:

But a Value with No Compromise

A true safety culture is led by men and women committed to the principle for it's own sake – not solely for compliance,

How can successful safety committees affect costs and impact the bottom line?

- Attend industry and safety professional association meetings
- Introduce new and tested ideas into the workplace to encourage and support safety implementation
- Develop relationships with vendors, and insurance loss control professionals
- Invite company leaders as guest speakers to discuss company challenges and successes

- Develop a subcommittee that is responsible for understand OSHA regulations that pertain to your industry
- Develop expertise in various business functions; ERM
- Spend time in each department of your company (field trips) talk to workers, show interest in their jobs, make changes if possible based on feedback (Hawthorne Study)

Safety Committee Design

- Determine the Structure of the Safety Committee
- Determine the Optimal Size of Your Committee
- Determine Who the Specific Members will be
- Determine who the Executive or Management Advocate will be

Develop a Mission Statement / Purpose

- To promote and maintain the interest of employees in health and safety issues.
- To educate managers, supervisors and employees through awareness and training activities that they are primarily responsible for the prevention of workplace accidents.

- To help make health and safety activities an integral part of the organization's operating procedures, culture and programs.
- To provide an opportunity for the free discussion of health and safety problems and possible solutions.
- To inform and educate employees and supervisors about health and safety issues, new standards, research findings, etc

- To help reduce the risk of workplace injuries and illnesses.
- To help insure compliance with federal and state health and safety standards.

General Key Elements

- Hold meetings on a regular basis, following a consistent schedule.
- Set clear meeting agendas, publish them in advance, and follow them.
- Keep minutes of each meeting that summarize the issues discussed, the proposed actions to be taken, and the person(s) responsible for follow-up on each item.
- Minutes should be published and provided to each committee member, as well as made available to all employees.

- Members should be required to attend all meetings, except in the case of emergencies. If a member cannot attend a meeting, then an alternate should be sent.
- Attendance should be taken at each meeting and recorded in the minutes.
- Publicize the Committee's accomplishments, as well as assistance to management; find ways to recognize the efforts of individuals and groups within the organization who make significant contributions to the Safety Program.

Typical Duties

- Report unsafe conditions and suggest corrective actions.
- Meet at least monthly; less frequently for smaller departments or operations, but at least quarterly.
- Clearly define the duties and responsibilities of officers and members.
- Review incidents, near misses, Supervisor's Accident Investigation Reports, claim summaries and loss analysis on a periodic basis.

- Review all serious injuries. Not for faultfinding, but for fact finding to prevent a re-occurrence of the same or similar incident.
- Contribute ideas and suggestions for improvements in safety.
- Work safely and influence others to work safely.
- Make periodic facility safety audits.
- Sponsor and coordinate contests, poster programs, safety drives; etc., and supply other informational materials which can help to promote safer operations.

- Develop, implement, and review written safety programs.
- Build enthusiasm for safety programs.
- Direct involvement with organizational wide safety training.
- Establish dispute resolution procedures.
- Propose and create safety checklists.
- Identifying high-risk job tasks and developing written safe operating procedures.

Best Practices and Proven Strategies

- Set Clear Goals – Hold members accountable
- Have an agenda for each and every meeting and send out ahead of time.
- Review “Old Business”
- Accident Review
- Inspection Reports

- Review “New Business”
- Goals / Planning (short term / Long term)

Summary - Essentials of a Successful Safety Committee

- Top management officials should attend safety committee meetings (at least periodically). They must show interest in the safety program to both supervisory management and labor.
- **Mission Statement.** Clear statement that supports the safety committee and states what management is looking for and what it is expecting to get from the committee.

- Gives the committee guidelines to meet the requirements of upper management.
- Improved inspections.
 - Implementing cooperative inspections that include workers and management representatives;
 - Making inspections fun and gratifying by noting not just the negative but the positive conditions in the workplace
- Chairperson must show strong leadership, keep things moving.

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- The committee should address legitimate safety issues only. The committee should not become a format for negotiating union business or airing grievances.
- Meeting agendas must be established and provided to members in advance. The agenda should establish a starting and ending time for the meeting.
- Minutes of each meeting should be circulated to all members and management within 2-3 working days following each meeting.

- Members must be expected by management to attend meetings and to schedule the necessary time.
- Acknowledgment. Recognition of the committee for its positive impact on the workplace. Bringing the success of the committee to everyone's attention makes others want to be part of it.
- The minutes should include the names of members who did not attend as well as those members that did attend.

- Let all employees of the organization know about the committee. Post minutes or notices, put articles in newsletters. Solicit input from “fellow” employees.
- Be positive. Give credit where credit is due. Keep employees informed of the committee’s activities.
- Celebrate your success!

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Cathi Marx has a 25-year career in risk and safety management positions for mid-sized companies, and positions of responsibility on both the carrier and insurance agency/broker side of business. She is the past president of the San Diego Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers and as a member of the San Diego Association of Insurance Professionals.

As a Corporate Environmental Health and Safety Manager for a technology company, Marx managed the domestic and international EH&S program and played an integral role in obtaining ISO 14001 certification for the U.S. based manufacturing facility. She has experience in developing and implementing corporate Business Recovery and Continuation Programs, integrating all levels of the organization into a comprehensive recovery plan. Marx also managed a 10 state territory of safety & health consultants for a multi-line insurance company, during which time she was responsible for service quality, productivity, cost effectiveness, and broker/client relationship.