



Gaining Support for Off-the-Job Safety

Safety is a serious issue with serious consequences that impact not only your organization's daily business operations, but also the daily lives of your employees.

Due to the apparent connection between a preventative on-the-job safety program and a company's productivity and bottom line, safety in the workplace is widely supported by many organizations. But unfortunately, in a majority of instances, this is where the concern ends.

To successfully control injury and illness, the focus on safety must extend outside of our organizations, beyond our hours of operation. An alarming eight times more workers died of injuries suffered in their homes and communities than in the workplace. Nearly twice as many workers suffered disabling injuries off-the-job than on-the-job. Who does this impact? Your employees, their families...and ultimately your organization through absenteeism, turnover, insurance costs and more.

But how do you gain top management support for off-the-job safety activities? You must promote the program's value:

- Research your organization's off-the-job accident costs as well as revenue needed to pay for the costs (i.e., employee and dependent medical expenses, wages and benefits paid to injured employees, claims administration costs, costs to train replacement workers, reduced productivity, lost sales, etc.). Solicit your Human Resources department for assistance.
- Based on these statistics, and other contributing factors, determine the areas in which your organization would benefit most from off-the-job safety initiatives. Develop a supporting activity plan.
- Establish a budget for your proposed program.
- Educate other units and facilities about the program's benefits.
- Sell the program up the management chain. Solicit and incorporate their feedback and suggestions. Work toward success in your location, then leverage as an example for other facilities.
- Track the actual costs of the program and savings realized. Publicize the savings to encourage future funding.

Refer to the National Safety Council Library for supporting information. Most library services are offered free to NSC members. Call 1-800-621-7615, x2199 or x2194 (8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. CT) or search the online bibliographic database in the Members-Only Section of <http://www.nsc.org>.

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