Controlling Behaviors Through Audits

Presented By BHHC Loss Control

December 2025

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94%

It is now estimated that only 6% of workplace accidents are caused by environmental factors - unsafe conditions, OSHA violations, dangerous equipment, etc., while the remaining 94% of accidents are caused by unsafe behavior.

- Gene Earnest and Jim Palmer, Proctor & Gamble

88%

Heinrich's Original study of accident causation, 88% of accidents are caused by unsafe behaviors

- Herbert William Heinrich, Travelers Insurance 1931

Workforce Solutions Provider Needs Help

Background

A workforce solutions provider, faced rising safety incidents and workers' compensation costs across its logistics operations.

Challenge

High incident rates and escalating costs prompted leadership to seek a proactive safety strategy.

Reduced Accidents and Reduced Costs

The Effort

In 2021, the company launched a Behavioral-Based Safety Observations program focused on identifying unsafe behaviors and reinforcing safe ones in real time.

Implementation: Supervisors conducted regular observations, called out unsafe actions, and celebrated safe practices to build a safety-first culture.

Outcomes

- 40% reduction in OSHA-recordable accidents within months.
- 25% drop in workers' compensation costs over next three years.
- Increased employee engagement and accountability around safety.
- Safety became a shared value across all locations, transforming the culture and improving operational efficiency

AGENDA

November 2025

1. How Safety Observations Fit into Your Overall Accident Prevention Efforts
   - Prepare To Conduct a Safety Observation
   - The Role of SOP’s and JHA’s
   - Deciding to Tell or Not to Tell
2. Performing Safety Observation
3. Coaching Towards Desired Behavior

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We Will Focus on Best Practices

- The goal of an employee safety effort is to prevent injuries and increase the involvement of staff in your safety efforts.
- Regulatory standards are *minimum* requirements. Best in class employers go above and beyond.
- Remember that every workplace is different. Find the risk potential and address it proactively.

From: Milwaukee Journal Sentinal

How Safety Observations Fit Into Your Overall Accident Prevention Efforts

ROLE OF SAFETY OBSERVATIONS

IDENTIFY UNSAFE BEHAVIORS

Observe and recognize risky actions

REINFORCE SAFE PRACTICES

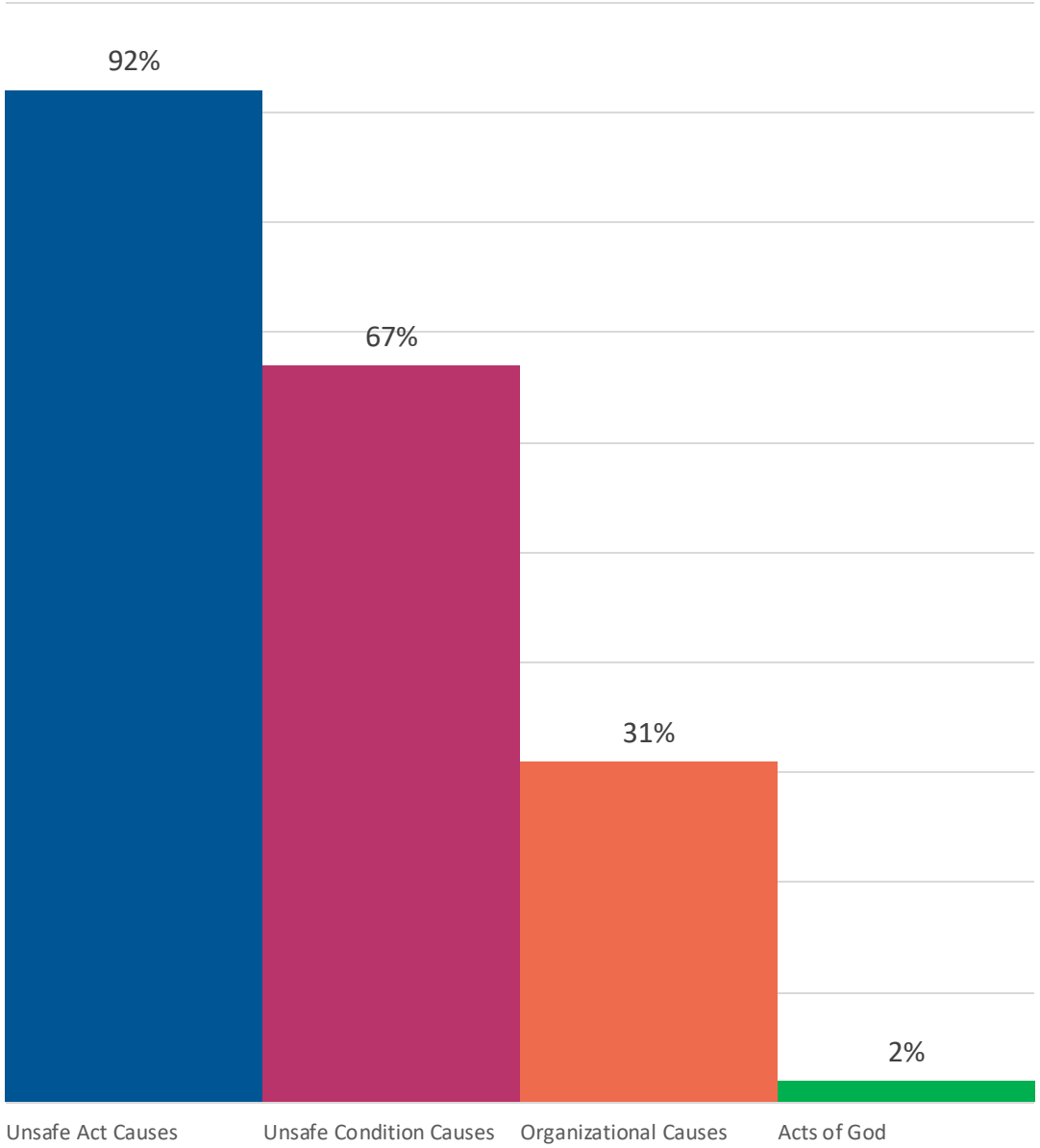
Encourage adherence to safety procedures

