

# ***Does Your Workplace Safety Program Practice The 7 Safety Virtues?***

Are your employees working safely? If so, do you know *why* your employees are working safely?

If it's because you're watching them, they might revert to sloppy habits when you're not looking. If they're working safely because they're being browbeaten into it, they're probably not going to keep it up for very long. But if they're working safely because you've created a strong safety culture, your workplace safety program has legs.

Employees in a strong safety culture work safely because of the seven safety virtues:

- 1. Employees know what they are supposed to do.** They have been over the company safety rules many times and in several formats. A manager or supervisor has talked to them and made sure they understand. They have passed quizzes on the policies and rules and know whom to ask if they have questions.
- 2. Employees know *how* to do what they are supposed to do.** Workers have practiced enough to feel comfortable with procedures. Someone instructed, corrected, and coached them until they got the procedures right.
- 3. Employees know safety is important and affects them directly.** Employees have learned how accidents can affect them, their families, their co-workers, and the company, both personally and financially. They know the company enforces the rules. They also know that working safely is part of their performance appraisals and can affect their pay and job security.
- 4. Employees care about safety.** Workers care about safety for the reasons just described, but they also care because they have invested time and energy in addressing safety problems. They know that their safety ideas, concerns, and complaints will get a fair hearing by their employer.
- 5. Employees know that their company cares about safety.** Your employees have seen accidents and near-misses investigated promptly and thoroughly and have been informed of the results. They expect safety issues to be part of company communications and training. They have observed that the company corrects hazards and establishes and maintains safe work practices.
- 6. Employees never forget about safety.** Even on days when employees feel distracted, they still remember to work safely because it's become a habit.
- 7. Employees know shortcuts aren't worth the risk.** Even when employees are tempted to take shortcuts around the demands of work safety, they don't take the risk because they are aware of the consequences of carelessness in the workplace. †

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