



ASSP NORTH FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER – AUG/SEPT 2020

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Keeping Your Safety Culture Healthy During COVID-19

Dakota Software

It is not a question of “if” or “when.” Whether your company fully realizes it or not, COVID-19 has already had a profound effect on the business’s organizational culture, including its safety culture. Here are some key areas of safety culture to keep an eye on to ensure that you are mitigating any negative effects the pandemic may be wreaking on your hard-won cultural successes.

With over 5 million total cases and over 175,000 deaths caused by COVID-19 in the United States, businesses across the country continue to struggle with this health and safety threat. It has taken a toll on our collective mental health, and the current atmosphere can be detrimental to safety culture. However, on the positive side, most people have developed a greater

general awareness of safety and health precautions due to COVID-19.

Building a safety culture isn’t easy, and it’s important for environment, health, and safety (EHS) managers to hold the line against cultural deterioration. Focusing on the following areas can help you maintain morale and safe behaviors among your workforce.

Leadership

Good leadership is the cornerstone of safety culture, and a safety leader can come from anywhere within your organization.

- **Set the example for your entire workforce.** Demonstrate safe behaviors all day, every day, and show employees that caring for one another’s safety on the job is the top priority.
- **Identify your allies and your champions within the organization, from the board room to the shop floor.**

No matter your position within the company, find the executives, managers, supervisors, and staff-level employees that you feel are on board with the organizational safety message. Support each other and build confident communications that can win over even the safety skeptics you may have within the organization.

Communication

Never underestimate the power of proper communication within an organization, and it may be more important than ever in the COVID-19 era.

- **Be honest and present in your communications.** Be straightforward and transparent as you let your workforce know how the organization is protecting their health and safety amid COVID-19. Make the communications as personal as possible—if you can communicate via a video call instead of a boilerplate e-mail, do so.



- **Clearly set safety procedures and expectations.**

Reinforce your current safety policies to employees, and clearly update them on additional protocols that the pandemic may have put into place.

- **Remember that communication is a two-way street.**

Encourage your employees to reach out with any questions or concerns that they may have regarding health and safety.

Systems, Behavior, and Engagement

With good leadership and proper communication, you can establish well-understood systems companywide, and these systems will in turn promote safe behaviors and employee engagement with safety.

- **Review your management systems to see how you need to adapt.**

Whether you have an internal set of systems or follow international management standards,

review what you have in place, make note of the adaptations you must make amid COVID-19, and take the appropriate actions. And if you don't have a system, there's no better time to build one than now!

- **Educate employees on safe behaviors.**

Train your workforce on your systems and provide them with accurate information that will help keep them and their coworkers safe.

- **Demonstrate a positive outlook on safety.**

As you adapt your systems and train to them, never treat this process like it's a chore—if you set a positive example of safety engagement, your employees will follow suit.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe

COVID-19 has presented the greatest health and safety challenge many of us have faced in our EHS careers. With a well-organized, fact-based, and empathetic approach to the

challenge that also employs all of the safety tools we have at our disposal, organizations can maintain healthy safety cultures even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

EHS Daily Advisor

Online Edition
August 28, 2020
[EHS Daily Advisor](#)

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Mask disputes raise questions of employee safety

Angela Childers

Mandatory mask policies aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19 have made workers more vulnerable to potential assaults by customers who view these policies as an infringement of their rights, experts say.

“This is really a supercharged issue. It appears now that the issue of mask policies has just become deeply personal,” said Andre Simons, Washington-based director of crisis and security



consulting at global risk consulting firm Control Risks Ltd., of the surge in attacks on workers in recent months.

While some individuals and workers may consider patrons' refusing to mask up as threats to the safety and health of themselves and their families, others refuse to wear masks because they see the COVID-19 mandates as an "existential threat to their personal liberties," he said.

"That's why we're seeing these conflicts erupt, and why there is potential for them to continue here in the next several weeks and months," Mr. Simons said.

Dozens of assaults — and a few deaths — have occurred in public places over mask-wearing throughout the U.S. Workers have also received threats and have been intentionally coughed on by customers for pointing out mask policies.

In May, a Family Dollar store worker in Michigan was shot and killed after he requested a customer and

her child wear masks. In early July, an auto body worker in New Mexico shot and killed a man who allegedly had tried to run him over after being asked to wear a mask, and a grocery security worker in California was charged with murder for shooting a customer he fought with for violating the store's mask policy.