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Discuss positive and negative findings

PREVENT INCIDENTS

Address hazards before they cause harm

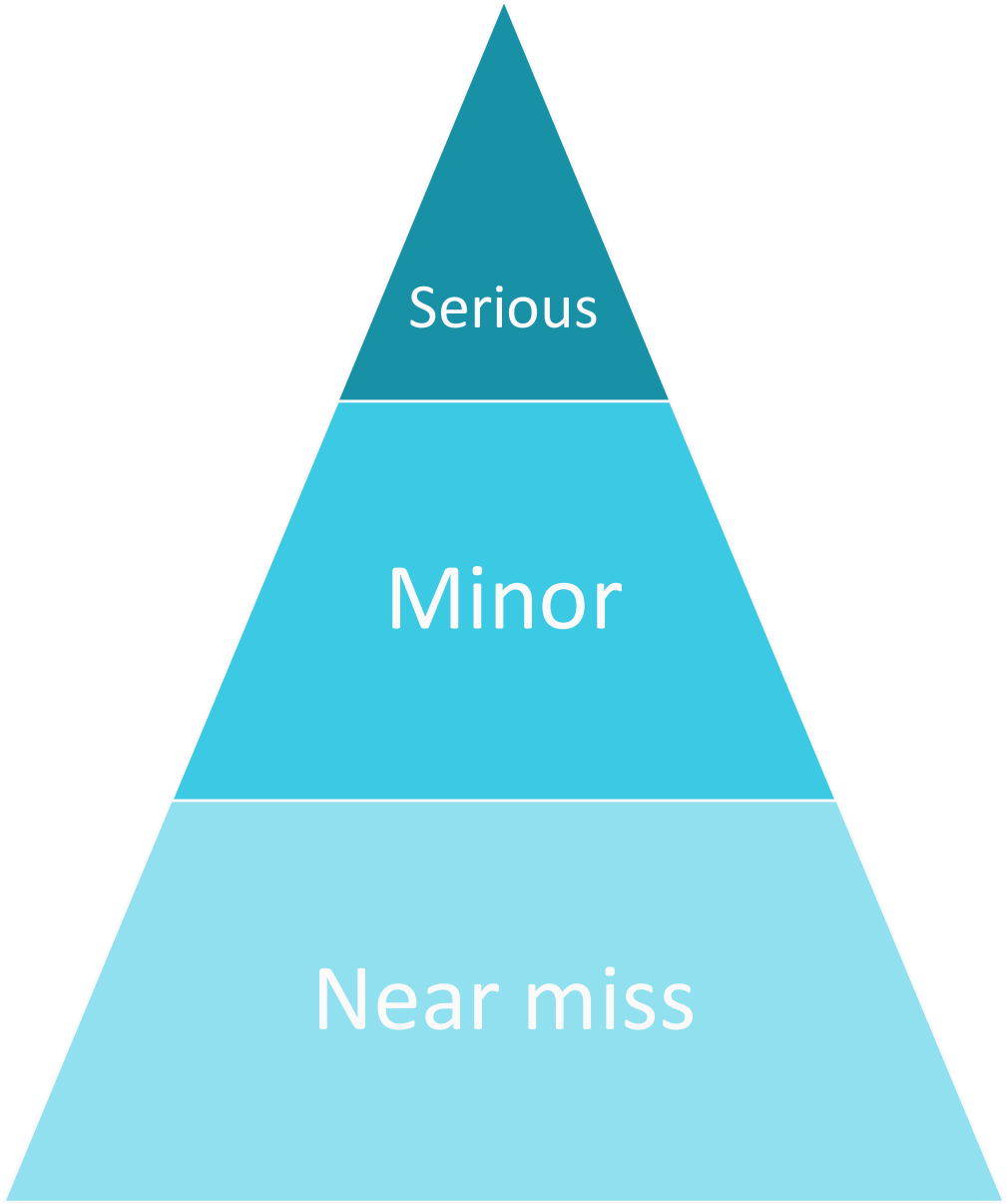


Multiple Causation Theories

Accidents are rarely the result of a single cause

They occur due to a combination of factors:

- Domino Theory
- Multiple Causation Theory
- Human Factors Theory
- Systems Theory
- Epidemiological Theory



Accident Triangle (adjusted)

