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Regard for Safety

Part Four of A Ten Part Series on Work Ethics

By: Steve Capell



Why does safety have anything to do with Work Ethics? Good question! Actually safety doesn't just happen because of some safety manual that is covered in corporate dust. Safety takes practice, knowledge, proper tools, proper dress, proper management, proper training, etc. Safety is only as good as the work ethics of the organization. What I mean by this it only takes one individual with poor work ethics to compromise the safety of a entire organization. So, YES, Works Ethics is fundamentally the core of any safety culture at a organization.

Why do think companies place emphasis on Safety. There are lots of reasons for this. The first reason it's required by law. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) requires every business with one or more employees to have a written safety manual in place. The safety manual must cover all aspects of OSHA standards! The next reason is safety has a great Return on Investment (ROI). The latest studies show that for every dollar spent on safety a two dollar return is realized. One reason for the excellent return is the high cost that companies pay for workplace injuries. According "Environment Health and Safety" it cost's American companies \$62 billion a year for on the job injuries.¹

Well Steve tell me how!

I would like to bring this entire subject into a more personal reason. The reason that safety is important is because our families, friends, and co-workers as they do not expect us to come home with an injury or illness from our jobs. This effects children, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and friends.

When I had the position of a regional manager I had a safely supervisor that was reporting to me. This person's responsibility was to oversee, train, and advise on the corporate health and well being of the organizations safety program. I can assure you that there are compelling reasons in the corporate manual that states that the breaking of a safety rule has consequences including termination. Most companies take safety this serious and you need to likewise take it seriously.

Take a journey with me as the final reason safety is matter of life and death. A young man who worked for the railroad was performing some work on 100 foot tower. One of the safety rules state that you must me tied off at all times when climbing poles or towers. This young man was tied off; however, he was tied off to a steel tower member that he was removing and fell 90 feet. He lived 4 and half days, but his internal injuries were massive. Safety is personal. Safety only works because of Work Ethics.

The "how" is simple. Make sure you read your company safety manual. Make sure you stay focused on the job and make safely important for you, your coworkers, and your family. Not only is this important for staying employed it could be a life and death matter.

In closing remember to keep safety a focus of your daily efforts and have it define who your are ... and I will see you – yes you - the rising example of what work ethics is all about!

¹ Smith, Sandy. "U.S. Companies Pay \$62 Billion Per Year for Workplace Injuries." EHS Today, 15 Jan. 2016, <https://www.ehstoday.com/companies-injuries>.