

A Foreman's Needs in Safety Promotion

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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 spoilage 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