

# Safety Education Energy; It Keeps Going and Going and Going ...

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It is hard to believe that 22 years ago I was graduating from college. My head packed with information that I didn't fully grasp and in many cases really didn't care to grasp. As an EMT, I was interested in emergency medicine, but it wasn't until I took a class in occupational safety that resulted in a new passion that would fill the next 22 years of my life.

I continued on to complete additional advanced education in safety with dedication. Recently, I applied to take additional course work in epidemiology (the study of the causes, distribution, and control of disease). You see, like the pink Energizer® Bunny, education keeps going and going and going - it is a life-long process. If we stop learning, then we stop growing and expanding our minds.

I want to share some observations I have made over the years of teaching and learning about safety:

- Safety is MORE about management systems and processes.
- Management tends to believe it is MORE about

what workers choose to do in the field, never realizing that they control these decisions.

Too many business curriculums (mine included) never address the requirements for safety management. Business schools teach quality and productivity management methods, but most completely omit SAFETY-HEALTH-ENVIRONMENT - the third part of the triad which can make or break a business.

Ben Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Peter Drucker, a famous management consultant stole this concept and rephrased it to: "The first duty of business is to survive and the guiding principle of business economics is not the maximization of profit, but the avoidance of loss."

If you are a manager missing this important leg of a complete business education, consider the **upcoming OSHA 30-Hour class** to expand and bolster your effectiveness as a "complete" manager.

Participants often comment, "Boy, I wish the people in the office had this course." I couldn't agree more! Often field personnel are lacking the ability to implement training because they face barriers that only management can address. I believe there is a perception by many managers that "safety" classes are for field personnel.

It is no secret that construction can be an extremely dangerous business. Margins are thin and a single worksite tragedy can ruin a job, a year's profits or even the company, and worse - an employee and his or her family. Some play the odds without understanding how to properly manage the risks.

ABC is offering an OSHA 30-hour program next month at the Chapter office. The program will address many of the aspects of OSHA programs required for organizations to maintain compliance as well as safety operating practices for many construction-related activities. These programs are as much for company presidents as they are for the skilled trades performing the work!

Safety must be knitted in to every aspect of the organization. Education helps to achieve a base from which everyone can relate. It helps to support a safety culture. But like that pink, drum-beating bunny, it must continue ... on and on and on. Everyone must hear the drum. If our teams are marching to the same beat, then we can move forward to injury-free and positive safety cultures.