

**THE CAFETERIA THAN THE OTHERS HOW
CAN YOU CONTROL THIS PROBLEM?**

● SEVERAL ACCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED IN YOUR DEPARTMENT RECENTLY, APPARENTLY UNRELATED IN ANY WAY. ONE VICTIM DIDN'T KNOW THE SAFE PRACTICE, ANOTHER TOOK A CHANCE BECAUSE HE WAS IN A HURRY, ANOTHER WAS INJURED WHEN A PIECE OF STOCK FELL OFF A TRUCK. SOME MEN ARE BEGINNING TO FEEL THAT THE SAFETY PROGRAM DOES NOT AMOUNT TO MUCH. WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?

A modification of the case study technique is the incident process. It has the advantage of requiring less preparation time. The incident or problem is presented, in writing, to the group. The instructor supplies additional facts and details. Members put these together to ascertain what happened. They then arrive at a decision and a plan of action.

Conference Method of Teaching

To aid understanding and stimulate participation in instruction courses, industrial educators many years ago developed the conference method of teaching. This method is widely used in teaching management subjects to people in business and industry.

The conference leader should be skilled in this method of teaching. He should know how to draw out information and opinions from the conferees, and sum up their conclusions. As is desirable in a participation class, the number of people in a conference group should be small enough that free discussion can occur.

The leader's part is mainly that of asking questions that will provoke thinking and discussion. Learning can take place in a conference if the conferees have a background of experience that enables them to discuss the subject intelligently.

Problem-solving conferences

Since a conference is a device for getting a job done, it is particularly useful in an area like safety where many people are involved. A conference yields big returns in education for all who participate, even though its immediate purpose is to solve a current prob-

lem, not merely a hypothetical one.

Frequently, the safety director has problems relating to the operation of the safety program which he needs to discuss with production supervisors. The problem may have to do with the occurrence of a number of similar accidents, with some new feature of the safety program, with a new type of work to be undertaken, with a method of operation or plan to be worked out, or with any other subject in which both the foremen and the safety department are interested. To find a solution to the problem, the safety director may call a conference with a group of supervisors.

The conference leader should be familiar with the relationships of the members of the conference and with the general area of the subject matter.

It is of the utmost importance that the leader and members of the conference know the scope and limitations of what they are expected to do. If, for example, a conference group meets to decide how to put into practice a policy or a directive that has been issued, they should understand that it is not within their authority to have the policy or directive changed.

If the group meets to discuss improvement of procedures for the elimination of a hazard, they should know whether or not they may consider extensive alterations of buildings and installation of new machinery. If they do not know the limitations within which they must work, then the conference becomes a source of dissatisfaction and frustration or is regarded as simply play-acting.

If the job of a conference group is to recommend action and they do recommend action, they should, of course, know what becomes of their recommendation.

Often, however, a conference group will discuss a matter that affects only the members, in which case their conclusions are drawn for their own guidance. This is probably the most usual and most satisfactory kind of conference.

Conference leading

Every safetyman and supervisor should attempt to become a skilled conference leader. Since such skill comes mainly from practice, he should accept opportunities for holding conferences even if he has not had a great