

## Implementing a Culture Based Safety Program

By Gary Hanson, President of  
American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc.

With the implementation of the Group Rating in 1990, it is gratifying as a safety consultant to see the number of small companies that now understand the need and importance of establishing an effective Safety Program. The economic incentive is tremendous and many companies have now come to expect this savings on an annual basis. Unfortunately, there still are a number of companies out there that have not done or are not doing all the right things to help prevent employee injuries. This can be a costly oversight and results in a company being removed from the Group Rating.

The true value of an effective Safety Program must be clearly understood and communicated to all levels of management and employees.

An effective Safety Program is designed to protect a company's most valuable assets:

- \* The Employees
- \* Equipment and Property
- \* Production, Sales and Service Capacity
- \* Financial Strength
- \* The Company's Good Public Name

An effective Safety Program helps the company achieve its Corporate Mission of being successful, growing and making a profit. In other words, a good Safety Program needs to be an integral part of a company management philosophy.

Safety must become a part of the Management Culture:

- \* The true value of safety must be understood and communicated clearly.
- \* High performance goals must be established and achievement of the goals demanded.
- \* Safety must become a part of how the organization thinks.
- \* Safety must become a part of the daily routine of employees.
- \* Safety must be taken into consideration in all decisions affecting the company's employees.
- \* Safety must be managed with Consistency and Intensity.
- \* Excuses are not acceptable.

A Culture Based Safety Program should be established and the following elements included:

- \* Senior Management leadership and support.
- \* Written Annual Plan
- \* Established performance goal communicated to all levels of management
- \* Methods to identify why employee would behave in an unsafe manner and then taking the necessary action to correct this.
- \* Development of Safe Work Procedures.
- \* Accountability and Responsibility clearly outlined and measured.
- \* Safe work environment established and maintained.
- \* Safe tools and equipment provided.
- \* Proper and detailed Safety Training Provided.
- \* Positive reinforcement, follow-up and enforcement provided.
- \* A method to allow employees to give input and get them involved in improving the Safety Program provided.
- \* The program must be reviewed at least annually and updated as needed.

The Safety Program must be managed with an aggressive organized approach. Protecting the company's most valuable assets is good business and well worth the cost and effort. A good Safety Program reduces cost and increases the company's profit.

In other words, it is simply good business, good for the employees and good for the company.

If you need any help with your Safety Program or have any questions, please give me a call at 1-800-356-1274.

