



Loss Control TIPS

Technical Information Paper Series

Innovative Safety and Health SolutionsSM

Operations Control Results In Loss Control

The Importance Of Loss Control For Supervisors

The purpose of this technical paper is to help supervisors do a better job of enhancing productivity and reducing accidents by providing a means for review and prevention of operational factors that can contribute to accidents. By using a logical method to look at operational problems and come up with workable solutions to those problems, supervisors can learn how to identify operational problems which contribute to accidents and incidents.

Clearly, accidents are costly to an organization. Accidents may mean lost time, diversion of both attention and personnel, medical expenses, and even lawsuits. Accidents are an example of the type of obstacle to productivity that a supervisor may have to confront.

Accidents also reflect poorly upon supervisors, since supervisors are responsible for controlling operations within their areas of responsibility. Since accidents and other operational obstacles reflect a breakdown in operations control, it is not surprising that supervisors with the fewest accidents are those usually held in the highest regard by management.

Supervisory Skills

In order to control operations within his or her area of responsibility, a supervisor must possess certain basic knowledge and skills. Every supervisor must possess knowledge of the work and the responsibilities of those who work in the department. Knowledge of the work is derived from whatever training or education the supervisor brings to the job, plus the actual on-the-job experience. A supervisor's understanding of responsibilities comes from experience and from such sources as company policies and job descriptions.

A supervisor must also possess several important skills. A good supervisor must be an effective planner. Planning may be a supervisor's primary function. He or she must be able to plan effectively to ensure proper procedures, schedules, and utilization of resources.

After planning, a supervisor's most important challenge is to instruct; to explain to each member of the work team what is expected. Instruction can take many forms, such as group instruction, or one-on-one; it can even be delegated by the supervisor to someone who may be a more capable trainer. The supervisor remains responsible, even if the task of instruction is delegated.



A supervisor must be able to lead others, both by example and by inspiration.

Communication skills are equally vital to the supervisor. Since the supervisor links management and workers, he or she must be able to speak the language of both sides, and clearly relay the concerns of each.

Supervisors must also demonstrate a great degree of flexibility. An open-minded supervisor is an approachable supervisor; this means that workers are more apt to communicate small concerns before they evolve into major ones. In addition, open-mindedness is essential to effective problem solving.

Operations Control = Loss Control

Operations include every facet of the process involved in ensuring that the product or service is efficiently produced or provided. *Operations control* involves making sure that satisfactory results are achieved. The task of the supervisor is to control the operations in his or her area of responsibility. The better this is done, the better products and quality objectives will be attained. This should also translate into fewer accidents. If the supervisor controls his or her operations, losses will be controlled.

Definitions: The Language Of Loss Control

A *Loss* is a sudden and destructive event. A *Loss Exposure* is a possibility of a loss. *Loss Prevention* aims to reduce the frequency or likelihood of a particular loss. *Loss Reduction* aims to reduce the severity of a particular loss. Together, *Loss Prevention* and *Loss Reduction* equal *Loss Control*.

An operational problem, or job hindrance, is any condition or event that interrupts or interferes with the normal process of the job (in other words, anything that hinders the supervisor's overall job performance or efficiency). Examples can include damaged equipment, delays, rejects and re-works, damaged material, shortages, people problems, and injuries. Accidents certainly interrupt or interfere with the orderly progress of the job. An accident is a major job hindrance.

Similar to an accident is an incident. An incident is an accident-like occurrence, but without harm to persons or damage to property. An incident is sometimes referred to as a "near miss". Incidents are job hindrances.

Operations control includes controlling job hindrances. The supervisor who is properly controlling operations is reducing and eliminating job hindrances, including accidents and incidents.

A Responsible Condition is a condition that, if eliminated, would result in no further repetition of the particular loss or accident, under the same set of circumstances. In other words, the responsible condition is the crux of the matter, the underlying condition that allowed the loss to occur. Identifying and correcting responsible conditions to prevent reoccurrence is the primary responsibility of the supervisor. It is the purpose and goal of accident analysis and investigation.

Managing For Loss Control: Equipment/Material/People

Regardless of the size or type of organization, we have found that operational problems are reducible to an analysis of the production factors: Equipment/Material/People, or E/M/P. These factors are at the core of every organization, and are the key to identifying any job hindrance.