Over the last several days, media outlets have reported several assaults over mask-wearing. On Friday a customer punched a barista in Los Angeles purportedly over the coffee shop's mask policy, and on Sunday a man who was asked to wear a mask at a New Orleans convenience store shot at the workers before fleeing.

Some of the reasons for this backlash over masks are cultural and some may be due to changes in mask policies from the beginning of the pandemic, said Deborah Roy, Falmouth, Maine-based president of SafeTech Consultants Inc. and president-elect of the

American Society of Safety Professionals.

"In the U.S., we don't have a culture of mask-wearing for public health reasons, whereas in other countries it's much more common," she said. "I think the initial guidance of not wearing masks in the U.S. confused people, and it made it more difficult later on to recommend cloth face coverings." The initial recommendation on masks had more to do with the available supply than safety, she said.

Multiple retailers have publicly released statements asking customers to wear face coverings in their stores, but a few — including Woonsocket, Rhode Island-based CVS Health — said they will not require employees to enforce the mask mandates over concerns for their safety.

"To be clear, we're not asking our store employees to play the role of enforcer," said Jon Roberts, CVS Health's executive vice president and chief



operating officer, in a statement. “What we are asking is that customers help protect themselves and those around them by listening to the experts and heeding the call to wear a face covering.”

Companies can help reduce customers’ mask-related frustration by clearly stating their mask policies and visually reinforcing those policies at entrances, Mr. Simons said.

“Confusion can also lead to conflict ... and can naturally lead to flare-ups between customers and employees,” he said.

“Companies really have to be more upfront about the message,” Ms. Roy said. “If someone doesn’t want to wear a mask, you want to have a positive option for those individuals as opposed to a negative message.”

For instance, companies can offer free disposable masks to customers without them or offer customers curbside pickup by providing a handout with information on how to place

their order from their vehicle or home if they choose, she said.

The more signage a company has and the more protective equipment they make available to customers, such as disposable masks, gloves and hand sanitizer, “the less likelihood of having that negative interaction with a customer,” Ms. Roy said.

On Friday, California released a “playbook” for employers that suggests employees “avoid approaching coworkers or members of the public who are not wearing a face covering for the purpose of attempting to enforce any face-covering recommendation or requirement.” It also recommends employers have in place a “method for calling in support from security or law enforcement if needed.”

“Planning and preparing for what could potentially become a hostile situation will go a long way toward protecting both employees

and customers,” said John Dony, Itasca, Illinois-based director of the Campbell Institute at the National Safety Council.

But regardless of the steps taken, confrontation can occur, and employees need to know what to do if faced with aggressive or hostile customers, Mr. Simons said.

“If they feel threatened or unsafe, the best policy is to defer to onsite security or law enforcement personnel,” he said. “If there’s not that immediate threat to safety, I think retail employees could really benefit from knowing and using de-escalation skills.”

One of the first things to remember, he said, is not to tell a customer to calm down.

“It’s usually seen as a directive by the hostile person,” he said. Rather, employees should make sure they’re calm and can remain that way during the conversation and speak to the angry customer with a



calm voice in a soothing tone.

“Rather than minimizing the issue ... demonstrate empathy and understanding,” Mr. Simons said. For instance, he suggests employees state that they understand how important the mask issue is to the customer and offer a face covering if the individual showed up at the store without the intention of defying any policies.

If the customer continues to engage, the employee should actively listen to the customer, summarize back to them what has contributed to their decision not to wear a mask and express their understanding of the customer’s frustration and anger at the policy and situation.

“What we’re trying to work to avoid here is having what is potentially a flashpoint of conflict turn into a broader moment of violence,” he said.

If a customer is in an establishment and refusing

to wear a mask, a possible approach is to do what many stores do from a loss-prevention standpoint by reporting, but not engaging, shoplifters.

“Depending on the culture of the organization, that may be appropriate,” Ms. Roy said. “And particularly if it’s a small mom and pop kind of store that only has one or two people in the building, that may be a safer approach.”

Business Insurance
July 29, 2020
[BusinessInsurance.com](https://www.businessinsurance.com)

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Court: Positive drug test doesn’t prove impairment

Death Benefits Paid Despite Positive Weed Test

Merriell Moyer

Positive drug test results alone aren’t always enough to prove impairment contributed to a workplace injury or death, as an Aug. 28 court decision proves.

A worker who tested positive for a large quantity

of marijuana showed no signs of being impaired before a fall that led to his death, so his widow can continue to receive death benefits, according to the Supreme Court of Kansas.

