SAFETY—Motivation and promotion

A new loss control program often produces a flurry of activities — many departments are involved, and there is a high degree of participation by all employees. But how do you sustain interest in the program? Without continued motivation, employee response will gradually taper off and, after six months, the interest may be at pre-program levels.

To maintain interest, management should direct and control the loss control activities so that the employees will benefit directly. Interest will be aroused by activities that appeal to them personally. However, everyone is not motivated by the same incentive; therefore, consider these factors that determine motivation:

- **SELF-PRESERVATION:** Fear of personal injury
- **PERSONAL OR MATERIAL GAIN:** Desire for reward
- **LOYALTY:** Desire to cooperate
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Recognition of obligations
- **PRIDE:** Self-satisfaction and desire for praise
- **CONFORMITY:** Fear of being different
- **RIVALRY:** Desire to compete
- **LEADERSHIP:** Desire to be outstanding
- **LOGIC:** Special ability to reason
- **HUMANITY:** Desire to help others

Programs should be planned using a systematic approach aimed at the factors that are most influential to the affected employees. This will be much more effective than a hit-or-miss technique. There are many types of program promotions that can create and maintain interest in the loss control efforts:

1. **Posters.** Should be located in high traffic areas, selected to promote a theme or call attention to a problem, and changed at least monthly.

2. **Handouts.** Can be used in conjunction with monthly poster theme as reinforcement. Usually included in payroll envelope or can be mailed to the employee’s house.

3. **In-house newsletters.** A separate section can be devoted to inform employees of current and future loss control activities, messages by top management, achievement toward goals, and ideas that worked. These are some items that will be of interest.

4. **Suggestions.** Employees should be encouraged to submit written ideas and suggestions. Providing a box where they can deposit their suggestions gives them the feeling of having a direct line to management.

5. **Group safety meetings.** Generally most effective when they involve top management, are planned to promote or train, and are of short duration (up to 30 min).

6. **Individual safety contacts.** Usually performed by the employees’ supervisor on a scheduled basis (weekly to monthly) with one topic as the basis of discussion.

7. **Safety contests and campaigns.** These can be designed to reward individuals or groups. The best results are achieved when everyone is involved and many types of activities interface to promote the campaign or contest.

Programs that show an interest from top management, through the supervisors to the hourly employees, help create the spirit of cooperation. Effective communication is a motivation tool. When top management knows and participates in the program, it communicates to all employees that safety is a company effort.

Employees must be motivated to reach the loss control goals established by top management. Programs that are designed to reach those goals must be systematic and effective. The more employees are motivated to participate in the loss control program, the more successful it will become.

**Sources:** Wisconsin Council of Safety, Minnesota Safety Council, and National Safety Council.

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