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Zero Injuries in the Workplace

There are many arguments both for and against having the goal of experiencing no injuries over a year's time or indefinitely on the job. At the management level and the field level, many employees feel that experiencing zero injuries over a long time is incredibly unrealistic.

Because of perception, many employees are put off by the amount of effort it would take to achieve zero injuries. This should not be the case. No one should be put off towards safety due to a company setting zero injuries as its goal.

Giving Zero a Fighting Chance:

If everyone at a worksite does not believe that a zero-injury year is possible then most likely it will not be, even for a short amount of time. Our actions are often a reflection of our thoughts and beliefs. If we think safety is just a waste of time and it is impossible for everyone to avoid injury while at work, then it will most certainly show in how we choose to carry out our tasks.

It is necessary to switch your mindset to be open to the idea that achieving zero injuries is at least possible, despite how hard it may be.

Individual Workers Lead the Way Towards Zero:

As individual workers, there are many things we have control over to do our part in preventing workplace accidents and ensuring no injuries. While a lot of the safety culture can be influenced by the upper management or direct supervisors, it is the individual workers who truly forge the way in whether or not safety is embraced and implemented every single day.

It is estimated that over 80% of all people injured on the job are at least partly responsible for the incident occurring in the first place. Factor in the individuals injured due to the unsafe actions of a coworker and what is left is a very small percentage of individuals who are hurt on the job from a cause outside of the unsafe actions of themselves or of a coworker. Because of this fact, individual workers have the power to prevent the overwhelming majority of workplace injuries.

Summary:

Most workplace injuries are caused by unsafe decisions and unsafe actions of individuals.

If the majority of a work crew believes the possibility of zero injuries exists and takes action on this belief, then it is truly possible to go long periods of time with no injuries.

Focus on one task at a time; do not focus on the amount of effort it will take to avoid injuries over a long period of time.

What is important is the task you are about to do once you leave a safety meeting.