THC found in bloodstream following fall

Gary Woessner worked for Labor Max Staffing at a feed mill, where he fell from a catwalk and suffered a severe traumatic head injury.

No one saw him fall, and the cause remains unexplained, according to the supreme court [decision](#).

Woessner died six months later from the injuries suffered in the incident.

While in the hospital, a [toxicology screen](#) was performed indicating a positive result for a large quantity of THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

The amount found was high enough to trigger a conclusive impairment presumption under state law, and Labor Max



requested additional testing for confirmation.

No death benefits for widow

During Woessner's months of treatment, Labor Max paid workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability and for his care while in the hospital.

The company stopped paying after getting confirmation on the THC levels, leaving Woessner's widow without death benefits.

She contested the decision before an administrative law judge, arguing her husband wasn't impaired at the time of the incident.

Co-worker saw no signs of use

Labor Max submitted the two drug test reports as evidence and presented testimony from a forensic toxicologist, who agreed Woessner had to have recently consumed marijuana for it to appear in his bloodstream so soon after the incident.

He admitted he didn't know if marijuana use

contributed to Woessner's death and couldn't say "the active ingredient was present because they didn't test for it" so he couldn't tell what the level of impairment was.

Woessner's widow testified she didn't see him on the morning of the incident as he'd spent the night with their daughter and grandchildren, who said he didn't consume any marijuana while at their residence.

She told the judge she only knew of one instance when her husband consumed marijuana, which was about a month prior to the incident.

A co-worker, who worked with Woessner every day, testified he'd spent 10 to 15 minutes working near him the day of the incident and saw him no more than five minutes before his fall.

He said Woessner seemed normal, but admitted he was no expert in identifying drug impairment symptoms.

Evidence fails to support results

The judge felt Woessner was impaired and found in favor of Labor Max, but the state's Workers' Compensation Board overturned the decision. An appeals court then overturned the the board's decision.

Because the positive drug test results triggered the presumption on impairment, Woessner's widow had to prove impairment didn't contribute to her husband's death, according to the supreme court.

Since the toxicologist couldn't give an opinion on the level of impairment indicated on the test results, and because Woessner's co-worker couldn't verify Woessner was impaired on the day of the incident, the supreme court found in favor of the widow.

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September 8, 2020
[Safety News Alert](#)

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Are You Ready For a Stand-Down?

5 Things You Can Do to 'Walk the Talk'

It is no surprise that safety is top of mind for every worker on every job site. And yet, falls from elevation are still happening. In fact, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), falls from elevation continue to be the leading cause of death for construction employees.¹

So, for the seventh year, OSHA is again sponsoring National Safety Stand-Down. This voluntary event, being held September 14-18, 2020, is designed to raise fall hazard awareness in order to stop fall fatalities and injuries. National Safety Stand-Down is also your opportunity to “walk the talk.”

Here are 5 things you can do during National Safety Stand-Down to show workers how much safety matters.

1: Get Real. Acknowledge the elephant in the room. Talking about safety can feel like somebody is reading from a book but never turns the page. Explain why you talk about safety so much. Share the hard truth and fast facts about fatalities. In addition, give some context by focusing on real-world situations. Tap into safety near-misses you yourself have experienced. Use the day-to-day challenges your workers face on the job site to make safety more personal.

2: Have a Conversation. Approach every safety talk as a dialogue. Ask open-ended questions like, “How would you feel if ...” or “Please describe a time when ...” These questions can help workers make a connection between the statistical facts of falls and the reality of how it affects real life. Let employees share, too. Remember, feedback is a powerful tool, and may lead to new ideas or changes in

your safety plan and policies.

3: Be Creative. Keep in mind that people have different ways of listening and learning. Find new ways to present safety information. A short video vignette or a highly visual infographic, for example, can help capture attention or offer a different point of view. Get your personal protective equipment (PPE) out, too, remind everyone of proper use techniques.

4: Encourage Participation. Ask employees to strut their safety stuff. Have them walk everyone through your safety procedures and protocols, or give a demonstration. For example, have workers go through a 5-point harness inspection that includes looking at labels, load indicators, webbing, hardware, and stitching. Even better? Do some side-by-side challenges and see who can do it in under 2 minutes. For many, hands-on training and peer-to-peer competition can have



more impact than employer-to-employee training.

5: Get Free

Resources. Like you, we're on mission to protect the health and safety of workers, helping ensure their safe return home at the end of each workday.