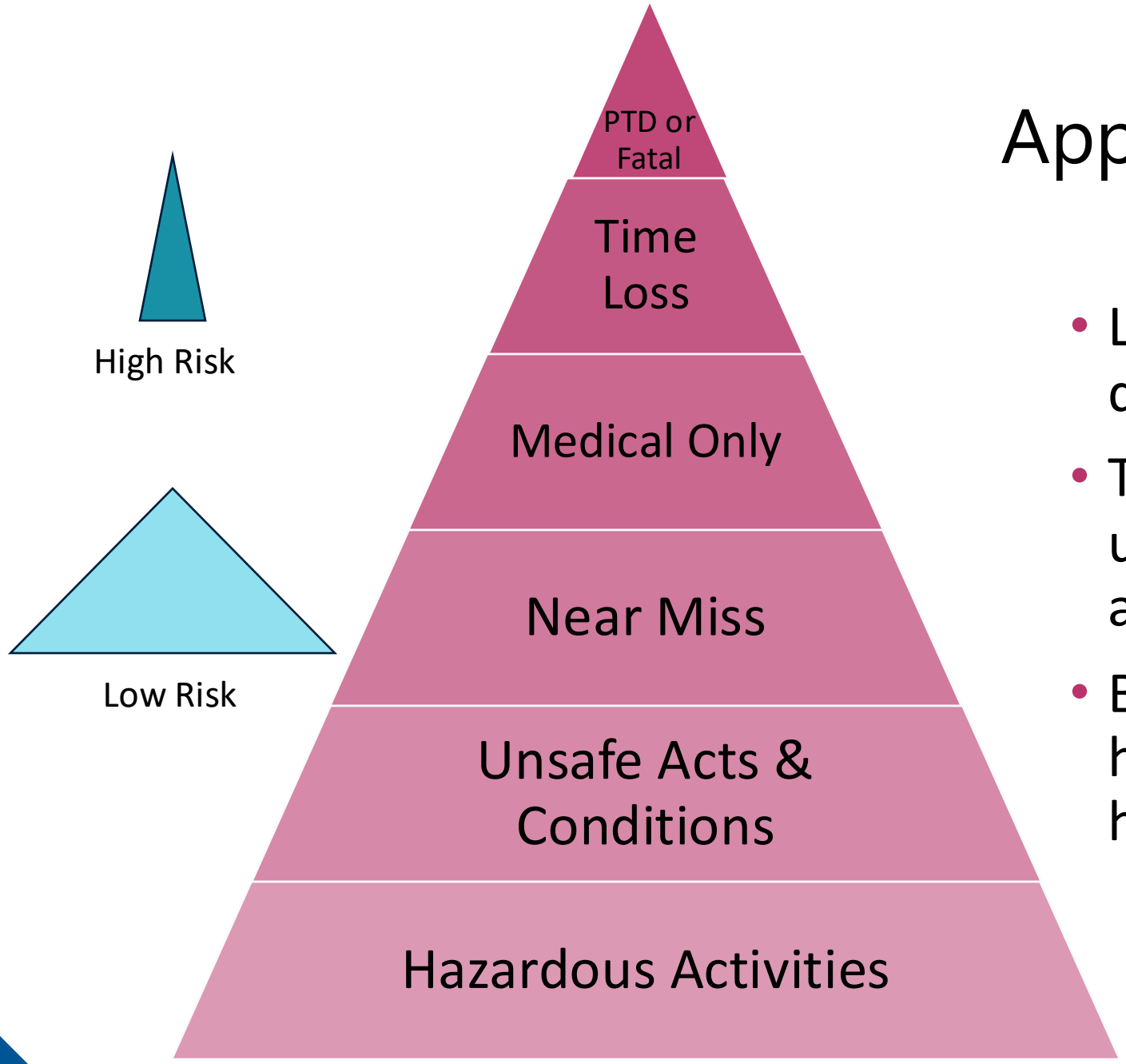
1931 Heinrich looked at 75,000 accidents

- 1 Serious Accident
- 29 Minor Accidents
- 300 Near Misses

1966 Bird analyzed 1.7 million accidents

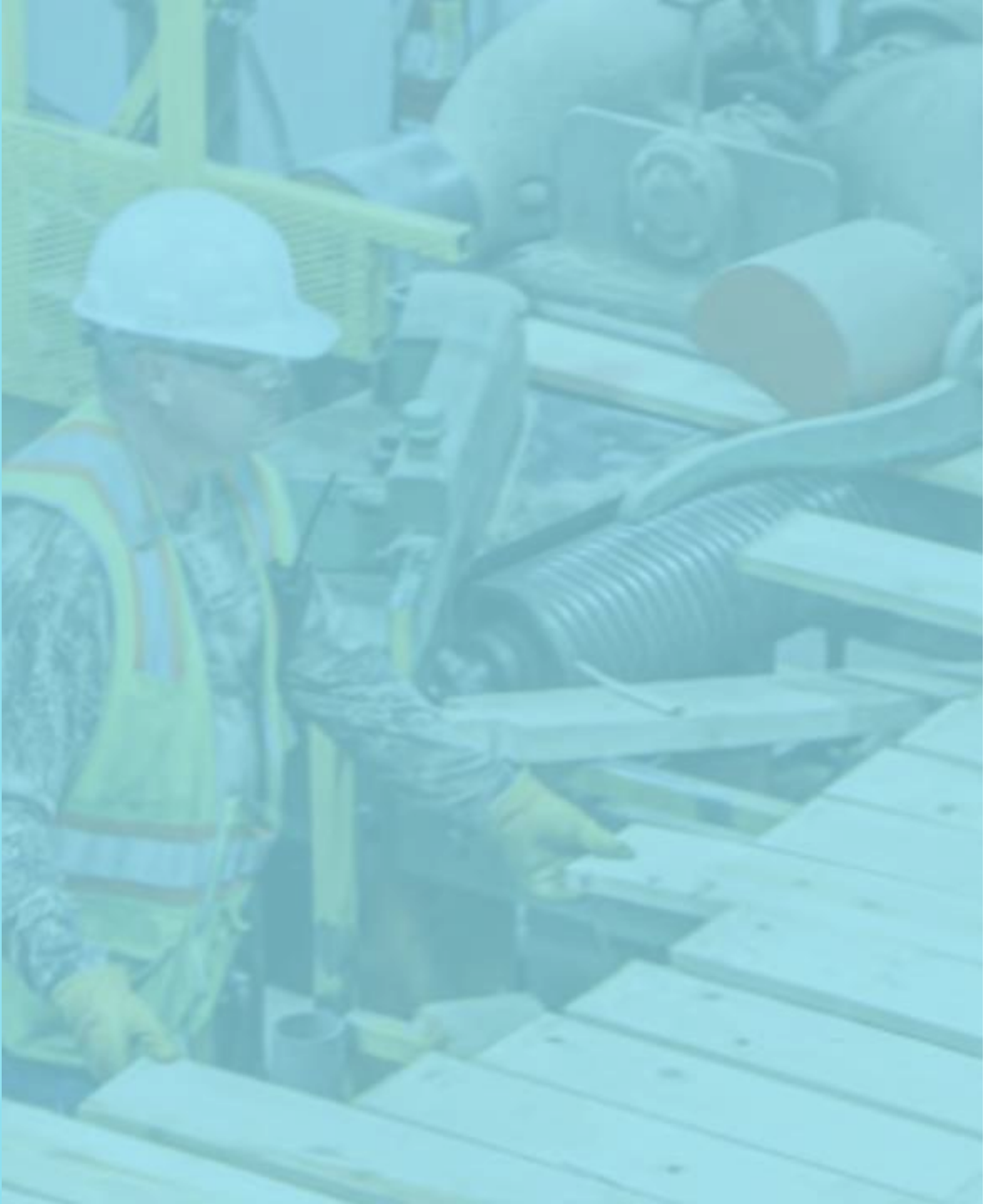
Updated Triangle:

