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Current Safety Topics in the

TEXTILE INDUSTRY

as presented in sessions of the Textile Section
at the 41st National Safety Congress

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A Foreman's Needs in Safety Promotion

By JAMES GRAY

Machine Shop Foreman, Carrier Corp., Syracuse, N. Y.

Why should a foreman be interested in safety? He is a busy person with a production schedule to meet which takes up his time. And every minute counts.

Does safety produce anything? Would it help to eliminate a backlog on the schedule?

Let's take a look at the foreman's job and assume for awhile that you are a foreman.

You are a part of an organization whose existence depends on making a profit. You are given machinery, materials and men with which to produce goods and you are expected to use them efficiently and without waste. The machines and equipment in your departments usually cost many thousands of dollars. You are, perhaps, running a \$40,000 annual gross business. Being aware of these facts, you are always alert to prevent breakdowns which would interfere with production.

If a machine fails, you see that no time is wasted in getting it going again.

In the maintenance of equipment you are given the services needed to keep them operating, thus preventing machine failures and material waste.

Materials are checked and handled carefully to prevent waste and interruption of production schedules. Materials are closely guarded against damage or spillage during processing. You recognize the value of the materials you process and act quickly to correct any waste you encounter.

While machinery and materials can obviously be controlled, you have quite a different problem to contend with in controlling the actions of people. Furthermore, you have need for assistance in controlling a very different type of waste caused by human failures, such as the failure in sacrificing safety for apparent speed. Familiarity breeds contempt for danger and you will sometimes find caution being thrown to the winds by people who seem driven by the urge to take a chance.

You know people who seem to derive some satisfaction from going past a stop

sign, apparently aware that the penalty may be death.

You will find many conditions that interfere with your plans for production which can be overcome by your own efforts. Materials may arrive late on the line, and tools may sometimes be defective. *The most difficult condition to contend with, however, is that perpetual bugbear—the lost-time accident.*

The loss of the right man on the right job will introduce an extremely difficult problem—replacement. With a new man on duty, the job will need closer supervision. The rate of production will go down, and the chances of making defective parts will be greater.

In the event of an accident, people lose time not only in caring for the injured person, but also in investigating and reporting the accident. The curiosity of those in the vicinity is a separate safety hazard in itself.

During the recent Labor Day week-end, a mock accident was set up on a busy highway as a warning to passing motorists. When one curious driver slowed down to gaze at the wrecked cars and dummies, four cars following him crashed into his car and each other.

Although accidents are difficult to contend with they normally happen one at a time. However, one accident can demoralize your whole operation; in your case, a \$40,000 business.

What can you, the foreman, do about conditions such as those just mentioned? You will discover that except for the injured person, you are the one in the shop who is most affected and in the best position to act in preventing a recurrence.

Questions will present themselves:

1. What tools are available?
2. What set up to make?
3. What procedure to follow?

You will find the most efficient tool to be the education of the workers.

Here we see a need for study. The foreman must begin with himself. He must

check up on his own attitudes and make any necessary corrections. He must examine his knowledge of accident prevention. He must be sure of the subject he is about to teach. He must look at the tools he is going to use and understand their function and application. He must follow a plan of action that fits into the safety program of the organization. He must attack the problem vigorously and efficiently just as he does in cost reduction, efficiency, and quality on a day to day basis.

A great safety minded industrialist once observed that "Safety must be achieved in the minds of men." We will never be safe unless we want and try to be safe.

Safety, being a state of mind, can best be created in an employee when he is new and anxious to impress his supervisor. The foreman, due to his close contact with him, is in the best position to use this tool of education. Instruction of the new employee is excellent insurance against accidents. Then, education should be a continuing process if safety is to be constantly in the minds of men.

The set up used will depend on the safety program of the organization. The degree of interest that exists in the high levels of management will be reflected in the program. Where the interest is high the program will be an active one. Types of programs vary but their success depends on the amount of interest and enthusiasm shown by all levels of supervision.

At Carrier Corporation, where I have been a foreman for many years, you find yourself in an ideal position to promote safety. You are a foreman with a voice in hiring, reprimanding, and discharging. You take part in establishing company policies and receive all possible support necessary in the promotion of safety from the president, and his executive safety committee consisting of: The vice presidents of manufacturing; the vice president of production services, the vice president of personnel.

The safety director, reporting directly to the vice president of manufacturing services, is very effective in getting prompt action, and right down the line. The training department assists the safety program by conducting a series of meetings with superintendents and foreman on safety and accident prevention. In addition, safety is always stressed as a key point in all trades training

programs. The training department also conducts an orientation program including safety instruction for new employees.

The Carrier Courier, our monthly magazine, features articles on safety and health.

Our medical director, a doctor who has specialized in industrial medicine, devotes his full time to the promotion of health and accident prevention.

Scheduled safety meetings are held by the superintendent with his foremen, safety personnel, and employees who might have had accidents during the month. At this meeting accidents and near accidents are discussed with a view to preventing a recurrence. Suggestions and recommendations are made, shop safety men are consulted, and follow up is checked.

