

Thoughts from the “Safety Guy”- Chuck Gessner

Quips of personal experience and opinions

2002 Southern Arizona ASSE Awards Banquet
May 21,2002

SALVATION!

“So you’re the new safety guy! Great to have you on board. Sure glad we finally have someone responsible for safety in our company.”



The Safety Officer

Some more progressive managers know that regulatory compliance is only part of the equation.

Please don't carry the big stick!

“We are looking for a kinder and gentler safety person.”

The Safety Specialist

Some management camps believe that a safety specialist is someone who manages worker compensation paper work.



The Safety Manager

Even in Safety Camps:

“So you say that you are a Safety Manager and not a clerk. How does the work get done?”

“What are you going to do, be like the Washing Machine repair man on TV?”

Walking on a tight rope

“Well, If the safety guy is not responsible for safety...what good are you?

What the heck are you going to do? I got all of this paperwork to file and everyone else is busy!”

What makes a good safety manager?

- Part of the senior management team
- Responsible for the overall performance of the business
- Responsible for program development
- Viewed as a resource to the entire organization
- Inspires the organization to value safety and manage all risks

A New World Order!

Risk Manager

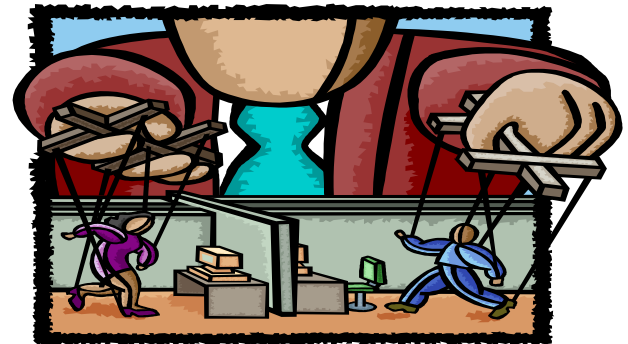
(a.k.a. safety officer- “safety guy”)

- **Guide**
- **Educate**
- **Train**
- **(Motivate) through Inspiration**



The Truth Could Hurt

- **All employees are responsible to know the standards, procedures, rules. To comply and participate in the program.**
- **The manager in charge of the people and operations is responsible for safety;**
- **The manager who is in charge of the manager of the people and operations is responsible for safety;**
- **and so on.**



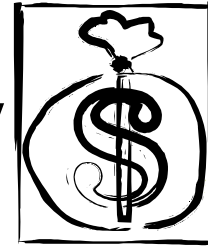
Hollow Statements?

Safety is our #1 priority!

Safety First!



Big Money



The truth:

**Profits are our first
priority!**

“or expense control”

WHAT IS SAFETY?

You've heard the slogans:

- Safety First!**
- Work Safe!**
- Committed to Safety!**
- Safety is our First Priority!**
- ETC.....**

What does it mean?

We're not talking about that other safety, spelled: **saftey**

SAFETY

THE CONTROL OF ACCIDENTAL LOSS

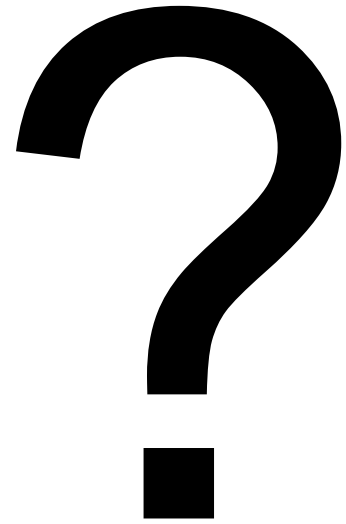
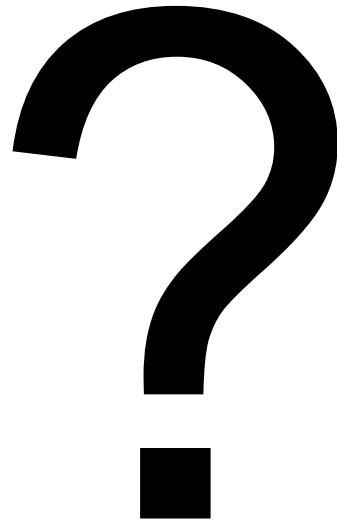
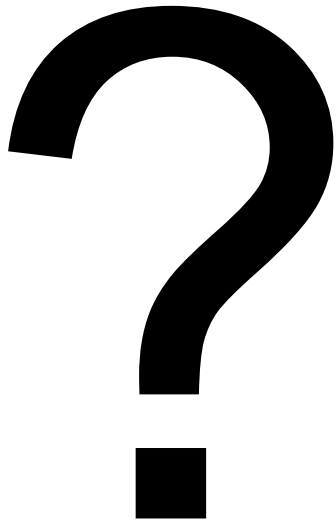
AN ACCIDENT IS

- **AN UNDESIRED EVENT**
- **THAT RESULTS IN HARM TO PEOPLE, DAMAGE TO PROPERTY, OR LOSS TO PROCESS**
- **INVOLVES CONTACT WITH A SUBSTANCE OR SOURCE OF ENERGY ABOVE THE THRESHOLD LIMIT OF A BODY OR STRUCTURE**

INCIDENT

**AN UNDESIREED EVENT
WHICH, UNDER SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT
CIRCUMSTANCES COULD
HAVE RESULTED IN HARM
TO PEOPLE, DAMAGE TO
PROPERTY, OR LOSS TO
PROCESS.**

WHAT CAUSES ACCIDENTS?