- 1 Serious Injury
- 10 Minor Injury
- 30 Damage-Causing Accidents
- 600 Near Misses



Applying the Theory

- Layers permanent total disability or fatality at the top
- Time loss, medical, near miss, unsafe acts and conditions, and activities underneath
- Base of the triangle varies by hazard – narrower base the higher risk



Safety Observations Focusing on the Bottom

- Check the effectiveness of training programs
- Promote on-the-spot correction of unsafe acts
- Provide opportunities to compliment and/or reward safe behaviors
- Develop cooperative safety attitudes
- Promote more learning about employees
- Suggest and identify better job methods

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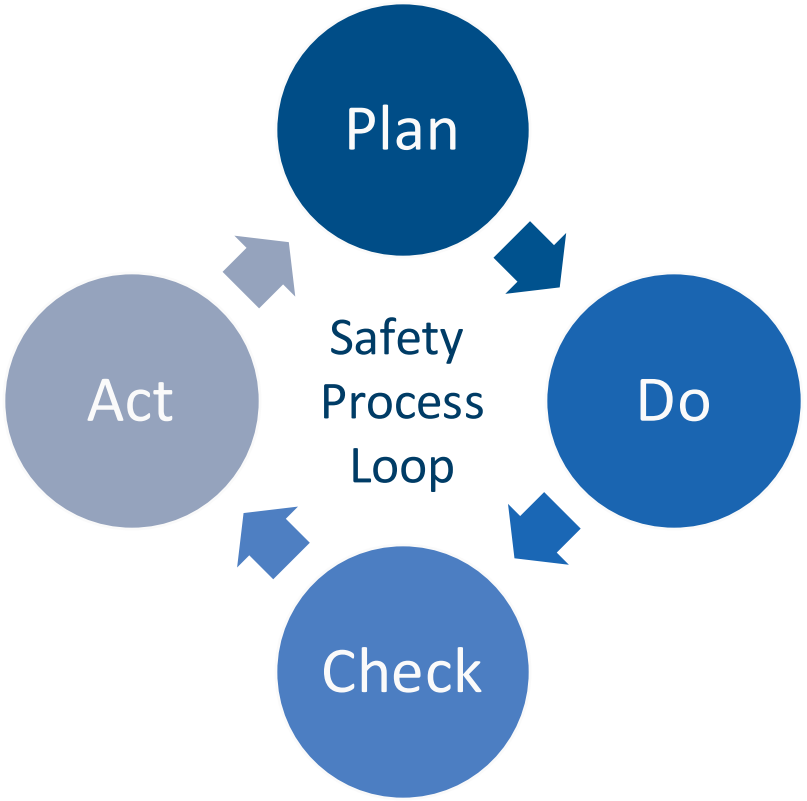
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Task Definition	Specifies what the employee is expected to do
Step-by-Step Instructions	Details how to perform each task safely and efficiently
Training Tool	Used for onboarding and refresher training
Compliance	Ensures adherence to quality, production, timeliness and safety standards
Foundation for JHA	Provides task breakdown for hazard analysis

Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

JHA COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Hazard Identification	Analyzes each SOP step for potential risks – Supervisor and employee review job with SOP as guide
Risk Assessment	Evaluates likelihood and severity of hazards
Control Measures	Recommends engineering, administrative, or PPE controls
Worker Protection	Ensures employees understand safety protocols
Continuous Improvement	Updates JHA with changes in tasks or environments

Preparing for the Observation



Identify who needs an observation

- New hires, change in position, outside influences, hazardous operations, other

Decide what you are looking for including job steps, hazards, and proper controls:

- Job Specifications, Job Hazard Analysis, Care Plan are all sources of data
- Look at a scheduling of tasks in the workday and ensure observation coincides to task
- Decide if you should tell the employee prior to completion of the observation

Who Needs an Observation

- New hire
- Transfer employee
- Returning after leave of absence
- Traumatic event
- Positions with high defect rate
- Positions with significant changes in productivity
- Positions with high accident rates
- Non-routine tasks
- Other

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What are you going to observe?

Job Step Review

- Review the SOPS
- Review and use the JHA
- What are the critical behaviors?
- Consider recent incidents or near misses
- Observation guides

Job Safety Analysis	Type of job: Helping to hitch an implement (wagon, machine) to a tractor Date: March 3, 2003	
Personal Protective Equipment to be worn: Work boots with steel toe, shank, leather gloves		
Basic Job Steps	**Potential Hazards**	**Recommended Action or Procedure**
Check the position of the implement wheels.	Implement could roll when tongue is picked up, causing a crushing injury.	Check that the wheels of the implement are blocked.
Check the position of the implement tongue.	Straining the back if the tongue is heavy.	Use blocks to keep tongue at hitching height, squat down and use leg muscles to lift rather than bending over and lifting with your back; use implement's jack stand if it has one; use temporary jack if tongue is heavy and implement doesn't have a jack stand.
Have tractor driver back to within a few inches of implement tongue.	Crushed between tractor and implement if tractor operator miscalculates while backing. Run over by rear tractor tire.	Stand outside of tractor and implement until tractor driver stops tractor. Use hand signals.
Helper moves in to align implement tongue and pin hole with tractor and pin hole.	Crushing injury to the hands or body.	Keep hands in back of drawbar connection point. Wear leather gloves. Tractor operator backs with low gear and low engine speed.
Insert drawbar pin to connect tractor with implement. Insert safety pin or attach safety chains.	Helper can be run over by tractor implement; suffer crushing injury to the feet if the implement tongue slips off of the tractor drawbar.	Operator puts tractor in park or sets brakes before helper drops in the hitch pin. Helper steps from between tractor and implement before tractor operator moves tractor. Helper wears steel-toe work boots.

