The Value Of In-House Safety Management

by Anna Wells - Editor, *IMPO*

In this new segment, our editors square off on timely issues relating to industrial maintenance and plant operation. The editorial staff would like to stress that we are not intending to specifically endorse any one viewpoint, however our intent is only to encourage dialogue by showing a point-counter-point on contentious issues.

Although outsourcing your safety program does have its benefits-bringing in a company with the resources to maintain a consistent working knowledge of existing and upcoming safety requirements and tools-this is something that can also be maintained in-house, with the adequate resources. This can be accomplished simply through proactive training of safety management and giving them the time and budgetary capacity to keep improving the program.

The problems crop up when an HSE manager has his/her hands in too many programs: if an HSE manager is dealing with severe time constraints, areas will inevitably suffer. This individual's job is arguably the most important in the plant-keeping accountable the well-being of the employees and ensuring the consistent operation of the facility with no lost-time incidents. There is no element to this job than you can afford to overlook.

Still, if you have the resources, then it might pay to make sure your employees see the 'face' of this program. In order to maintain buy-in, it might be beneficial to make the employees understand fully that the safety program is embedded in company culture-not an 'add-on' that can be brought in and 'retrofitted,' so to speak, to an existing organization.

OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Association) offers plenty of resources to plant management in the way of basic accident prevention programs, and new

information on PPE (personal protective equipment). The website also offers links to materials you can utilize to properly assess your program: do you have a handle on precisely how safe your employees are? Could they be safer?

Whether you decide to outsource the role of safety director, or keep it in-house, the most critical aspect is that the money and time be devoted to this all too important role. Lost time accidents due to employee injury are scary-not only do employees suffer, but so does productivity and efficiency.

Click here to read IMPO Editorial Director Jeff Reinke's take on outsourcing safety. [1]

Comments? Email *IMPO* Editor, Anna Wells: anna.wells@advantagemedia.com. **[2]**

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