Safety Matters

Provided by: Acumen Solutions Group

Combating Workplace Safety Complacency

It's vital for employees to feel comfortable in their job role and capable of performing workplace tasks effectively. However, comfort shouldn't come at the cost of complacency.

Being complacent on the job and ignoring safety hazards can carry significant consequences in the workplace—such as near-miss incidents, injuries and even fatalities. After all, just because your workplace is safe, doesn't mean you don't have to follow proper precautions. In fact, many safety incidents aren't caused by unsafe conditions, but rather by careless acts or behaviors.

That's why it's crucial for you to play your part in combating complacency, keeping both yourself and others safe at work. Review this guidance to understand what workplace safety complacency is and how to prevent it.

What Is Workplace Safety Complacency?

Put simply, workplace safety complacency occurs when an employee becomes so experienced or familiar with their job responsibilities that they start to develop an overly relaxed attitude toward tasks. This attitude shift can cause the employee to ignore or become complacent with their job hazards and stop taking proper safety precautions.

Employees can display workplace safety complacency in a variety of ways—including rushing through tasks, skipping important safety steps during a task, multitasking or engaging in distracting activities while performing a task.

Regardless of how confident or comfortable you are with workplace tasks, it's imperative to avoid complacency. Even the most experienced employees can hurt themselves or others if they fail to uphold adequate safety precautions.

How to Prevent Workplace Safety Complacency

Here's what you can do to combat safety complacency within the workplace:

- **Take hazards seriously.** Remember that no matter your skill level, you're never immune to workplace hazards. Always pay attention during workplace safety meetings and training sessions to fully understand the risks that accompany your role and comprehend the consequences of engaging in unsafe actions.
- **Follow workplace policies and procedures.** Ensure you follow all safety policies and procedures when performing workplace tasks, even if it seems tedious. Don't rush through tasks, try to multitask or skip certain steps.
- **Conduct safety audits.** Consider having a co-worker routinely audit you to see if they identify any safety concerns while you work—this is also known as a behavior-based safety observation (BBSO). Make sure you assist your co-workers by auditing their work through BBSOs as well. By observing others, you may even become more aware of your own habits and identify additional areas for improvement.

To ensure a successful safety culture within our organization, it's crucial for you to be comfortable addressing complacency issues on the job. If you have any concerns regarding workplace safety complacency, talk to your supervisor.

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