Observation Guides
Hazard Specific & Job Focused

Safety Observation: Manual Lifting
Hazard Control Toolkit

SPECIFIC RISK FACTOR(S) IDENTIFIED						
Please check the items below where improvement is possible in order to address the risk factor						
MANUAL LIFTING						
NEEDS FOCUS	RISK FACTOR IDENTIFIED	CORRECTIVE ACTION APPROACH				
		A	B	C	D	E
	Body position (steps out of neutral)					
	Gripping Surface					
	Grip Method					
	Use of Mechanical Lift Assisting equipment					
	Twisting4					
	Bending at Waist (Below knee work)					
	Weight Limits					
	Two or More Person Lifts					
	Stretching					
	Other (List):					
	Other (List):					
	Other (List):					

A: Redesign Task to reduce manual lifting (engineering)
B: Retraining
C: Work with a mentor
D: Share with Team
E: Increase frequency of safety observations

Corrective Action Plan	Responsible Party	Corrective Action Date

BHHC Loss Control - Because everyone deserves to be safe, valued and respected.

Remarkable Construction
Safety Observation Checklist

Description	Used Properly	Not Used Properly	N/A	
1. Tailgate Discussion	O	O	O	
2. Wheel Chocks	O	O	O	
3. Personal Protective Equipment	O	O	O	
a. Hard Hat	O	O	O	
b. Eye/Face Protection	O	O	O	
c. Hearing Protection	O	O	O	
d. Hand Protection	O	O	O	
4. Traffic Control Devices	O	O	O	
a. Cones	O	O	O	
b. Signs	O	O	O	
c. Flagman with Proper Equipment	O	O	O	
5. Vehicle Grounds	O	O	O	
6. Personal Grounds	O	O	O	
7. Rubber Gloves and/or Sleeves	O	O	O	
8. Cover-up Material	O	O	O	
9. Fall Protection	O	O	O	
a. Climbing Belt and Safety Strap	O	O	O	
b. Harness (full body)	O	O	O	
c. Lanyards	O	O	O	
d. Ladders Secured	O	O	O	
10. Proper Equipment Use and Location	O	O	O	
11. Trench/Shoring	O	O	O	
12. Safety Signs	O	O	O	

Comments

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Benefits of Structured Data Collection

Trend Analysis

- Better understanding of risks and safe practices
- Increased vigilance and proactive behavior

Focus department and company training

- Clear guidance helps employees feel more capable and secure in their roles
- Ensures consistent competencies for staff

CheckList: Construction - 1926
Users: All Users
Category: All Categories
Company: All Companies
Date Range: 6/1/2018 - 9/30/2018

Total Inspections: 82

Aerial/Boom Lifts	Pos	Neg	Total	%
Workers tied off to approved anchorage point in basket? 1926.453(b)(2)(v)	38	13	51	75%
Workers not tied off to adjacent structure/equipment? 1926.453(b)(2)(iii)	17	2	19	89%
Operator(s) trained and/or authorized? 1926.453(b)(2)(ii)	26	6	32	81%
Both feet on floor of basket? 1926.453(b)(2)(iv)	11	19	30	37%
Boom/basket load limits not exceeded? 1926.453(b)(2)(vi)	9	4	13	69%
Aerial lift stationary when elevated? 1926.453(b)(2)(viii)	10	2	12	83%
Aerial lift controls clearly marked/identified? 1926.453(b)(2)(ix)	6	3	9	67%
Aerial lifts inspected prior to use/documented? 1926.453(b)(2)(i)	5	2	7	71%
Access gate/opening closed when working in lift? (ANSI/SIA A92.5)	4	2	6	67%
Operated on level surface per equipment specs? (ANSI/SIA A92.5)	2	0	2	100%
Outriggers (when available) utilized as needed? (ANSI/SIA A92.5)	3	0	3	100%
Work platform kept reasonably clear of debris? (ANSI/SIA A92.5)	3	1	4	75%
Are Boom Lifts operated within the wind speed service limit? (ANSI/SIA A92.5)	3	0	3	100%
Good compliance/no safety violations? (1926.453)	1	0	1	100%
Category Total	138	54	192	72%

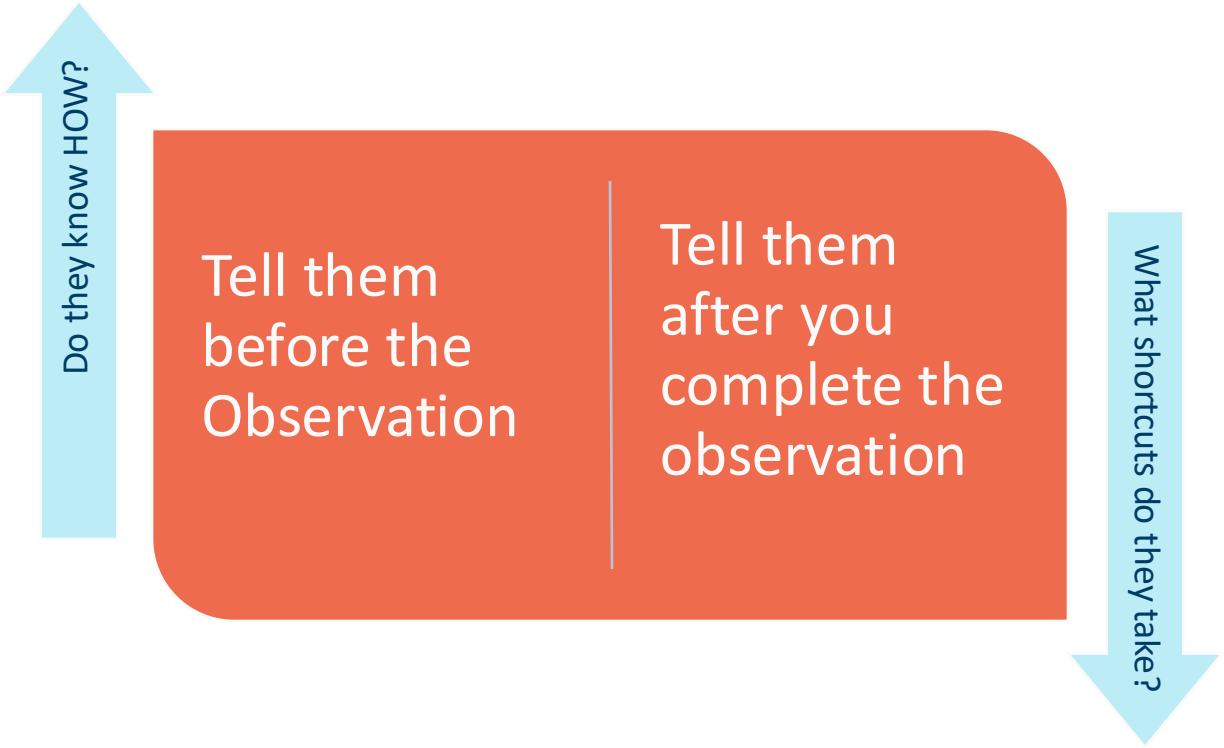
Behaviors	Pos	Neg	Total	%
Eyes on path/looks in direction of travel?	7	1	8	88%
Looks back prior to stepping backwards?	6	0	6	100%
Pushes instead of pulls when possible?	6	1	7	86%
Avoids overhead work when possible?	3	0	3	100%
Lifts with legs not back when possible?	2	1	3	67%
Forms a bridge with free hand when lifting?	1	1	2	50%
Category Total	25	4	29	86%