CORRECT.....?

- **EMPLOYEE FAILURE**
- **ATTITUDE**
- **LACK OF PRESENT MOMENT THINKING**
- **CARELESSNESS**
- **FAILURE TO EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED**
- **LACK OF COMMON SENSE**
- **NEGLIGENCE**
- **IGNORANCE, HOLIDAZE**

Common Sense

- **The use of these two words in a conversation about safety is non-sense!**
- **It is an excuse for not managing safety!**

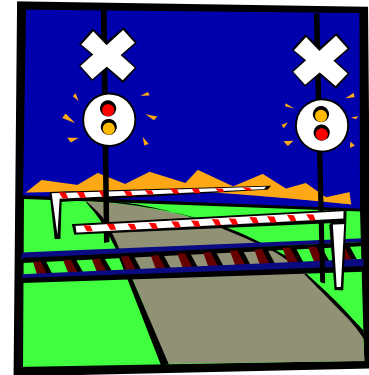
Shades of Gray

- **If it's not safe, don't do it!**
- **We don't do or condone unsafe behavior!**
- **What is safe and what is an excuse?**
- **Anyone can shut it down if it is unsafe.**
- **We have a responsibility to tell people that this “product” is unsafe.**

Safety is not always B&W

- **The best that we can do is perform investigations (even before an accident occurs- hazard analysis), then make the corrections**
- **We do this in a financial setting, Return on Investments (ROI)**
- **Hazard Analysis-Risk Assessments are like doing an ROI**
- **Do the things that we know that will reduce risk**

Life is Risky



- When you get out of bed, do you plan your day in light of the risks that you will encounter? Think about it.....did you:
 - **look both ways before crossing that railroad track?**
 - **Check the air pressure of your tires before backing out of the driveway?**
 - **Check to see if the beverage your drinking was tampered with?**

Life/Risk requires analysis

KNOW (as much as possible) THE SEVERITY OF THE CONSEQUENCES

Plan those activities in life that are high risk or at least those thing that you know are risky.

In an industrial setting there are many, we are not just watching TV.

Management does every day in a business setting, it no different to manage financial risks or “safety” risks

SAFETY MYTH

**99% of accidents are caused by the Unsafe
Actions of people.....**

NONSENSE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

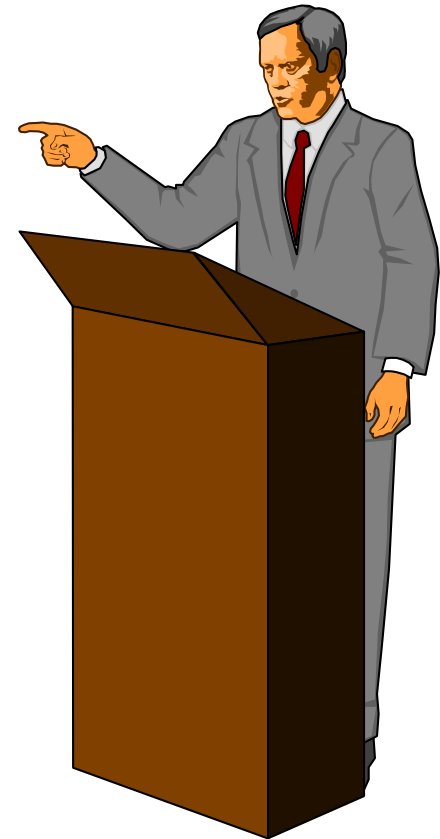
**This differs from site to site and is
dependant on the application of the
Principle of Multiple Causes.**

CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS

FOUR FINGER
RULE

LACK OF CONTROL

LACK OF MANAGEMENT
CONTROL



MANAGEMENT CONTROL

A PRIMARY MEANS TO SAFETY

**Along with production or productivity,
quality and cost.**

SEVEN OR YO

QUESTION:

**Are we minimizing loss by
CONTROL?**

Or mostly by LUCK?



Proactive safety management

- **A regulatory compliance driven safety program is the bare bones approach**
- **The real meat is creating a culture that has a proactive approach rather than relying on luck**
- **Proactive safety is doing something before an accident or incident occurs**



Here's a Clue

“The greatness of a company is manifested through its compassion towards all its personnel.

How else can it expect loyalty?

Frank Salas Jr.

1999

Injury Rates



“Our safety performance is good! Our injury rate is less than the national average!”

FACTS:

- A fatality counts as one injury**
- An injury is up to interpretation**
- If IR's are the only safety performance measurements, safety people are good at interpreting what defines an injury**

Dan Peterson

“...analysis of safety system effectiveness by accident statistics is usually a waste of time. Because of sample size, they are usually invalid, mostly measuring luck.”