Employer Flexible™

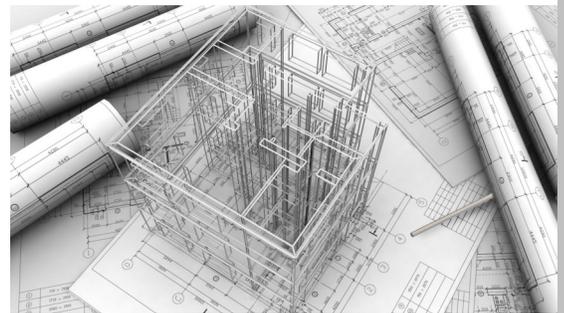# Monthly Safety Newsletter

November 2014

Blueprints for a Sound Safety Program

Visit The Foundation of a Safe Workplace from Oregon OSHA for more details on the seven key management activities.

Oregon OSHA has created a resource to help outline what it takes to make a workplace safe. In it they describe the basic fundamentals of a sound safety program based on seven key management activities:

1. Management leadership
2. Hazard anticipation and detection
3. Hazard prevention and control
4. Planning and evaluation
5. Administration and supervision
6. Safety and health training
7. Employee participation

A building cannot stand without a strong foundation and cannot grow without a sturdy framework. Before building engineers even start to draw up blueprints they plan, design, rework, and consider many aspects of the project in front of them. The same can be true of a good safety program, it needs to be planned, designed, and reworked based on the different aspects of the business. Buildings have regulatory requirements that make some aspects of them similar. Safety programs also have regulatory requirements which will make them similar. What we need to remember is an engineer can't use one blueprint to build different types of buildings just like we can't use one written safety program to manage safety at different types of businesses. Finally, even a brand new building is never perfect; the maintenance phase begins the day after construction is complete. The safety program may be written but it never will be complete. This is why maintenance is so important.

News & Notes

- Great projects all start with a strong foundation.

- A Good Safety Program requires constant maintenance.

- Document to Protect Your Client, Yourself, and Your Organization.

- If you don't write something down you will inevitably forget it.

Written Documentation

If it isn't in writing, it didn't happen. Good documentation is key. Both of these statements reinforce the importance of written documentation. Think back to early history and how little we know before the written word. In addition think of how much a story can change as it gets retold again and again. Professor Ford author of *The Four Conversations* offers these three tips:

1. Reliably write things down, even those things you are sure you won't forget.
2. Reliably write things down in the same place, like a journal or inventory of some kind.
3. Regularly review what you have recorded.

For more information visit It Doesn't Exist if it Isn't Written Down by Jeffrey Ford

Tips for Analytical Problem Solving

In applying any problem-solving process:

➢ Look for patterns, similarities, bubbles, and differences in the data.
➢ Draw inferences from the data, and anticipate the unexpected.
➢ Challenge your assumptions and interpretations. If possible, don't depend on assumptions if you can check on evidence.
➢ Play devil's advocate—try to disprove your theories as well as confirm them—and don't ignore contrary evidence.
➢ Try to control biases, prejudices, and conflicts of interest.
➢ Divide difficult problems into sub-problems and attack them individually.
➢ Control variables in reasoning or testing to get better results.
➢ Keep environmental, legal, and social considerations in mind.
➢ Combine the use of imagination with rational thinking.

STEP 1 Identify the Problem
STEP 2 Explore Alternatives
STEP 3 Select an Alternative
STEP 4 Implement the Solution
STEP 5 Evaluate the Situation

Stress Management

The World Health Organization has called stress "the health epidemic of the 21st century." The EAP provider ComPsych Corporation conducts an annual StressPulse Survey that looks at the prevalence, effects, and on-the-job causes of workplace stress. Among findings of the most recent survey:

➢ 95 percent of employees have either high levels of stress or constant, but manageable stress levels.
➢ As for work priorities, 59 percent of employees see accomplishing basic responsibilities as most important, 22 percent see being present as most important, and 19 percent consider performance improvement as their top priority.
➢ 15 percent of employees miss more than 6 days per year due to stress.
➢ Stress and personal relationship issues are the most common reasons for employee absence (47 percent), even exceeding medical reasons, which account for 42 percent of absences.

Many additional tips to reduce, prevent and cope with stress can be found at helpguide.org

News & Notes

- Evidence and facts carry more weight than assumptions and opinions.

- Think outside the box and try to both prove and disprove a theory.

- Learn healthy strategies to cope with stress rather than using unhealthy ways to cope with stress that can cause more damage in the long run.

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