Importance of Scheduling

- To observe high hazard activities, you must be there when they occur
  - Loading and Unloading activities
  - Charging tanks or process vessels
  - Non-Routine tasks – concrete cleaning
  - Tasks that result in injuries and accidents
  - Tasks with high defect rates
- To observe specific employees, you must work on their schedule
- Timing matters!

To Tell or Not To Tell

When you inform the employee, it makes a difference



- Evaluate whether the employee knows *how* to do the job complete an informed safety observation
- Evaluate how the employee *performs* their work, do not inform them prior to completing the observation
- In all cases, always provide *feedback*

Performing the Observation

Performing the Observation

Incidental Observations

- Part of other work activities
- Short observations and feedback sessions

Deliberate Observations

- More planning and foresight
- Separate time is set aside to perform the deliberate observation

Determining Frequency for Observations

- New Hire; 3 in first month
- Existing employee; 1 per month

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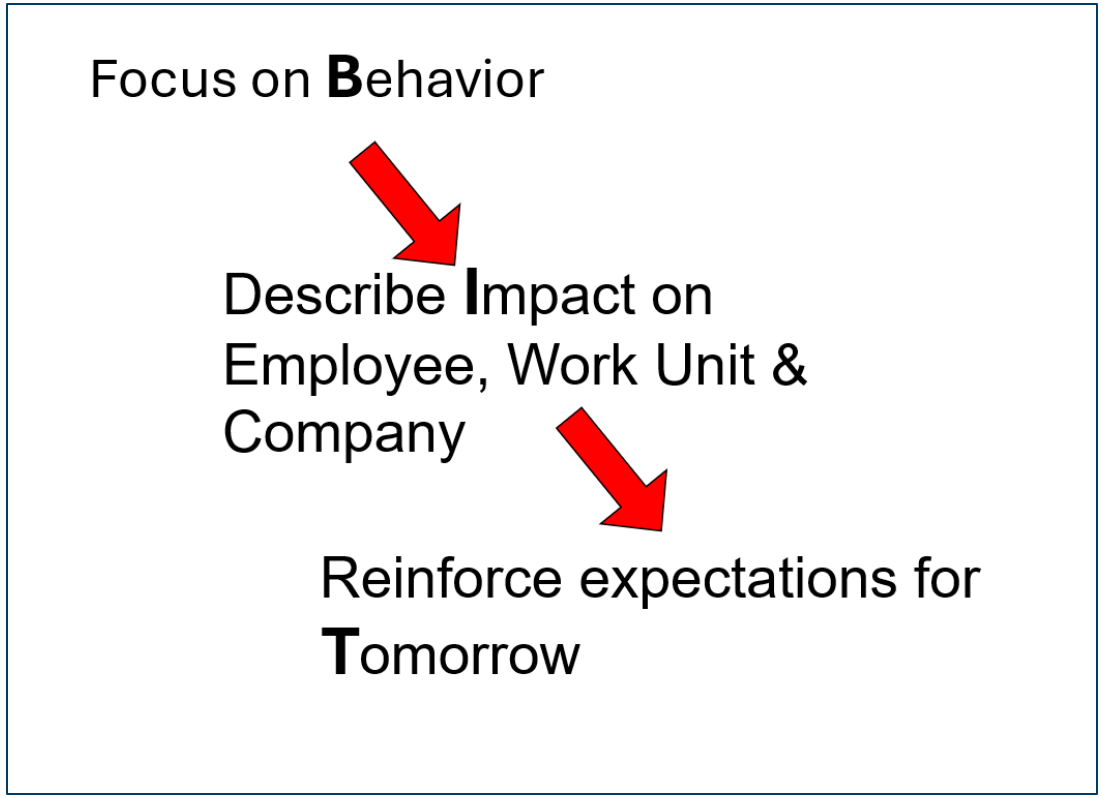
Performing the Observation

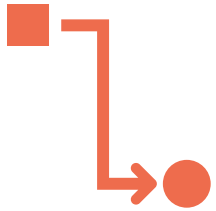
- Tell First, explain to the worker what you will be doing and for how long.
- For uninformed observations, stand out of the way and observe the employee.
- After all Observations, approach the employee, explain that you have just performed an observation and proceed with the coaching session.



Feedback: a BIT of Information

Behavior

Make sure employee understands the positive or negative behavior that was observed.



Impact

Link the impact to a personal level, unit level, plant level and corporate level.

Tomorrow

What action's do you expect the employee to complete tomorrow and on.

