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CONSTRUCTION PROJECT SAFETY TRAINING

Success in Achieving Zero Employee Injury Requires “Safety Education, Orientation & Specialized Training.”

Safety Education

Safety education knows no exclusion; from CEO's to the line workers; all benefit from safety training and safety training properly achieved is a vital part of cultures of safety where employee injury becomes a very rare event. When “Safety Education” is under funded and meager in content, it can be said that such results from “at risk behavior” by top project leadership in failing to provide the safety education resources proven to be effective in achieving a zero injury culture of safety.

All Employee Safety Orientation

The Construction Industry Institute (CII) research found TRIR improvements as high as “nineteen fold” when safety orientation was given every employee. The best performance was found when the following three initiatives were applied: 1. the orientation is formal, 2 both contractor and owner project leaders participate, 3 and comprehension testing was conducted to insure employee understanding. On reflection one can immediately see logic in the research outcome. When employees see an owner/contractor coordinated commitment to insuring all receive the same safety orientation, it is then the employees begin to believe the quest for zero injury is real and not just “safety talk.” Those projects that test after the orientation see improved attention and alertness during the sessions as the employees insure their personal comprehension of the orientation details.

Formal Safety Training

While many employers include some safety training during orientation, the CII research found benefit where projects provided both workers and supervision, including top project leaders, additional safety training. This additional safety training should always be project specific thus providing training in advance of need in many areas. Project leaders who for reasons of schedule or cost keep putting off safety training until “later” are in fact engaging in “leader at-risk behavior.” One could say an untrained worker asked to perform work for which he/she lacks recent training is an “injury in waiting.”

Specialized Safety Training

The CII research went on to conclude that those projects that were experiencing a zero injury outcome were giving all employees including supervision at least four hours safety training per month. Also the researchers found that projects that actually provided a project training budget were more effective. It goes without saying that to not spend the budgeted funds would be counter productive. The frequency of training most prevalent was weekly with weekly supervisor training being a strong component. At first this amount of safety training seems excessive and too costly but when one considers the exorbitant cost of many typical injuries occurring to workers the informed know immediately that safety training is the “right” way to go; “right” for your employee's health, “right” for long term productivity and “right” economically for the corporation; a “win-win” situation of rare proportions.

Safety Training Truism

“Zero Injury” is the daily outcome of doing a lot of little things well;
but “Zero Injury” when found, is no “Little Thing!”

NAC Safety White Papers

Through the Position Papers on Safety, the National Academy of Construction has summarized for corporate executives the practices being successfully applied by others, and is recommending that American businesses inside and outside construction investigate and use the safety research of CII. Many users of CII safety research have achieved consecutive work-hours exceeding one million without an OSHA/BLS Recordable injury.

The nine research-based CII Zero Injury safety leadership categories are:

1. Demonstrated Management Safety Commitment;
2. Staffing for Safety;
3. Safe Work Planning, Pre-Project and Pre-Task;
4. Safety Education, Orientation and Specialized Training;
5. Employee Involvement, Behavior Safety and Safety Perception Surveys;
6. Evaluation and Recognition of Safety Performance;
7. Contractor Selection and Management;
8. Accident/Incident Investigation Including Near Misses;
9. Drug and Alcohol Testing.

Please see web site www.naocon.org for a complete set of the previous 15 NAC Safety White Papers.

The ROI of Zero Injury Safety Performance

It is often heard from employers that the cost of implementation of the nine Construction Industry Institute zero injury safety initiatives is expensive. This is true! There is significant cost to the employer to apply the zero injury research. However this investment has a proven rate of return of 400% to 500% per annum when compared to the costs of BLS average injury rate performance for the construction industry in America. When implemented properly the Zero Injury Safety Leadership concept results in injury becoming a very rare event thus protecting your workforce from harm.

More Information?

Information and details on the increasingly popular “Zero Injury Safety Leadership Concept” are available from the following source: Construction Industry Institute, 3925 W. Braker Lane (R4500), Austin, TX 78759-5316 Ph (512) 232-3004.

www.construction-institute.org

See the NAC website at www.naocon.org for copies of the Safety Whitepaper series.

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