

Paper Mill Squeezes Injury Rates!

B-Safe® is a Behavior-Based Safety process that creates a 'safety partnership' between wage roll employees and management to improve safety performance. Although the emphasis is on those injury causing behaviors identified from incident reports, associated outcomes include better communications, reduced incidents, and cost-savings from reduced operating costs.



In the bottom three of their industry's safety league table, a paper mill wanted to involve its employees in safety and was looking for the ideal vehicle that would give them ownership and reduce injuries. B-Safe® was chosen after a comprehensive review of six vendors by a joint management and union selection committee.

The project began with 'buy-in' sessions with all employees to 'sell & tell' the process and brainstorm the behavioral issues. A safety survey was also conducted to discover employee's perceptions about safety *per se* and what they would do to improve safety in their work area. This identified many system faults and unsafe behaviors. The system faults were rapidly attended to by a safety task force.

During this time, a plant project team and the Trades Union Council were trained to implement the B-Safe® process over a five day period. This included background information on behavioral principles, incident analysis, checklist development, observer training, goal-setting, feedback, observation data-entry and analysis.

The project team then developed observation checklists. They obtained specific unsafe behaviors from an analysis of the previous two years incident records. These and others raised at the 'buy-in' sessions and the safety survey were developed into 'Behavioral Observation Checklists' to cover 55 observation areas.

The project team recruited and trained 195 volunteer observers to use the checklists, give feedback and set targets with their workgroups.

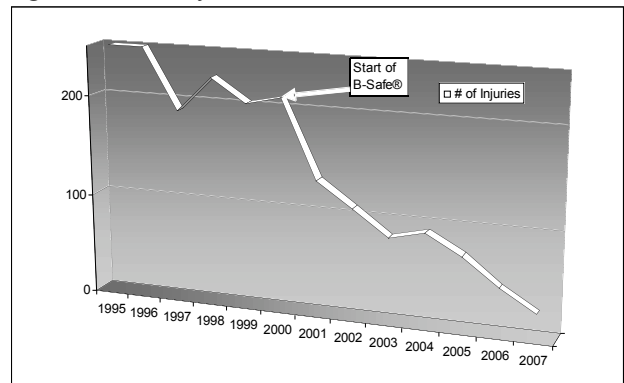
The observers monitored their colleagues in the plant areas for 10-20 minutes a day for four weeks, to find out how safe people worked. Each workgroup then set an improvement target. Observers continued to monitor daily and gave feedback when observing people and at weekly feedback meetings. The project team followed up any corrective actions, the status of which was reported back to the workgroups. This cycle of events was repeated every 30 weeks or so.



The observers later took part in one-day Applied Behavioral Analysis workshops so they could analyze the root causes of behavior while observing.

During the first year, the number of injuries fell by 34% and has now reduced by 77%.

Fig 2: It works! Injuries tumble!



Now ranked 16th out of 86 mills in their safety league table, the site has moved up 66 places over the last few years!

Contact us to see how we can help you improve your safety culture

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