National Safety Council materials and other literature is issued to all line supervision and is used by the foremen in their talks with the employees either individually or in groups. We find that the *Five Minute Safety Talks for Foremen* and job instruction cards are particularly valuable.

Filed records of these talks are recorded and kept available.

I am reminded of an instance where the value of these records was forcibly illustrated: An employee, seeking compensation for injuries incurred as a result of an accident, made a statement in court to the effect that no instruction had been given him in prevention of this type of accident. The foreman, hailed to court, produced evidence from the file proving that the claimant had been given ample instruction in the prevention of such an accident.

Bulletins are issued on contest ratings, our position nationally, locally, and plant-wide are included.

Weekly inspections are conducted by the good housekeeping committee which consists of management and line supervision. Our insurance company reports the findings of their trained personnel. The services of a specialist in hygiene are made available for the study of health hazards which include smoke, fumes, gases, noise levels and many other factors which may affect the safety and health of employees.

This manifold program contributes much to making Carrier a safe place to work.

Many foremen are not so fortunate in having such a program behind them, but

this does not change their needs in the field of safety. What the foremen need most would be hard to define in this technological age because his needs are too numerous to list.

We all know that unless the worker is well trained in working safely, accidents will happen more frequently. The root from which most accidents stem in industry is lack of proper instruction. Approximately 80 per cent of them are due to unsafe acts on the part of employees. Unsafe acts committed because the employee was not instructed properly or he ignored the instructions. The remaining 20 per cent are caused by poor housekeeping, faulty machinery and improper safeguards.

Statistics like these are startling but they will do no good on the safety director's desk. The foreman needs to be told. He is the one who is responsible for the conduct of his men, for accident prevention, housekeeping, etc. He knows this; it is part of his job. He does not hesitate to go out of the way to work for the Blood Bank, Community Chest Fund, Defense Bonds and many other activities for the common good. He is sold on them, but if you have failed to sell him on safety, he will not go out of his way to sell it to his men.

To get along well with people you must like people. We foremen like our men; give us something to sell that is good for our people and we will prove this. Our job is getting people to do things we want done. We do it in production; we can do it in safety.

In production we are provided with many services to help accomplish the desired results. Likewise, to produce results in accident prevention, assistance is needed.

To whom should we look for assistance? We can look up, away up, to the head of the company where authority is. The interest and enthusiasm at the higher levels will be reflected at the lower levels. We need sincere and continuous interest in accident prevention from executive management. Encouragement—we foremen feel good when commended from above for having a good safety record. We have pride in accomplishment. Our men also are commended and encouraged in trying to do better.

Examples are important too. We usually hear about it when management enters a

restricted area without protection. I recall hearing a remark to the effect that the dust doesn't know who is boss. Good examples help the foreman by proving to the men that the higher levels of management are also safety conscious and it gives them assurance that production will not be insisted upon at the expense of safety.

We look to you, Mr. Safety Director, for much of the material assistance in accident prevention. We look upon the safety director as a consultant, a specialist, a highly trained man in the field of safety who can assist so tremendously in the preventing of accidents. We depend on him to keep us informed and up to date. Let us know what is happening. We need him to keep us supplied with teaching material and to help us in locating and eliminating safety hazards in our departments.

We need solid, concrete things to build safety with, just as we need the correct material in our production program. Everything in the safety program should be secondary to having us foremen fully equipped to instruct and reinstruct our people in the right way to do things and in checking to see that instructions are being followed. We, too, need instructions in the proper safe way to do things so that we can pass them on to our people. "See Us Often." You are welcome. Mr. Safety Director, let's look it over together. We may have just the idea you are looking for and vice-versa.

Your presence in the department will help to show the men that the company has a real interest in making our shop a safe place in which to work.

But don't undermine the foreman by contacting the men directly when you observe something unsafe, or likely to be so.

Get the foreman. He knows his people best. They may resent your approach and you may damage the good attitudes that have been built up in them regarding safety. A man may have troubles at home, like a very sick child in the hospital, and you would not help his distracted mind. The foreman would know these facts and have him on a job he can do safely in his condition.

Much more can be accomplished by teamwork. Coach the foreman well and the score will be good, but don't bawl him out in front of the team. He can take criticism, lots of it, if it is constructive.

Help the foreman to keep the respect of his men. He needs it in accident prevention.

The foreman needs cooperation of the safety director in getting the necessary action to eliminate a safety hazard once it has been located. A decision which has to be made higher up can best be obtained by the director of safety.

Again, I say, keep us informed. If an appropriation has to be made which may take time, let the foreman know about it. Now, not weeks later. He likes to know what is going to be done about it, and can pass it on to his men who wonder about such things.

The safety director and the foreman need each other and working together makes both of them more effective in the prevention of accidents.

While the foreman needs much assistance from others, he also has a need for certain qualities and characteristics within himself. He has been referred to as the key man in industry for generations. His ability to be a leader is necessary in order to guide men, inspire enthusiasm, get groups to work together as a team, and to create the desire for accomplishment.

