

## 10 WAYS TO INCREASE WORKER ENGAGEMENT IN SAFETY

1

### GET WORKER INPUT INTO METHOD STATEMENTS

Engage the workforce in producing risk assessments and method statements, they are the ones doing the work yet their input is often overlooked.

2

### ENGAGE THE WORKER IN IDENTIFYING RISK

Ask the worker what the most dangerous task they complete is or where they think they are most likely to have an incident. Use behavioral analysis to identify steps to make at risk working less likely.

3

### MAKE IT EASY TO GET FEEDBACK

If you want the workforce to submit near misses, observations or ideas, make the process as easy as possible and reinforce the behavior straight away. Most people avoid submitting information because it is effortful and you never hear anything back anyway.

4

### ADDRESS ALL ISSUES RAISED QUICKLY

Encourage the workforce to speak up about hazards or issues by addressing them quickly. When people learn that their feedback is acted upon quickly they will engage more. If you can't address the issue say why rather than avoid the matter.

5

### COMMUNICATE WELL ANY CHANGES MADE

Communicate well any changes made in response to feedback. A simple white board listing you said - we did, that is updated at least weekly and kept live will reinforce the behavior of people speaking up and engaging in safety.

6

### PRACTICE HAZARD RECOGNITION EVERY DAY

If you want the workforce to be spotting and rectifying more hazards, ask them what they have seen and addressed every day. Keep asking and reinforcing progress. The only way you know they will say something when there is an issue, is if they say something when there is an issue.

7

### RUN ANONYMOUS SURVEYS

Survey the workforce regularly to get feedback on the real work environment, all of the day to day things that have a big impact on how the work actually gets done including time available to do the job, resources required, materials, information, supervisory behavior, expectations, barriers and any feedback received.

8

### GET WORKER INPUT INTO PPE SELECTION

Involve workers in PPE selection, they're more likely to use the things they have selected. Also remember to make equipment readily available, storing equipment just 50 yards away from where it is needed can make it less likely it will get used.

9

### DELIVER ENGAGING BRIEFINGS

Coach your supervisors on running engaging start of shift briefs and toolbox talks. Many supervisors have never been given any on the job coaching in these tasks and yet we rely heavily on them as part of our safety strategy.

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### RESIST THE URGE TO BLAME THE WORKER

Resist the urge to blame the worker when they are involved in a near miss or incident, their behavior is almost always a symptom of a deficient work environment. A significant unwanted side effect of a punishment based strategy is that the workforce will not talk openly about current working practices.



## SAFETY & INSTANT GRATIFICATION

In today's world where we have access to instant gratification at our fingertips, it's no wonder we all seem a bit more distracted. This can have massive effects on your safety program, so understanding how to approach instant gratification and leveraging it to your benefit is critical.

Instant gratification, simply put, is seeking out immediate reinforcers (things we like that happen now, instead of later). What behavioral science tells us is that these are extremely powerful consequences.

Many risky safety behaviors can be identified as instant gratification situations: not wearing a hard hat because right now it's more comfortable without one, taking a short cut because it saves me time immediately, etc.

Many safety behaviors that we want to see can be thought of as reinforcing (we get something good - like not getting hurt - from them) but they most often are "later" consequences which makes them less powerful than their instant counterparts.

Understanding this mix of consequences at play for your workforce can give you valuable insight into ways to begin changing it for the better.

Remember, understanding *why* behavior happens is the first step to changing it.