



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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*Breaking the Cycle
of Risky Behavior*



Risky behavior results from fatigue, frustrations, and stress pressure - which sometimes leads us to break down our safety training rules. This could eventually cause us to engage in risky behavior. To mitigate these situations, we need a mechanism to help us exercise self-control, pull back and re-assess ourselves before we get hurt or cause a fellow worker to get hurt.

Following are some causes of accidents (risk factors) that we can cultivate, and also some suggestions to help us guard against making errors that can lead to an injury:

FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS- (4 Causes)

- ✓ **Not Watching What we are Doing or Staying focused on our work-**
Letting our mind wonder off in left field can quickly get us in trouble. A small insignificant example is closing a door or car door on your finger. If we had paid attention to the door closing, this probably would not have happened. So we need to think about the “business at hand,” and save the daydreaming for when we’re off the job.
- ✓ **Not Concentrating on What We’re Doing-**
All hazards aren’t visible. Some hazards need to be thought about and prepared in advance for the actual event. A good example is working on a hot stove. To prevent burning a hand, we need to have a hot-pad handy. If we have the need to drive on icy roads, we need to prepare for the trip accordingly. Both of these can cause us bodily injury if we don’t prepare for them. Preparation and concentration can help us to avoid, or at least reduce, the possibility of an injury.
- ✓ **Being in or Moving into the “Line of Fire”-**
Failing to recognize that we are or might be standing in a line of fire can cause an accident. Focusing on the area that we are in or entering and keeping our minds on where we are supposed to be will help us, or a fellow worker, to avoid an injury.
- ✓ **Loss of Balance, Traction, or Grip-**
This error in judgment can also be reduced or eliminated by concentrating on the work that we are supposed to be doing.

HOW ERRORS HAPPEN-

Mistakes are, by definition, not deliberate. So, telling someone to watch what they are doing may be a nice gesture, but it is worthless in preventing injuries. Your wife tells you in the morning as you leave for work to “drive carefully and be safe.” It’s not that she thinks you will be driving unsafe, but she is helping you to remember to be careful yourself while watching out for the other parties in the road. Being careful doesn’t counteract the factors for error, but there are some techniques that do.

Following are four basic techniques that, if practiced, will limit errors and the injuries that they can cause.

4 ERROR REDUCING TECHNIQUES:

- **Self – Triggering on the State Before Errors Get Made-**
The first error reducing technique is the ability to recognize that we have passed into a state or mode of risk behavior before something bad happens to us. In real life, think about working on a project and fatigue and frustration have taken over and you are completely “flabbergasted with seemingly no light at the end of the tunnel.” In desperation, you walk off and get a beverage or visit the facility. In a few minutes, you return to the project. Bam! All of a sudden the frustration has left. You’ve had a minute to gain a “second wind” and the parts of the project are coming together.
- **Learning from Close Calls & Small Errors to Prevent Big Ones-**
While working on your project, you have a close call that has put you in “harm’s way,” but you escaped with no injury - just a close call. You can learn from this so that the next time you’ll be more cognizant of the situation and the prior close call will prevent you from having a big one.
- **Observing Others for the State to Error Pattern-**
This technique has three beneficial techniques that prevent accidents:
 - ~Watching others so that we may learn and avoid the error that has them in “harm’s way,” and evading those help us to avoid an injury.
 - ~Watching others in “harm’s way” will help us to be less likely to get into their predicament and move into a state of complacency.
 - ~Watching others helps us protect the individuals that we observe. This observation gives us an advantage, because we probably have seen the error already and it gives us instant help in possibly preventing an injury.
- **Working on our Habits-**
There are many things that we can do to improve our safety awareness and limit injuries. The first, and probably the most important thing, is taking extra caution to look for hazards as we are working and before they happen.

Watching and checking in advance for possible hazards isn’t easy but can be rewarding. You always have the person who tells you that they will never get hurt. These are types that probably need help the worse.

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