

KEYS TO CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

Organizations typically determine fault for workplace accidents on one of two underlying issues: the company's failure to establish an appropriate safety protocol or their inability to successfully implement a safe culture.

To successfully adopt a zero-claim mentality in the workplace, it's important to implement a holistic strategy that empowers the organization to manage progress as well as track results. The following are the best practices for addressing these issues, and how TrueNorth partners with clients to create an effective culture of safety.

Proof of Concept

In the book *Zero Trends: Health as a Serious Economic Strategy* author Dee Edington claims that by implementing a culture of wellness, organizations can prevent a sick population from becoming sicker. His philosophy pairs cultural best practices with proven procedures to drive down costs and improve company morale. Although Edington applies his approach to the healthcare industry, we can show that the method also may improve workplace safety.

As Edington notes, "...even if you do get somebody to change, you put them back in the same environment and they go right back to doing what they were doing before." His book introduces five pillars that, when applied collectively, encourage organizational change.

1. **Senior Leadership:** Establish goals and objectives through mission statement and key areas of focus.
2. **Operational Leadership:** Align the workplace with a common vision.
3. **Promote Self-Leadership:** Create winners.
4. **Reinforce Culture:** Reward, recognize and sustain progress among employees.
5. **Quality Assurance:** Outcomes drive strategies. Be sure to track progress.

Success Story

"TrueNorth has helped us figure out how to confront incidents and learn from them in a meaningful way." - Dennis Thompson, President of Thompson Truck & Trailer, Inc.

Thompson Truck & Trailer, Inc. is a TrueNorth client and full-service commercial truck dealership. With 11 locations and 300+ employees, the company sought to adopt a risk management plan that would shift mindsets and influence all aspects of their organization. Over the course of one year, TrueNorth's risk solutions team worked closely with Thompson leadership to implement key strategies to generate significant results.

Thompson’s success reinforces Edington’s approach. By applying the five pillars, TrueNorth and Thompson were able to create and sustain measurable change throughout the organization:

2010 – 2013 (Before)	2014 – 2018 (After)
Ad hoc safety program	Structured safety program
Lacking safety synergies	“Safety first” mindset
Undefined safety culture	Measurable safety culture and awareness campaigns
<u>25</u> lost time accidents	<u>3</u> lost time accidents
<u>93</u> work comp claims	<u>22</u> work comp claims
\$1,148,689 in filed claims	\$94,043 in filed claims

As evidenced by the data above, Thompson Truck and Trailer, Inc. channels employee engagement to create a dynamic safety program and drastically lower their number of workplace accidents. Their adoption demonstrates that a safe culture can engage employees, keep them safe, and will continue to grow to meet the company’s evolving needs.

Conclusion

All too often, organizations adopt a static safety program and wonder why it fails to yield results. A true commitment to safety must be a shared effort and approach—one that spans beyond the responsibilities assigned to the organization’s safety director or risk manager. With support from leadership, many organizations can adopt a culture of safety that will provide lasting value for years to come.

TrueNorth’s consultative approach helps our clients and their employees improve processes and achieve results. We do this by instilling a culture that encourages people to leave their jobs in the same or better condition than when they arrived that morning. Contact our team to learn more about our unique approach to risk management.

Sources Cited:

Edington, D. (2009). *Zero trends: health as a serious economic strategy*. Ann Arbor, MI: Health Management Research Center.

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