Feedback: Coaching Employees

When unsafe behaviors are observed, employees must be coached in the correct method

- Tell them *how* to do the task
- *Show* them how to do the task
- Have them *demonstrate* the task correctly
- Make *corrections* or *reinforce* good performance

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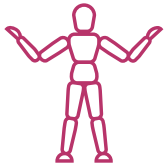
Elements of Effective Coaching

Ask Questions

Listen Intently

Be Non-Judgmental

Align feedback with desired behaviors



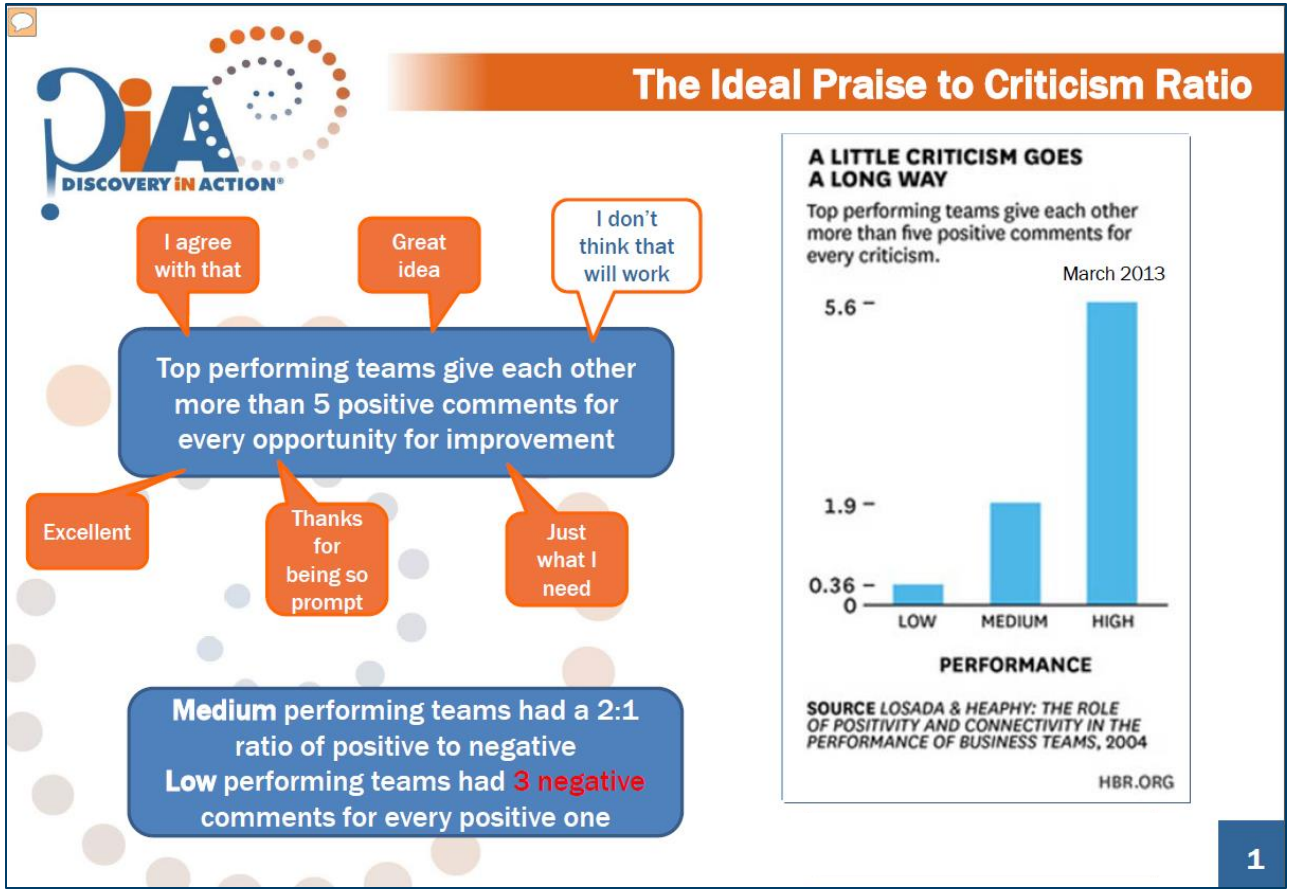
Model Strategies and Behaviors

Provide Honest Feedback

Create Safe Environment

Use Positive Reinforcement

4:1 Rule for Safety Observation



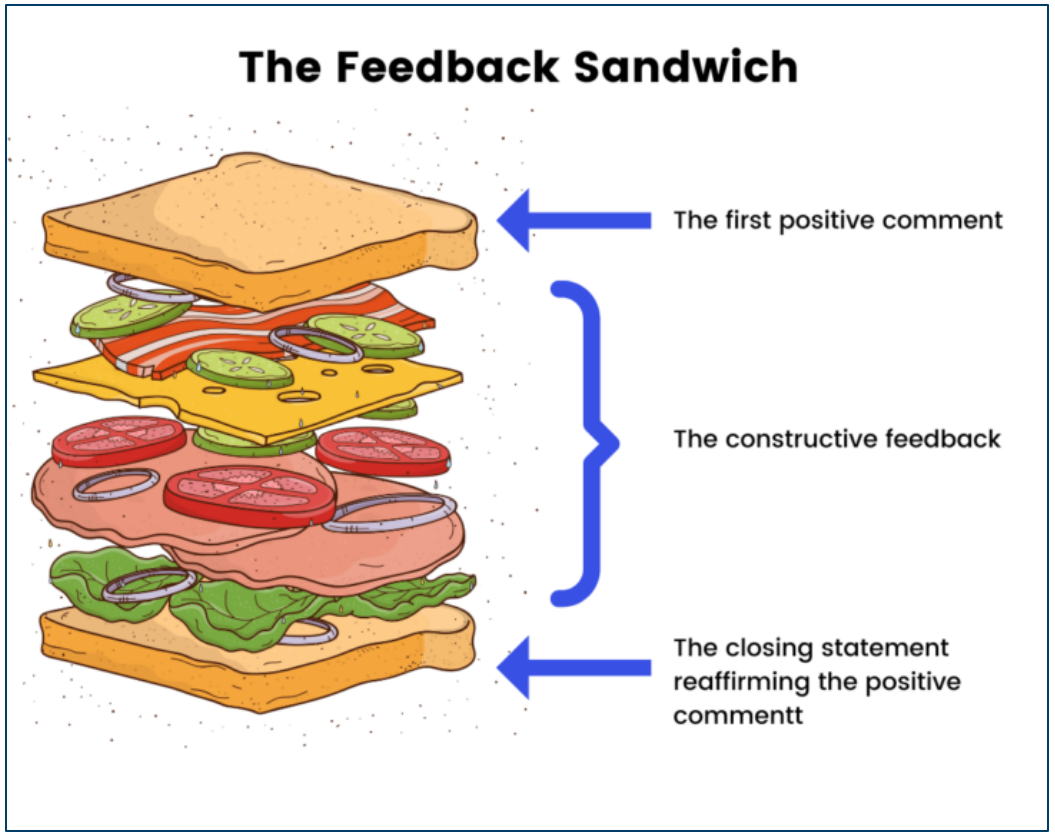
- Give positive feedback at least 4 times out of 5
- Reinforcement Effect: Behavior positively reinforced tends to increase or continue
- Extinction Effect: Behavior not positively reinforced tends to decrease over time
- Punishment Effect: Behavior "de-motivated" by negative reinforcement tends to decrease