Equipment includes all tools and machinery used on the job, including the building itself. The type of equipment used may vary, depending upon the nature of the business, but equipment will include everything from forklifts to word processors.

Material refers to all the elements that become part of or are used to create the product or service of the business. Examples of material include raw materials, as well as processed chemicals, paper, and electricity.

People includes all those who design, oversee, or produce the product or service. People means managers, service technicians and assemblers.

E/M/P encompasses all the elements that exist within a given enterprise. But more than being merely a system for categorization, E/M/P is shorthand for a highly successful method of analysis basic to effective operations control.

Whenever an operational problem is encountered, the E/M/P categories can be used to isolate the factors involved. Once these elements have been targeted, a review of each one is made by looking into the four considerations relevant to each category. The supervisor can begin to focus on the responsible condition as a necessary step towards its elimination.

EQUIPMENT	MATERIAL	PEOPLE
Select	Select	Select
Arrange	Place	Place
Use	Handle	Train
Maintain	Process	Lead

The E/M/P Approach To Loss Control

As you review each operational problem (or job hindrance), consider the equipment, material and people involved. Question how the equipment was selected, arranged, used, and maintained. Question how material was selected, placed, handled, and processed. If the problem involves an issue with people, review how each person was selected, placed, trained, and led. These questions will identify factors that need to be explored further.

E/M/P is a crucial starting point to focus on the elements of operational problems. Since the objective of this entire process is to control operations, this understanding is an essential first step.

Introducing The Six Ws

The E/M/P process enables the supervisor to better understand a job by breaking it down into its components. But E/M/P is only the first stage of the investigation. To identify the responsible condition that gave rise to the job hindrance, the facts must first be obtained. Once the supervisor has gathered the facts, he or she can identify the responsible condition or conditions and turn to the important challenge of developing methods to eliminate and control them. The way the facts can be obtained is by asking specific questions.

Why?	Why is It Being Done? Is It Necessary?
What?	What Useful Purpose Does It Serve?
Where?	Where Should It Be Done?
When?	When Should It Be Done?
Who?	Who Is The Best Qualified Person To Do The Job?
How?	How Can It Be Done Better, Easier, Safer?

Begin with the WHY? question. Why is it necessary to do whatever it is that is being done that has led to the job hindrance? If the answer turns out to be that it is, in fact, not necessary, then whatever is being done that led to the job hindrance can - and should - be eliminated, which will eliminate the job hindrance as well. In that case, the questioning need go no further and job hindrance has been resolved.

The second question — closely related to the first — is the WHAT? question. What useful purpose does this task or procedure serve? If it doesn't serve a useful purpose, then eliminate it (in which case, the investigation can end right there).

WHERE should it be done? Should it be moved? Rearranged? Reorganized?

WHEN should it be done? Is it an issue of timing? Should it be rescheduled?

WHO is best qualified to do the job? Is the right person doing the job?

And finally, the last “W” (which actually *ends* in W) is the HOW? question. How can it be done better, more easily, more safely?

These six Ws are the nuts and bolts of the investigation process. These are the questions a supervisor must ask to ascertain the responsible condition for the job hindrance. WHY? and WHAT? help determine whether the condition is necessary and useful. If it is not, it can be eliminated without further questioning. WHERE? WHEN? and WHO? help in combining and rearranging necessary details, and HOW? helps to simplify the job and determine the best way to do it.

Supervisor's Investigation Report

When an incident occurs, the supervisor in charge will usually report to management on the circumstances and whatever recommendations may be appropriate. The supervisor's report becomes an important tool for management to use in reviewing the overall circumstances and for setting necessary priorities.

The attached *Supervisor's Report Form* provides a convenient way to communicate to management with clarity and precision.

Heading Information. The data requested on the top of the form is important from an analysis standpoint. For example, it may reveal that a disproportionate share of the hindrances are coming from a particular shift. This in turn may raise questions about that shift, about fatigue, about supervision, and so forth. It may also provide additional E/M/P information.

What Happened? This is a brief description of what took place or what caused the supervisor to make the investigation.

Why Did It Happen? This section uses the “W” questions to provide the necessary information. It is important that the information provided be complete and objective. The answer to the WHY? question is really a statement of the responsible condition.

