WANTED

CULTURE OF SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

● Safety is NO Accident ●

Did you know that more than 60% of adults work, spending an average of 2,000 hours a year on the job? Given that we spend that much time at work, we definitely want it to be a safe place to be. Lets face it—no one wants to work in a bad and unsafe environment. The same is applicable of employees—an employer wants safe and healthy employees to foster safety programs at work. *Safety doesn't happen by chance...*

Workplace safety is about protecting the company's most valuable asset—its workers—by taking proactive means to prevent injury and illness. The "Safety Culture" that should exist in the workplace is not something you can look up on the internet or borrow from another company's safety manual, but it is something you can feel when you enter some workplaces. A company's safety culture provides a framework for introducing safe practices and safety education.

Pop Quiz
True or False:

☐ Safety is just common sense. We don't need to waste time training people not to put their hands on a "hot stove".

☐ A sloppy worker is only a danger to himself.

☐ Chairs or stools can be substituted for a ladder to get items out-of-reach as long as an employee "spots" the person using the chair or stool.

☐ Workplace safety is the responsibility of the person(s) wearing the risk management hat.

All answers are False.

A Company's Safety Culture Should Include:

Values and Beliefs

Before you can act on it, you have to believe it. What are the core values and beliefs that your company stands for? What is stated in the company's mission statement? Treatment of clients, proper use of resources, community outreach, and safety in the workplace should all reflect your company's values and beliefs.

Culture of Safety Checklist

☐ Safety and safety terms are part of the language of your company.
☐ Safe and unsafe behaviors are specified and enforced, along with consequences for ignoring safety practices.
☐ People are rewarded in a tangible visible way for promoting safety.
☐ Safety concerns are evident in the interaction among staff and in their interaction with customers and the public.
☐ New employees are briefed on safety procedures and on the consequences for ignoring them or engaging in unsafe behavior.
☐ Employees observe and correct hazards.

Safety Language & Rules

Every organization should have its own "language" - terms and guidelines that establish the way people are expected to behave in the workplace and with customers. These can normally be found in your company's employee handbook. But just because it's written down doesn't mean that all the employees in your office have made the rules a part of their routine or that they've chosen to make them a part of their behavior patterns. Safety shouldn't just be something that is required only of employees that work with specialized tools such as the service technicians and building engineers. Safety should be a whole office "thing".

The Unwritten Rules
Behavioral expectations

Behavioral expectations, or the *unwritten rules* of safety, are needed to reinforce a safety culture in the workplace. These "rules" indicate what value is placed on safety, and should be understood and acted on by all employees. What type of safety behavior is expected of you in your company or organization and have you been informed of these expectations?

Safety Climate

"Safety Climate" describes the way employees observe and correct hazards amongst each other and with the public. Are safety concerns evident in the interaction among employees and in staff interaction with the public?

Employees should always keep work areas clean and "dress for success" by using the appropriate protective gear and equipment. They should also have proper training for any tools/machinery they may have to use to complete their jobs. Positive reinforcement for following all safety protocols should also be part of your culture of safety. Are people rewarded in tangible ways for promoting safety and working safely?

Patterns of Problem Solving

People have to be taught how problems are identified and solved within your organization. Are new employee's informed about the company's commitment to safety by being taught all safety procedures? Do they know the consequences for ignoring safety practices or engaging in unsafe behavior? Are the consequences enforced?

Creating and fostering a culture of safety takes time and effort. So start small. Telcom cares about your safety and well being, so in an effort to help foster a culture of safety, we are supplying you with this *Safety Reminder Coin* as an idea for something you can give to your employees to keep as a safety cue to always...

Put Safety First...

Here's an idea: *Do random safety checks and reward your employees for having the reminder coin on them at all times.*

TELCOM
INSURANCE GROUP

Marilyn Blake, AU, CRM, COO
Telcom Insurance Group
6301 Ivy Lane, Suite 506 ● Greenbelt, MD 20770
Phone: 800-222-4664 ● Fax: 301-474-6196
www.TelcomInsGrp.com

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you are a Policyholder and would like more information or safety coins for your staff.