

Safety Success: Building a Culture of Employee Engagement



The DuPont Bradley Curve emphasizes that achieving zero injuries starts with an organization's commitment to zero incidents. Fewer injuries occur through compliance, supervision, and personal decisions influenced by culture. The greatest impact is achieved when interdependency, in the form of teamwork, is present.

Every individual is prone to errors that could lead to incidents. Having a colleague available to remind another to correct an error before it results in an incident is invaluable, though challenging to accomplish. This difficulty is illustrated in Don Merrell's poem "I Chose to Look the Other Way," where he describes witnessing a co-worker violate a safety rule but choosing not to intervene, leading to the worker's death. Many people hesitate to remind co-workers to work safely or wear safety glasses due to uncertainty about their reaction.

One method we used to communicate the importance of interdependency was through daily tool box talks.

During a discussion with young ironworkers on site, as they prepared to use a manlift, I asked personal questions about important people in their lives and then posed the following questions:

1. How might it affect you if your co-worker is injured on the job?
2. Have you ever forgotten to connect your lanyard to the anchor point?
3. Have you ever forgotten to lower your face shield before grinding?
4. Are you comfortable reminding a co-worker to connect or lower their face shield?

Finally, we aimed to reduce the fear of backlash by encouraging co-workers to let each other know that it is okay to remind them to work safely. One company created a large banner and had each employee sign the statement: "I give you permission to care about my safety." This approach fosters a culture of mutual care and responsibility, emphasizing that everyone has a role in ensuring safety.



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