This is why we work in the safety field and we encourage you to seek out the many free resources on the internet to assist you as you strive to promote safety in your workplace. Included in these free resources available to you are Tool Box talks, webinars, seminars, and how-to demonstrations for use with innovative safety products. If you cannot find what you are looking for, connect with someone in your network of safety professionals for the tools you need to keep your people safe.

Final Thoughts.

Construction falls and safety mistakes are costly in terms of lives, time, and

money. National Safety Stand-Down Day is your opportunity to, once again, put safety front and center, and to have a conversation with your employees about the hazards they face and what you are doing to protect them.

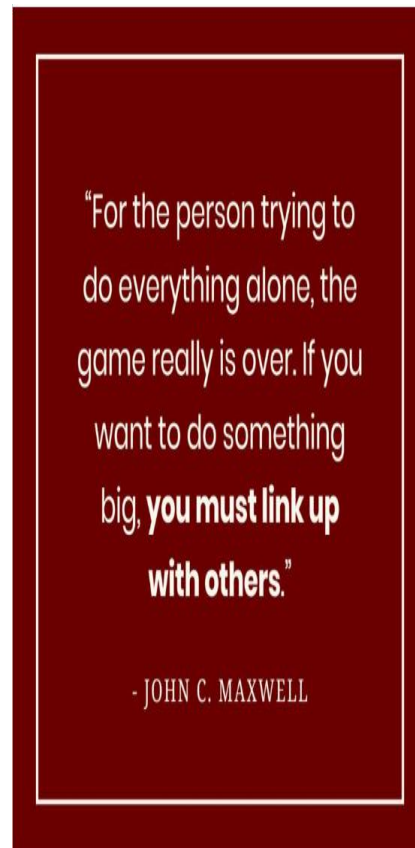
#StandDown4Safety

ISHN

September 7, 2020

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Inspirational Leadership in a Crisis

Paul Angelo

Leaders show others they have a plan to regain stability within their operation despite the instability outside.

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating economic uncertainty and anxiety, which means distractions in the workforce are at an all-time high.

Safety leaders understand that when distractions are high, exposures increase. Workers and managers are finding it difficult to focus because they have so much on their minds: their health and safety, the health and safety of loved ones, whether or not they can pay their bills, what the world will look like when this period of physical distancing subsides, and so much more.

It's times like these when inspirational leadership is needed most.



Inspirational leadership is a transformational leadership style that is critical when workers are worried, production is tenuous, and business is unstable. All three are interconnected—when one falls, the others go down too. Conversely, exposure starts to climb.

Inspirational leadership is therefore needed most during economic downturns, uncertainties in world affairs, or from sudden and unexpected natural disasters like a tornado or earthquake, or acts of terrorism like 9/11.

At its core, inspirational leadership is the ability to articulate an idea or an action to win over people so they share the same idea or action. Optimism, enthusiasm, fellowship—these are all direct results when people are inspired. Inspirational leadership builds relationships with others and minimizes the distractions that lead to the higher level of exposure.

But in order to inspire others, the leader him or

herself needs to be inspired. They need to believe in the vision they want to share. In this pandemic, experts and top government officials need to believe a vaccine is possible, the curve can be flattened, and that society will pick up where it left off, because if they don't, the millions of people who hang on those words won't either.

For that reason alone, all eyes are on leadership during a crisis. People are looking for physical signs and verbal cues that the situation is under control. In other words, for leaders, now is not the time to take passive resignation. They need to be in front of the situation and show others they have a plan to regain stability within their operation despite the instability outside.

So what do leaders need to do to achieve this state? Here are six ways to get there.

1. Get inspired. In order to inspire others, leaders need to determine what “good” looks like. Then they

can share that inspiration with others. You don't want to get this wrong because the stakes are too high.

For example: Recently I was working on a project that required checking on printing materials I needed to do my job. So I called the leader responsible for printing and asked the status of my draft. There was urgency because I had a client waiting. However, when I asked, the leader responded by asking how I was doing and how my family was doing. The conversation I thought would be contentious was instead empathetic.

When I talk with clients I try to lead by establishing a genuine relationship. My co-worker was effective because he wasn't defensive or anxious. He was calm and authentic. It is possible to be inspired by everyday interactions with people and pay it forward.

2. Establish your vision. Where do you want things to land after this crisis? For example, one vision I find inspiring is the idea that we will get through this together and the “new normal” may be different, but in some ways,



it could be better. That's a vision others can get behind. You don't want to lie and say that the change won't be painful. But you do want to prevent yourself from going down the road of only doom and gloom. Make sure the picture you paint is a good one and comes from a real place within yourself.

