

THE PERFORMANCE GROUP SAFETY CONSORTIUM MINUTES: 11/2/06—Utz Quality Foods, Hanover PA

Presenter: Tom Scholles, Training & Development Manager, Utz Quality Foods

- **Consistency:**
 - Do the right thing, the right way, all the time.
 - Report all accidents, all close calls, all unsafe conditions.
 - Shortcuts are only faster until you learn the correct way to do things. Once you get comfortable with the right (safe) way, you can be just as fast as with the shortcut.
- **Communication:**
 - It is unavoidable, irreversible, and affected by many other factors (i.e. environment, language barriers, level of attention, etc). The message you think you are sending is not always the message received.
 - Avoid emotional outbursts and over-reactions. Think before you speak.
 - Have a “real” open door policy. Encourage exchange of ideas, opinions, suggestions, and be responsive to them. Involve your employees in the process of discovering, dealing with, and solving safety issues. Their sense of ownership
 - Get to know your employees and make them feel comfortable coming to you with issues, feedback, etc.
 - Be enthusiastic about the safety of your employees. It should be obvious to them that their safety is a priority.
- **Culture:**
 - “The best time to plant a tree is 25 years ago. The second best time is today.” Don’t be afraid of change or be locked into old modes of operation. It’s never too late to work for positive change.
 - Workforces are diverse in many ways—culturally and generationally, with different values, attitudes, and styles. However, Safety is a team game, and the safety of the team takes priority over “individuality” or inherent differences. A certain degree of buy-in from the employee is required; an individual who is unwilling to get with the program may not be the right fit for your company.
 - Treat your employees with respect: Learn their names; acknowledge them when you walk past; be constructive with corrective action.
 - Reward positive behavior. Being acknowledged for a Job Well Done can be as effective a motivator as any extrinsic reward. A sincere pat on the back goes a long way. Any program that keeps safety awareness at the front of employees’ minds will be beneficial.
 - Walk the walk—set good examples. If your employees see you break the rules, you undermine everything you want to get across. Be consistent with enforcement—require things to be done the right way all the time.

General Ideas for the Consortium:

- **Meetings:** To be held at different sites throughout different areas, primarily Lancaster, York, Dauphin, Lebanon (possibly Berks and Lehigh) Counties, with occasional travel not to exceed one to two hours. Mornings and midweek seem to work best.
- **Purpose:** An opportunity for any personnel involved in ensuring the safety of their associates to get together to share ideas, work on common problems, talk about their experiences, learn about new topics, and serve as a resource to one another.
- **Range:** Open to representatives of companies across the entire spectrum of industries, primarily throughout central and eastern PA. The more diverse the attendee base, the better.
- **Information Sharing:** Minutes from consortium meetings will be e-mailed to all members after each meeting. Any documents that are shared by presenters or attendees (presentation slides, sample forms, etc) can be available through the Performance website and will generally be protected by password. Using an on-line message board where members could post questions and answers was also suggested. Group e-mails will display all attendees’ e-mail addresses to allow for direct communication between members. A number of attendees also noted that additional time for networking and free exchange would be a plus for future consortium meetings.

- **Suggestions for future discussion topics:**
 - Establishing a Safety Committee
 - Structure of Safety Programs
 - OSHA Inspections
 - Forklift Safety
 - Creating/evolving safety culture
 - Emergency response/ Evacuation Plans
 - Safety Incentives
 - Housekeeping
 - New employee hiring, orientation, and training
 - Continuing Education safety training for employees
 - Safety GMP's
 - Accountability
 - Challenges of an aging workforce
 - OSHA Voluntary Protection Program
 - Fatality Survival for businesses
 - Light Duty programs
 - Getting buy-in and funding for programs

Next meeting to be held in the 1st Quarter of '07. Date & Location TBA.