

cal fingerprints, so too, no two individuals have identical thinking processes. Because this is true, we must remain very flexible in handling this matter or discipline.

We must keep in mind that the old days when a "straw boss" kept order in his crew by developing the hardest knuckles, the biggest biceps and the loudest mouth, are long gone. Possibly a few cases of straw bosses also developing the widest toothless grins might have had something to do with this. Seriously, though, we do not believe that physical or severe mental or emotional force has any real place in today's application of corrective discipline to industrial employees.

The concept of discipline at the Ford Motor Co. is that it must be *corrective*. This concept also dictates that *only* as much corrective action be applied as is necessary to result in the desired correction. In other words, it is the expressed philosophy that all personal feelings be divorced from the case and only the *facts* are to be considered. This is what we mean by the term, "constructive discipline." Discipline that is *constructive* through reasonable and fair *correction*.

We do not mean to imply by what we have said up to this point that we do not want our supervisors to maintain control over their employees. To the contrary, it is insisted that they do. It is insisted that they be firm. Point No. 6 of the 14-point Ford Motor Co. Safety Program states, "Maintain firm plant discipline." Please distinguish between firm and harsh. These two words are poles apart in our philosophy.

As a matter of fact, if you think of it in the right light, being firm and insisting on strict adherence to the requirements of safety rules is actually being kind to an employee. Being kind to him to the extent that you force him to avoid having an accident. He may not appreciate your kindness in applying corrective discipline when it is merited. It is, nevertheless, kindness of the first water.

Speaking of the 14-point Ford Safety Program, points No. 4 and 5 are also worthy of note here. "Sell safety to the new employee," and "Re-sell safety repeatedly." It might appear that there is a discrepancy of terms here. Is there really a conflict

between "selling" an idea and using "discipline?" We think not. Remember what Webster says? Discipline is education. Selling, too, is education. Therefore, Selling is a form of discipline.

Regardless of what we call it, or how we define it, it means nothing unless it is applied.

I am reminded of a story I read sometime ago in a magazine. The story told of a rather large company that had been experiencing numerous serious accidents and injuries to employees with an ever-increasing frequency. According to the story, this went on for several years. (Hard to believe, but that is the story.) Numerous meetings to find causes and remedies were held but always wound up with someone saying that they hoped the "bad luck" would make a turn for the good, soon.

Finally it got to the point that someone at the top decided to bring the thing to a head. He called the managers of the various departments together and told them that it was up to them to find ways of controlling the situation or he would find someone who could. Rather drastic but a very effective form of discipline.

It turned out to be very constructive, as well. The top man's ultimatum finally made them realize that, far from their running the organization, the organization had actually been running them! Finally jolted out of their false sense of job security, each manager passed the jolt on to his subordinate supervisors. Each man was told to tender his resignation right then if he didn't think he could stop his employees from injuring themselves.

"Wow! The bosses are really mad now," they all thought, as they started scratching heads in search of ideas. It didn't take much scratching to come up with the idea of opening the safety rule books that for so many years had laid unopened in the desk drawers. One after another got the bright idea of starting to insist that the rules must be adhered to.

There were no changes in normal work procedures, no supervisors lost their jobs. The supervisors just started to supervise within the framework which already existed in the organization. The foreman started to be the "boss" and exercised his almost forgotten responsibility to discipline

employees who violated the rules. Accidents fell off sharply and other benefits were also realized. Morale was strikingly improved, absenteeism decreased and not too surprisingly, there was also a significant increase in productivity.

Let's go back again to Webster. Remember—he says that discipline also means "to teach." Ford Motor Co. accepts this meaning wholeheartedly and considers the teaching and training of its employees to be one of its most important functions. Sure, we realize that our prime function and reason for existence is to serve our customers with a top quality product at a price they are willing to pay.

But, to do this we must have a *trained, disciplined* work force, at all levels of the organization. For the purpose of this discussion, however, we are considering only how this policy affects our program to prevent accidents, with particular emphasis on the enforcement of safety rules.

In order for established safety rules to have any meaning, it is a prerequisite that the persons to whom they are to apply, have a thorough knowledge of their context and meaning. This is accomplished through a very thorough system of training for both supervisors and hourly employees.

These training techniques take many forms, and include:

1. A six months training period for new supervisors.
2. One-hour weekly training meetings with required attendance by all supervisors.
3. Frequent contacts between supervisors and plant safety engineers.
4. Wide distribution of safety rule booklets, to both supervisors and hourly employees.
5. Requirement that all supervisors of hourly employees hold weekly safety talks with their employees.
6. Indoctrination program for new employees which requires that the supervisor go over pertinent safety rules with the new man to insure he understands them. A check sheet and card which the employee signs must be returned to the safety office for each new employee.

But that is enough of detail. I think

you have the idea that the Ford Motor Co. has an excellent training program and does a good job of educating its employees on how to do a good job safely. We have given our employees the knowledge, now we must see to it that they use that knowledge to the best advantage—to the advantage that employees will not suffer accidents and injury from someone's disregard of safe practices established and spelled out in the rule books.

Let us take a quick look at how "constructive discipline" of a progressive nature works in cases which demonstrate the principles we have been discussing.

First, consider a simple theoretical case. Suppose that one of the plant safety engineers observed an employee working at a machine while he was not wearing his safety glasses, as is required of all Ford Motor Co. employees. The safety engineer contacted the employee's foreman and verbally informed him that the employee was exposing himself to the hazard of a potential eye injury.

Thereupon the foreman, knowing the employee has just returned from lunch and merely has forgotten to put safety glasses back on, approached the man and reminded him to do so. The man, being a cooperative individual, did so, with thanks to the foreman for reminding him. (*This man knows which side of his bread has the butter.*)

This man required very little correction since he realized that the eye protection rule was for his benefit. Just a word of caution was all the discipline (motivating education and correction) that was needed in this case and that was all that was applied. Mission accomplished!

Let us now consider a little more complicated and still theoretical case. Again, the plant safety engineer reported a worker, not wearing the prescribed eye protection, to his foreman. This individual was resentful and expressed himself fluently, indicating he did not want to comply with the rule requiring him to wear safety glasses.

In this case the foreman realized that positive action was needed to change this individual's thinking. The foreman, therefore, called the man into the department office and, explained to the employee that the Ford Motor Co. safety rule requiring all employees to wear approved types of