



New Mexico Tech

NEW MEXICO BUREAU OF MINE SAFETY

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June 2012 Newsletter



Guest Column

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has authored dozens of publications, and has 18 years of experience applying psychology to address business problems with organizations including the American Psychological Association, Amcor PET, Barrick Gold Corporation, City of Reno, Freeport McMoRan, Martin Marietta, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, NASA, Newmont Mining Corporation, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, among others. He has also addressed audiences numbering in the tens of thousands as a keynote speaker and corporate trainer including the New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference where he has given a keynote address for all five years of our conference. Please visit Ted's website, www.cbsafety.com for more information and enjoy the column!

Focus on the Situation to Replace Expectation with Appreciation

In my keynote speech at the 5th Annual New Mexico Mine Safety and Health Conference I made reference to a quote I believe is worth understanding and applying. I stated: "Replace expectation with appreciation to get the results you want." In this column, I want to elaborate on this quote and discuss its practical application in a mining environment.

As a behavioral scientist, I have often talked about the benefits of positive reinforcement to produce behavior change and improve attitudes. Whether applied to safety as when we thank an employee or co-worker for using the appropriate PPE, following the proper safety procedures, or pointing out *to us* that we might be at-risk for injury or some other aspect

of our operation, genuine and specific positive feedback will strengthen the behavior that it follows. That is, the behavior becomes more likely to occur in the future. It also makes people feel good. And, this will improve attitudes and morale which will make it even more likely for individuals to continue contributing in a positive way to our organization.

A work culture that produces this "discretionary behavior" is significantly different than one that produces compliance by threats of penalties for poor performance. Compliance is a minimum standard. And although we must be compliant with the rules and regulations that govern our operations, compliance is not enough to prevent all injuries. And, just as when we slow down in the presence of a police officer to avoid a ticket if we are speeding on the highway, employees learn how to do the equivalent to avoid the reprimands that have been programmed at work to produce compliance.

Behaviors necessary to avoid these penalties (not avoiding injuries) establish the standard. This is because behaviors that save time, are more comfortable and convenient, and that have not yet resulted in injury produce immediate benefits to the performer, even if they increase the probability of injury. The behaviors put us "at-risk" in a manner similar to speeding in our vehicle (we get to our destination more quickly and most often don't have a crash or get a ticket). Thus, we work to avoid the programmed penalties, but we don't always minimize the risk of injury. This is the definition of compliance.

In contrast, always driving the speed limit would be definitive of "discretionary behavior." And, the

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equivalent of this level of improvement in safety performance is available to us in our mining operations *if we show appreciation for keeping this standard.* So, the appreciation piece of the quote is straight forward, thank people for the good work they are doing. You should be specific about what actions you observed that made you happy, commenting on those exact behaviors, not their outcomes. Thus, instead of praising people for avoiding injuries (an outcome) we are praising them for the behaviors that helped them avoid injuries (e.g., using PPE, following procedures, pointing out risk to a coworker, etc.). This is a big step toward getting “discretionary behavior.” It sounds simple doesn’t it? So, why don’t more people do it? I believe it’s because of an outdated cultural perspective.

Specifically, one of the most common things I hear Supervisors and Management say to me in response to my suggestion that they work on positively reinforcing safe behavior is “Why should I reward something that is a condition of employment?” This statement defines an expectation. And, my response is simple: “Because sometimes they’re not doing what you want them to do.” Moreover, when we come to a situation with such expectations we are more likely to commit a basic error in human judgment to explain the non-compliant behavior. In particular, we are likely to believe the cause of the unwanted behavior is some aspect of the employees’ character such as, they’re lazy, a risk-taker, uncooperative, etc.

As a result, we start to treat the situation from that perspective. And this changes our behavior toward the employee or coworker (we punish the risk-taker, insubordination, or unmotivated employee) and ignore the situational influences on behavior (e.g., unavailability of resources, poor training, too much to do given the time to do it, and that we ourselves have placed a greater value on getting things done than doing it the safe way). Those who attended my talk will

recognize this as the *fundamental attribution error*. This phenomenon is the cause of poor decisions when dealing with employees, obscures genuine solutions, and as a result strains personal and professional relationships.

So, how do we replace expectation with appreciation to avoid these negative outcomes? *-By changing our own behavior.* I suggest focusing on the “situation.” And, we do this by finding facts, not faults. That is, ask yourself: if you were the one seen doing the behavior that you are trying to correct, what would be the likely explanation? If you are honest in this assessment, you will likely come-up with a lot of explanations that are situational. It is these causes that you should explore in an honest and constructive conversation with the employee whose behavior you are trying to influence. If you do this, you will find a solution that could be applied to a broader spectrum of employees who might also have been (or will be) placed in the same situation. As a result, you are improving the work system rather than ineffectively treating a symptom of that system.

Having said all of that, I want to amend the quote I referenced at the Conference to include its application. Thus, the next time you want to influence behavior “focus on the situation to replace expectation with appreciation.”

Tom Manion: Why They Serve—'If Not Me, Then Who?'

The Wall Street Journal ran this excellent piece by retired Marine Corps Colonel Tom Manion for Memorial Day.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303610504577419973285034422.html>

If you can’t get the link to work, let me know and I

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will share the article with you.