What Should Be Done? Supervisors have a responsibility to make suggestions to management as to what corrective measures would be appropriate, even if the actual authorization or implementation of those measures may well be beyond the scope of the supervisor’s authority.

What Have You Done Thus Far? Merely identifying the conditions responsible, without proposing any corrective action, means that in all likelihood nothing will be corrected. Someone must take action, even if the action is merely that the supervisor has reported the condition to management. What management decides to do thereafter is up to them.

How Will This Improve Operations? This question is designed to help the supervisor sell ideas to management. It is helpful to consider this question from a bottom line point of view. How will eliminating the problem save time and money?

Summary

Supervisors contribute to an organization’s primary goals of production; quality, and profit by effectively controlling their operations. Supervisors control operations by eliminating operational problems or job hindrances.

These operational control principles are the most direct way to incorporate loss control into everyday operations. It is important to determine the causes of accidents, when they occur. However, it is even more important to identify conditions which could cause accidents *before* those accidents occur. Why wait for an accident to happen?

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford’s Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

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APPENDIX:

Thinking About Workplace Accidents

Who is Involved in Workplace Accidents?

When we study the people who are involved in accidents, one of the areas which needs to be explored are employees who are involved in multiple accidents or incidents. A variety of elements can contribute to an employee's over-involvement in accidents, such as stress, age, alcohol or drugs, and disabilities. It has often been shown that new employees have a higher incidence of injuries than more experienced, long-term employees. Consequently, anything that can be done to reduce turnover will be beneficial to safety. Young workers, partly due to their lack of experience, tend to have an above-average number of accidents. Older persons may be involved in accidents due to their diminished hearing or reaction times. Substance abuse of any kind makes a person more susceptible to workplace injuries. Some disabilities may require accommodations to allow employees to perform safely.

What is the Work Environment Like?

While personal factors do have some impact, workplace conditions and practices account for the greatest number of accidents and injuries. Some workplace factors include shift work, fatigue, environment, and the nature of the business.. For example, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that third shift workers are most at risk for accidents, especially between the hours of 3:00 AM and 5:00 AM when the body's circadian rhythms get out of synch. Fatigue can result from jobs that are particularly strenuous, repetitive, or monotonous. Environmental factors such as heat, noise, dust, and lighting can affect concentration, and thus contribute to accidents. Workers who are required to be in close proximity to sharp instruments or high levels of potential or kinetic energy (e.g., machinery, heights, chemicals, etc.) are exposed to special hazards. Most, if not all, of these hazards can be overcome by engineering controls.

There Is No Such Thing As "Carelessness"

Using the word "carelessness" cannot explain an accident. It does not explain what went wrong. The word is of no help to the supervisor trying to prevent a repeat accident. Furthermore, it's a buck-passing word. "Carelessness" blames the employee. The supervisor comes out smelling like a rose. In analyzing human factors that might have caused an accident, keep these guidelines in mind, and don't use the umbrella word "carelessness." An employee involved in an accident probably:

- Didn't follow instructions.
- Didn't follow rules and regulations.
- Didn't use safe work methods.
- Didn't pay attention to what he /she or the equipment was doing.
- Didn't wear protective equipment.
- Didn't think ahead and plan his / her actions.
- Didn't know his own physical limitations.
- Didn't have the physical fitness necessary.
- Didn't have the necessary skills.
- Didn't know the limit of the strength of materials.
- Didn't use tools or equipment properly.
- Didn't anticipate safety or health requirements.
- Didn't have a good safety attitude.
- Didn't look.

Supervisor's Investigation Report

Name	Age		
Time	Date		
Department	Shift		
Job	How long on this job?		
WHAT HAPPENED? <i>(Describe what took place or what caused you to make this investigation.)</i>			
WHY DID IT HAPPEN? <i>(Get all the facts by studying the job and situation involved. Question by use of WHY, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHO, HOW)</i>			
WHAT SHOULD BE DONE? <i>(Determine which of the 12 items under EMP requires additional attention.)</i>	Equipment	Material	People
	Select Arrange Use Maintain	Select Place Handle Process	Select Place Train Lead
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE THUS FAR? <i>(Take or recommend action, depending upon your authority. Follow up; was action effective?)</i>			
HOW WILL THIS IMPROVE OPERATIONS? <i>(OBJECTIVE: Eliminate job hindrances)</i>			
Investigated by		Date	
Reviewed by		Date	

