

SMARTCARD™

Behavior Change Solutions

From Bill Sims

"I've inherited a safety incentive program that rewards people for lagging indicators and I'm worried there maybe injury hiding. How can I shift it to become behavior based?"

All too often, safety managers find themselves the unwilling inheritants of an old school safety incentive program based on trailing indicators. These programs reward employees to work a period of time without reporting injuries. While initially sometimes achieving dramatic injury reductions, these programs quickly deteriorate into a "self-perpetuating nightmare" as one safety manager put it.

The common problems associated with these programs are:

- hard to say if the incentive budget is really producing a return on investment**
- injury hiding as employees cover things up so as not to interfere with the group winning the award prize**
- a "band aid" approach to safety as opposed to ripping out the roots of accidents**
- an "entitlement mentality" where employees feel that they should be paid more or somehow earn a bigger prizes based on the number of years they've been injury free.**
- safety committees who spend more time picking out the next gift than figuring out the behaviors that should be rewarded and reinforced**
- a focus on "what we will give as a prize" instead of "what behaviors will we reinforce?"**
- employees who take safety seriously are rewarded at the same level as those who break safety rules and take chances--sending a message that management really only values the safety scores at the end of the year, not the behaviors that led to them.**

These are only a handful of the problems associated with lagging indicator reward programs--for a full understanding please visit www.behaviorchangenow.com and view our free webinar.

So how do you drop lagging indicator rewards in favor of behavior based recognition(tm)?

Many companies just go "cold turkey". With a CEO's backing, the safety manager will

simply end the trailing indicator rewards and get rid of the sacred cow.

Some companies choose to have no recognition in it's place (not a good idea), but others work to design a more behavioral type reward program.

In this approach, the new standard becomes ZERO UNSAFE BEHAVIORS & CONDITIONS in place of the old target of ZERO INJURIES.

Raising the bar sets a new standard for organizations who have struggled year after year to attain Zero Injuries but often failed. Now, armed with a behavioral tool that helps them chart unsafe actions, near misses, safety improvement suggestions, they can focus on the upstream and *in striving relentlessly for Zero Unsafe Behaviors they achieve Zero Injuries as a byproduct.*

Sticking with Trailing indicator rewards will kill this upstream approach every time....in short folks, "what got you here, won't get you there." and it is time to take off the training wheels and move into a BBR solution.

So what are the dynamics of an effective behavior based recognition (tm) solution?

Training-No more spray & pray

New research shows that 95% of all training is forgotten within 2 weeks (some safety managers say it happens in less than 2 hours!).

Many companies fool themselves into thinking that having employees sign a log sheet stating they attended the training meeting is sufficient to say that training has occurred. They use a "spray and pray" approach to training where they spray their posters, newsletters and safety videos at employees and pray that people are paying attention...with *no way to measure the impact of their training.*

So, one of the most important places to link recognition is to employees who pay attention and learn what you want them to. A further, more forward thinking step is to recognize kids and spouses of employees for their buy in to your process.

Recognition, the Right Way.

One company decided to get rid of their old school lagging indicator programs and replace it with an in house behavior based solution. They purchased a supply of gifts, hired a full time employee to run their store, and printed up little "Safety Bucks" which were given to supervisors to reward employees who "did something safe".

Over time, they noticed that only the supervisors and their favorite employees were receiving any gifts...the good 'ole boy system was the kiss of death for their program.

Positive recognition has to occur on the spot, immediate, and within 15 seconds of the behavior, according to Aubrey Daniels. This means that you have to create an on the spot reward/recognition solution that eliminates favoritism, and injury hiding....and you have to get supervisors to buy into it and use it.

We've posted a number of tips and strategies on how to do this at our Behavior Based Recognition webinar which is free and found at www.behaviorchangenow.com.

While the journey from lagging indicators to true behavior based recognition is not a piece of cake, the long term improvements to your safety process will be well worth the effort.

Regards,

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