Future Fees for Training

Please be aware that BMS will be raising its training fees beginning October, 2012. Fees will go from the current \$20 to \$25 per person per class. We have not increased fees since they were instituted in 2009. Our appropriation from the State has been cut since then and our MSHA grant has remained at the same level.

We will offer our August and September training free of charge. If training fees present a cost issue for your organization, this is your opportunity to sign up, but the schedule will fill fast (this does not include instructor course).

Veterans' Outreach

State agencies, the mining industry, ACNM, NMMA and BMS are working together on a veterans' outreach program in New Mexico. To that end, on July 20th there will be a veterans jobs fair in Albuquerque targeting the mining industry. More specific information will follow. In August BMS will conduct a 24 hour Part 48 surface new miner training in Grants for veterans. We are excited to be involved in this effort to help our returning veterans and to help the mining industry. We will send more information on this effort and please call if you would like to know how you can be involved.

Training

When attending training, please only attend the training class for the training you require. For instance, we are not permitted by MSHA to have annual refresher candidates in a new miner class. If an AR candidate shows up for a new miner class they will be asked to leave. If you are an aggregate miner requiring Part 46 training then attend a Part 46 training. If you are a Part 48 miner, attend a Part 48 training. Contractors working on both Part 46 and Part 48 sites may attend Part 48 for both.

The current Training Schedule through June can be found on our web site:

<http://www.bmi.state.nm.us/navTrng.htm>

Please take time to look it over. To schedule a class, please call Chris at (505) 553-1535.

New Mexico Mining Safety Board

The New Mexico Mining Safety Board met in Socorro on April 30th. The meeting continued discussions on creating guidelines on emergency notification requirements, and creating a policy document on the issue. Also discussed was SMI consultation with the MSB on fees for training and for coal official's recertification. The MSB was also informed about impending grant reductions to state programs by MSHA. This could cause significant fee increases in the future for training.

Discussions on emergency notification clarifications will continue at the next meeting scheduled for October 5th in Carlsbad.

2013 New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference

"*Your Path To Success*", Our 2012 New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference was a huge success. We had over 170 attendees who heard national speakers on safety topics, were educated at break-out sessions by knowledgeable industry and regulatory speakers and visited with exhibitors of some of the latest mining safety technology and wares. Charlie Morecraft was our Tuesday Keynote speaker. He gave a very moving account of his experiences following an accident that he was involved with at an oil refinery and its consequences.



Our 2013 Conference theme is "Everyday Heroes". We want everyone to be a safety hero at work and home every day. Each time you perform your job the safe way and every time you keep a co-worker from performing an unsafe action, you are a **hero!**



Summer Scam Safety

The following article on summer travel tips is from AARP Monthly Magazine.

Your Money ■ Scam Alert

9 ways to avoid ID theft when you travel

Anti-Hacking Packing By Sid Kirchheimer

When you hit the road for vacation, don't let crooks hit you. Here are nine simple tips to reduce the risk of identity theft.

1. Alert your credit card providers. Before you leave, let them know when, where and how long you'll be traveling. This helps fraud departments stop bogus charges if your plastic is used where you are not—and reduces the risk that your cards will be frozen due to "unusual activity" when you use them far from home.

2. Stop your mail. Or have a neighbor collect it. A full mailbox—especially with bank statements and credit card bills—can be a treasure trove for hackers and identity thieves (and suggests easy pickings for a home burglar). Pick up forms to hold or forward mail at any post office. Also, stop the newspaper, and don't broadcast your travel plans on social networking websites.

3. Weed out your wallet. Pickpockets love tourist destinations, so take only essential identifiers, like your driver's license, and just two credit cards—one to carry, another to be locked in a hotel room safe in case your wallet is pilfered. Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet—ever. Men, keep your wallet in a buttoned breast pocket or buttoned pants pocket. Women, wear a handbag, with wide straps and locked clasps, diagonally across the chest—and don't hang it over the door when you use a public bathroom.

4. Leave your checkbook home. You shouldn't need it if you have credit cards. Leave your bills and private papers home, too.

5. Consider a temporary credit freeze. A freeze denies access to your credit history, so ID thieves can't open accounts in your name while you're away, but it doesn't stop you from using your credit card. Setting up a freeze through the three big credit-reporting bureaus—Equifax, Experian and TransUnion—is a tedious job and may cost you money; it's best considered only for extra protection during prolonged travel.

6. Carry a spare. In addition to your real wallet, carry a throwaway with a few dollars and maybe some



If you're accosted, hand over the spare wallet.

old hotel key cards. If you're accosted, hand over the spare wallet while keeping the real McCoy. The thief may see money and plastic, and be off and running... and so can you.

7. Use safer ATMs. Debit cards are best left at home, but if you need cash withdrawals, ATMs in bank lobbies are less vulnerable to devices that robbers use to capture your card information. Bank lobbies generally have camera surveillance.

8. Be careful with hotel computers. Don't access financial data on hotel or other public computers or on public Wi-Fi networks. You never know what identity-stealing software is at work.

9. Beware of "front desk" fraudsters. A late-night phone call to your room from a "clerk" saying your credit card number is needed again may be a ruse by an ID thief. Ignore the request and call the front desk yourself. □

Sid Kirchheimer is the author of Scam-Proof Your Life, published by AARP Books/Sterling.

Be a Safety Hero Everyday



In New Mexico