

THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP IN SAFETY

By

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Senior management is the single most important aspect in an effective safety program. Without visible, enthusiastic and focused management leadership, no safety program will be able to help contribute to the overall company's efforts to be successful, grow and make a profit. Employees watch what management does as well as what management says. If they sense a lack of commitment to the safety program they will not believe in it. If they do not believe in the program, bad safety habits will be developed and once developed these bad habits are extremely hard to break.

Many companies fail to recognize the critical importance of management leadership. There are many reasons for this:

- Traditionally safety has not been thought of as a vital management function.
- Some companies only equate safety with OSHA compliance.
- Some companies see safety as an added expense instead of contributing to the profitability of the company.
- Safety simply isn't as exciting as other management activities.
- There are other pressing matters that limits the time available for safety.

Companies that have an effective program do not accept these excuses. These companies understand the value of a good safety program. They provide the necessary active leadership to ensure the program is successful. In these companies management:

- Committed to the safety program.
- Ensures necessary resources are provided to guarantee the program is implemented and administered effectively.
- Holds all supervisors and employees accountable.
- Understands that accidents are preventable.
- Corrects unsafe conditions and behavior.
- Takes an active role in the safety program and communicates this to all employees.
- Leads by example and follows all safety rules.
- Rewards and recognizes supervisors and employees.

Good safety programs do not happen by accident, they happen because management is committed to making the program work and provides the everyday leadership and direction. Active leadership is critical to ensure the safety program achieves its primary purpose of protecting the company's most vital assets.

If you have any questions or need assistance with your safety program, please call American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc., at 800-356-1274.