He has to gain and hold the respect and confidence of his men, use good discipline and be truly concerned with the safety of his men who look to him for leadership. He, in turn, looks to them for cooperation.

If a man aspires to be a good foreman, he must realize that he is the axis around which safety revolves in his department. His responsibilities in safety are many. They are not confined to the shop.

When an accident occurs in the shop, the employees' families are involved. They are affected in many ways. Loss of income produces hardships; physical disability can be life-long in some cases. How can a blinded man provide for his family?

We foremen think of these things and feel mighty responsible for the enforcement of safety rules.

This recalls a case to my mind which happened many years ago when compensation for injuries was on a less liberal basis.

A highly skilled toolmaker refused to wear eye protection. As a result his eyesight was damaged to the extent that he could no longer apply his skills. He became

dependent, and after sometime, a chronic alcoholic. Every time he saw the foreman, he cursed him and told him that he was responsible for his condition. What foreman would like to have that on his conscience?

The foreman has a large share of the responsibilities in accident prevention and has need for help from everyone from top management, in the application of the safety program, and right down the line to the employee whose cooperation is essential to the success of the program.

"The elimination of personal injuries alone," as Lamont du Pont once wrote, "warrants all the time, effort and expense involved." But quite apart from this obvious humanitarian side, industry's program is spurred by the realization that safety is simply sound business procedure. Its determination to get results is, therefore, independent of external pressures. Rules, ordinances and regulations have played their part in setting standards and defining uniform practices, but safety has not been achieved by the letter of law any more in industry than on the highway, where a vast body of laws and limits have failed to avert accidents. Safety on-the-job has come because industry well recognizes that in improved morale, increased efficiency, and enlarged productivity, it pays attractive dividends.

Thus in this field, as in so many others, industry has shown that progress stems from new methods and new technology, applied to human welfare through the simple and direct channel of mutual benefit. It is this process that has elevated U. S. living standards to present heights and that continually chalks up new gains in social betterment. It is a method peculiarly American in origin; it is a method peculiarly American in results.

When the safety engineer supplies the foreman with the necessary ammunition to enable him to do his level best and gives that foreman confidence and sincerity, he can be assured of the foreman's utmost support in the safety program.

When management understands that it is as essential to give as close attention to the prevention of accidents as to problems of production, inspection, buying, selling and all the other functions of management; and does it; then, and only then, will manage-

ment have accepted its full responsibility in accident prevention.

No program can be effective without all of our support. That's old stuff. But if top management and the safety engineer alike see that interest is kept alive and maintained, then we not only shape our own destiny, but those of others as well.

Foremen are conscious both of their

obligation to industrial safety and of their strategic position in any considered safety program. Effective production under absolutely safe conditions should be the creed of the foreman and he is dedicated to their dual attainment. We ask safety men, of all categories, to build their industrial safety programs around us as foremen: we shall not—we cannot—fail that trust.

What the Safety Engineer Expects in the Safety Program

By STANLEY F. SPENCE

Dir. of Safety and Fire Prevention, American Cyanamid Co., New York City

There is no such thing as a safety engineer who knows all of the answers. The safety engineer, or safety manager, is a specialist in a field jammed full of so many specialties that no man can be expert in all of them, or, in fact, many of them. Please do not consider me an iconoclast, or a heretic, or an ordinary-everyday complacency-buster. I do not want to give a full treatise to my colleagues in the field of accident prevention engineering. All I want to do is to be a stress-reliever for those of the profession who sometimes may feel inadequate because they do not know the answers to so many of the technical problems which, day after day, confront them.

The safety engineer, to my way of thinking, is a man who has these approximate abilities, aside from character and spirit of cooperation: He has a good engineering or technical background in academic training and practical experience. He knows his physical plant from A to Z. He understands the fundamentals of the processes and operations conducted in the plant. He knows the plant systems and procedures. He knows how to develop the specific systems and procedures which are necessary in his accident and fire prevention program, and how to integrate them with the existing plant operational policy. He likes people and has a hankering to know what makes them behave as they do. He has the ability to instill in people the desire to work in such a way as to avoid accidents. He has imagination,

and he can anticipate accident problems. He has a finely-developed sense of relative values.

Now, what does that make of the safety engineer? In a chemical plant, does it make of him a colleague of the research chemist? In the wool mill, does it require of him the specialized skill of the dye house superintendent? In any plant, does it make of him a design engineer? No, it makes of him a management man. One who knows more directly about "what makes Peter run" than many of the others in the plant management.

From the engineering standpoint, the accident prevention manager should have such a broad knowledge that he will understand the whys and wherefores of his plant and its processes, and such a special knowledge of accident-prevention and fire protection engineering that he can satisfy the specific requirements of his profession.

Beyond that, as far as purely technical things are concerned, I do not expect him to attempt to know all the answers. But I do expect him to know where he can get the answers—factual, authoritative answers! This means that the safety engineer must constantly be in the process of determining just which people in his own plant, or elsewhere in industry, have highly-developed specialized experience or knowledge in which they surpass. A judiciously-selected pool of specialists, to be called upon for help as needed, can be the most important technical backing possible for the industrial safety engineer.