



Safety Motivation and Promotion

A new loss control program often produces a flurry of activities because many departments and employees are involved in its successful operation. The question hard thought by these groups is; what should be done to maintain interest in the program? Without continued motivation, employees begin to lose their positive response to safety. The danger is that their motivation, with time, could drop below pre-program levels.

To maintain interest, management has to direct and handle the loss control activities so that the employees will benefit directly. Interest will be aroused by activities that appeal to them personally. However, everyone is not motivated by the same incentive; therefore, activities that encompass several motivating factors will gain more overall participation.

The key motivating factors are:

Self-Preservation: Fear of personal injury

Personal or Material Gains: Want for reward

Loyalty: Desire to cooperate

Responsibility: Recognition of obligations

Pride: Self-satisfaction and desire for praise

Conformity: Fear of being different

Rivalry: Desire to compete

Leadership: Desire to be outstanding

Logic: Special ability to reason

Humanity: Desire to help others

Programs should be planned using a systematic approach aimed at the factors that are most influential to the affected employees. A systematic approach will be more effective than an unplanned technique.

Safety programs can have many types of promotions to create and maintain interest in the loss control effects:

- a. Posters** – Locate them in high-traffic areas. The poster's topics should promote a theme or call attention to a problem. Change them on a regular schedule, based upon local needs.

- b. Handouts** – They can be used in conjunction, to provide reinforcement, with poster themes. Usually they are included in payroll envelopes, can be mailed to the employee's house, or are distributed to workstations.

- c. In-house Newsletters** – A separate section can be devoted to inform employees of current and future loss control activities. They can include messages by top management, achievement toward goals and ideas that worked.

- d. Suggestions** – Employees should be encouraged to submit written ideas and suggestions. Providing a location where they can deposit these ideas, gives them the feeling of having a direct line to management.

- e. Group Safety Meetings** – Generally, these meetings are most effective when they involve top management, and are planned to promote or train. The meetings should only last short durations (up to a ½ hour).

- f. Individual Safety Contacts** – They are performed by the employee's supervisor on a weekly to monthly basis, with one topic as the foundation for discussion. These contacts should follow a planned loss-prevention oriented schedule.

- g. Safety Contests & Campaigns** – These can be designed to reward individuals or groups. The best results are achieved when everyone is involved and many types of activities overlap, to promote the campaign or contest.

Programs that show an interest from top management through the supervisors to the hourly employee, help to create the spirit of cooperation. Effective communication is a motivational tool. When top management knows and participates in these programs, it displays to all the employees that safety is a company effort.

Employees must be motivated to reach the loss control goals established by top management. Programs designed to reach those goals must be systematic and effective. The more employees are motivated to participate in the loss control program, the more successful it will become.