Feedback: The Coaching Sessions

Safety Sandwich

- Compliment
- Correction
- Compliment

- Make sure employee understands the appropriate way to perform the task.
- Have employee demonstrate key safety controls
- Always express concern for the employee's well-being when providing one on one coaching



Effective Coaching

Common Pitfalls to Safety Coaching

The Message

- Overemphasis on Compliance
  - Focusing only on rules without mindset
  - Leads to minimal engagement and poor understanding
- Ignoring Data and Trends
- Coaching Only After Incidents
  - Reactive rather than proactive coaching
  - Misses the chance to prevent issues before they occur
- Lack of Supervisor Training
  - Supervisors may not be equipped with coaching skills or safety knowledge
  - Leads to ineffective or counterproductive sessions.

The Approach

- Lack of Personalization
  - Using a one-size-fits-all approach
  - Reduces relevance and impact of coaching
- Inconsistent Follow-Up
  - Coaching is treated as a one-time event
  - Missed opportunities for reinforcement and improvement
- Poor Communication Skills
  - Lack active listening or constructive feedback techniques
  - Can result in misunderstandings or defensiveness
- Failure to Build Trust
  - Coaching without safety
  - Employees may withhold concerns

People Learn Differently

Visual Learners

- Prefer diagrams, charts, videos, and written instructions
- Benefit from visual aids like infographics, signage, and safety walkthroughs

Auditory Learners

- Learn best through listening and verbal explanations
- Respond well to safety talks, coaching conversations, and recorded briefings

Kinesthetic Learners

- Learn by doing. hands-on practice and physical engagement
- Thrive in simulations, role-playing, and on-the-job demonstrations

Read/Write Learners

- Prefer reading manuals, writing notes, and reviewing documentation
- Benefit from written safety procedures, checklists, and self-paced modules

Learning Styles Impact on Safety Coaching

One-size-fits-all coaching is ineffective

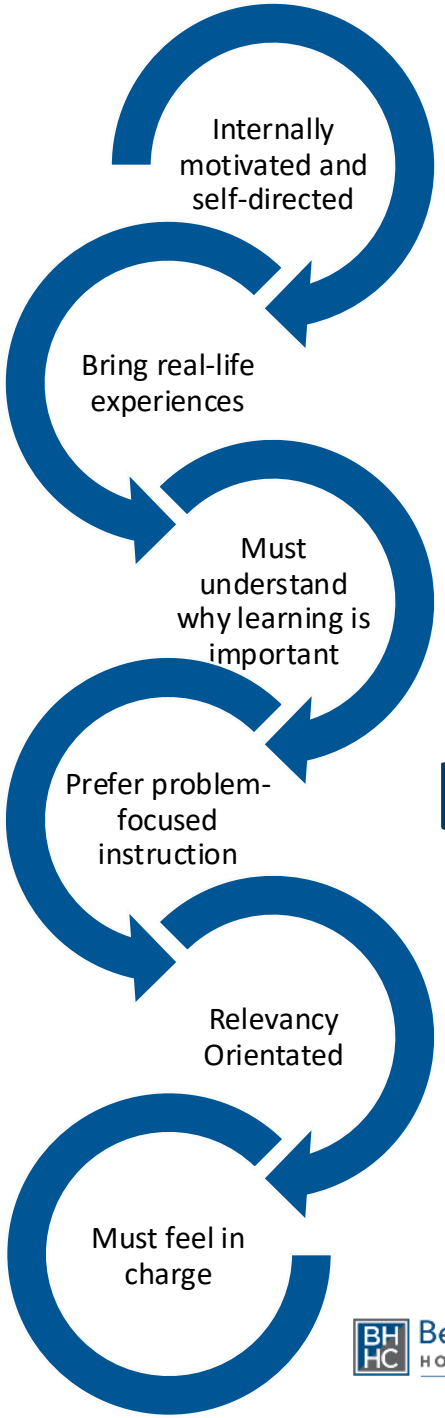
- tailor methods to individual preferences

Blended approaches

- (visual + verbal + hands-on) increase retention and engagement.
- Misalignment between coaching style and learning preference can lead to confusion or disengagement.

Supervisors should observe and adapt

- ask employees how they best absorb information.



Adult Learning

Active Listening

Safety Communication Techniques for Supervisors

What makes it successful:

- Shows employees their concerns are heard and valued.
- Builds trust and encourages open dialogue.
- Helps supervisors identify underlying safety issues

Summary

ROLE OF SAFETY OBSERVATIONS

IDENTIFY UNSAFE BEHAVIORS

Observe and recognize risky actions

REINFORCE SAFE PRACTICES

Encourage adherence to safety procedures

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Discuss positive and negative findings

PREVENT INCIDENTS

Address hazards before they cause harm

A Safety Observation Commitment

- How many safety observations can you do?
- How many are you willing to commit to?
- Who will you observe first?
- What do you hope to accomplish?
- How will you measure your success?

AGENDA

Recap

1. How Safety Observations Fit into Your Overall Accident Prevention Efforts
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Questions?

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