3. Set the example. You are the barometer that workers will use to gauge whether things look good or if you don't believe things will get better. Look at what you do or don't do and what you say or don't say. If you don't invest the time and energy into showing you care, you're just setting the stage for other people to feel rejected.

Think about it as a performance that will have a lasting effect, positive or negative. You have to realize that when you're on that stage, it's not just about you—it's about us. And if you're an inspirational leader you will recognize that how you respond will have a powerful impact on the organization.

4. Interact with your team. Physical distancing is how we are living right now. We're not bumping into each other in the hallway or conducting major business around a conference room table. Yet you need to interact with your team. How can you do this? Set up Zoom or similar technology calls to talk with one another, or just use the phone. Leadership is an interactive sport, so you have to interact. When under duress, some people close in. But now is the time you need to reach out.

5. Practice inspiration every day. You don't need to wait for that monthly meeting to give an end-of-game victory speech. You can inspire others on every phone call you're on or with every daily interaction. Also, remember: Your workers are not expecting you to give a speech that matches the great leaders of our day. You just need to show people you need them to move forward.

6. Inspirational leaders build credibility with their workers. At the

heart of inspirational leadership is sharing your vision, helping others grow, serving as a mentor, and projecting optimism. If you do those things well, you're going to build trust with your people that will pay off in increased safety and well-being.

So how do you start? Think about what inspired you recently. How can you use those actions or statements with those around you. Communicate that everyone will get through this pandemic together and show them that you really believe what you say.

Recognize that you need to be on your game every time you interact with your people. Make sure you check in with them, encourage them and listen. They need you now more than ever. And you need them too.

EHS Today
Online Edition
August 19, 2020
[EHSToday](#)

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LOCAL CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE

September 16, 2020

Legionella

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

October 5, 2020

**What OSH Professionals
Should Know about Total
Worker Health**

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

November 18, 2020

Stop the Bleed

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

December 2020

Winter Social

TBA

January 20, 2021

Emotional Intelligence

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

February 17, 2021

Arc Flash

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

March 17, 2021

OSHA Update

Currently Virtual/Webinar
Noon Meeting

April 2021

OSHA Update

Workers Memorial
TBA

May

Fall Protection

TBA



The North Florida Chapter
has achieved Silver status
for 2019-2020.

Congratulations & Thanks
to everyone that helped
make this possible.

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The 2020 Region VI PDC has
gone virtual!

CEUs Approved - 2.4

**Continuing Education Unit
Credits will be**

provided. Attendees will be
awarded 0.6 CEU's per day and
must login each day, all 4 days
to receive the full 2.4 CEU
award.

The 4-day online conference
runs from September 15-
18. For complete details and to
register,
visit <https://region6.assp.org/pdc>.

**Early Bird Registration, Only
\$99**

(until August 31) - [Click Here](#)

Virtual PDC Sponsorship,

Only \$250 - [Click Here](#)

(Includes Company Logo
recognition on all marketing
materials and a link to your
company website)

2020 Virtual PDC Schedule

[Click here](#) to view the complete
2020 schedule.

If you have any questions,
please call Erika May at 661-
472-6591 or
email safety@regionsixpdc.com



Local Chapter Officers and Chairs

Elected Officers

- President - Bob Dooley
- President Elect - Eric Gray
- Secretary - Steve Wilson
- Treasurer - Yaniv Zagagi
- Delegate – Paul Thomas

Appointed Chairs

- Membership Chair
Mark Gibson
- Newsletter Chair
Allen Davis
- Nominations Chair
Steve Brown
- Past President
Steve Brown
- Program Chair
Dan Hemsall
- Social Chair
Phillip Baker
- Social Media Chair
Vernon Adams
- SPY Awards Chair
Curtis Strothers
- Scholarship Chair
Stephen Brown

Local Chapter Information

The North Florida Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals, formerly the American Society of Safety Engineers, was chartered in 1952 and currently has over 200 members.

Professional meetings are held nine times per year in the Jacksonville area.

Meeting notices are distributed, and RSVP's are returned by email. If you are a member of ASSP and are not receiving notices by email, please email the [Chapter Secretary](#).

Local Chapter Meetings

Virtual meetings will begin in September. Topics and dates will be published soon.

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Job Market Links General Employment Links

[ASSP](#)

[BCSP General Safety Jobs](#)

[BCSP Construction Safety](#)

[Jobs](#)

[BCSP Industrial Hygiene Jobs](#)

[EHS Careers](#)

ASSP Chapter Links

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