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How the message is sent is as important as the message

Are your safety meetings meaningful and informative or “just another thing to do”? Do employees come away having learned something or are they just “gutting out” your presentation. Oftentimes it is not what you say, but how you say it.

Loss Prevention Plan safety meetings should be part of your program if they aren’t already. They can take many forms from small work group or location meetings to companywide training events. Grabbing your employees’ interest and attention is a key element to effectively communicating safety and general health messages. A clear and concise safety message is a critical part of any safety meeting. If the message is not received, understood and put in practice the outcome could be a serious accident.

We can’t all be riveting speakers. As you plan for your **short** presentation, remember that no one paid top dollar to sit in the audience. Additionally, you are likely addressing a topic that many of them have heard before, many times. Safety meetings can seem like an uphill hike, but you can level the path by practicing some presentation basics. All of these can play a role in enhancing the effectiveness of some or all of your safety training sessions.



- ◆ **CONSIDER YOUR SHORTCOMINGS** - Remember that you are probably not a polished speaker. In fact, this may not be something you look forward to or are very good at. For those reasons you need to plan your presentation and engage the group.
- ◆ **EXPLAIN TECHNICAL TERMS** - In a classroom setting when you have to include technical terms, explain their meaning. Use a PowerPoint , write them on a board or have them listed on a flip chart so that employees can read the terms and hear them at the same time.

continued from "How the message is sent is as important as the message"

- ◆ **ENGAGE THE AUDIENCE** - There is an excellent chance that many members of the audience know as much about the subject matter as you do. Capitalize on this! Ask questions that allow them to help you deliver the message. They may phrase an answer in a manner that the group connects with because it comes from the group. This also communicates to the audience that you think they are important.
- ◆ **TAKE EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTO ACCOUNT** - An employer must instruct its employees using both a language and vocabulary that the employees can understand. For example, if an employee does not speak or understand English, instruction must be provided in a language the employee can understand. Similarly, if the employee's vocabulary is limited, the training must account for that limitation.
- ◆ **KEEP YOUR TONE WARM AND FRIENDLY** - Talk normally. Don't lecture. A good practice to limit your talking time is to periodically ask a question that allows you to gauge whether or not people are listening. Ask a question about what you covered in the last 2 – 5 minutes.
- ◆ **MAINTAIN A COMFORTABLE PACE AND MODERATE VOLUME** - Don't speed through or drag out your words. Speak loudly enough to be heard in the back row, but rather than shout use sound amplification equipment. Prior to training, practice your presentation and the pace at which you deliver it.
- ◆ **SPEAK WITH FIRMNESS AND CONVICTION** - Let your tone say that you believe what you're saying is important. Remember, you're trying to promote the importance of the safety information you are communicating to this group of employees. If you don't seem to think it is important, I can guarantee them won't.
- ◆ **BE ENTHUSIASTIC** - Just for the heck of it let's assume not everyone wants to be there. Recognizing that, it is all the more important you demonstrate that you are glad to have this opportunity to talk about an important safety topic. Make every effort to use your voice and body language to show your enthusiasm. If you seem bored or indifferent and seem as if you'd rather be somewhere else, your audience will want to be elsewhere too. One caution, enthusiastic does not mean dramatic. Remember, you are not on stage.
- ◆ **CREATE TEAM SPIRIT** - Whenever possible, use team building words like "we" and "our" rather than "the company" or "management". You are supporting a common safety culture that is based on the premise that a safe work environment is in everyone's best collective interest. Focus on safety as a group objective that everyone pursues together as a team.
- ◆ **MAKE EYE CONTACT** - Don't just read your notes. Look up and around the group as you talk. If you are using a PowerPoint, summarize the bullet points and don't just turn your back to the audience and read them. Eye contact is connective and makes the message personal. It can engage those who are otherwise disengaged.
- ◆ **COMBINE WORDS WITH DEMONSTRATIONS** - Point to the object of your discussion. This could be a visual such a picture or a piece of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If you are describing how injuries result from improperly lifting, demonstrate how to lift properly. Demonstrate the proper way to wear personal protective equipment. Better yet, ask a member of the audience to make these demonstrations. But, you better be very confident or have prepped them beforehand on how to properly execute this demonstration.
- ◆ **STAY FOCUSED** - Stay on topic. Speakers oftentimes spend too much time with anecdotal stories they believe illustrate a point. This can be effective, but only if it is short and clearly illustrates your point. You need a manageable amount of time to cover your content and keeps the training session to a time period that is not too lengthy.



For more information on safety training, contact CMTA at wgroup@cmta.net.

PRESS RELEASE

In addition to advocating the interests of manufacturers before the California legislature and regulatory agencies, CMTA also strives to provide members with products and services that can make them more productive and competitive. Following on the success of our workers' compensation program, we are now providing members with an outstanding commercial insurance program underwritten by an A+ rated insurance carrier committed to the manufacturing sectors.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 19, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- CNA and the California Manufacturers & Technology Association (CMTA) today announced that CNA has been chosen as the endorsed business insurance carrier of choice by the CMTA.

As a world leader in advancing safety and writing coverages across 90 percent of all manufacturing classes, CNA was selected by the CMTA, working with broker Warren G. Bender Co., because of its depth of experience in the industry, financial strength and expertise in coordinating end-to-end coverage programs for today's modern manufacturers.

"This endorsement affirms CNA's position as the premier provider of insurance coverages, claim and risk control services for manufacturers," said Franklin Maccotan, director and industry leader, Manufacturing, CNA. "CNA's goals align with the CMTA's mission of helping California manufacturers protect the safety of their employees and the public, as well as the assets of its members. The endorsement allows CNA to be even more responsive to the unique needs and concerns of the manufacturing community."

The CMTA represents over 400 manufacturing, processing and technology-based companies, and works to improve a strong business climate for an economic sector that generates more than \$230 billion annually and employs more than 1.2 million Californians.

"CMTA is proud to announce its partnership with CNA to deliver a premier and cost-competitive commercial insurance package to its members," said Dorothy Rothrock, president, CMTA. "California manufacturers are the backbone of our state's economy and innovation. Because comprehensive insurance protection and effective risk control support is a critical component to operating in California, the CMTA looked at many potential partners. CNA, with its experience and long history of end-to-end coverage and manufacturing focus, was the clear choice to deliver the best program."

CNA is the endorsed business insurance carrier for more than 15 national trade associations, including the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association, International (FMA) and the National Precast Concrete Association (NPCA). CNA is also a member of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

To learn more about CNA's manufacturing industry capabilities, visit www.cna.com/manufacturing.

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If you run your own manufacturing business in California, odds are that you have a full plate every day. That means a lot of work lands right in front of you. Management decisions can pile up in front of you every day causing questions, headaches, and stress.

One way to manage your plate of management decisions is to consider outsourcing your retirement plan responsibilities through the CMTA Retirement Program.

The plan is a cost effective, efficient way to utilize your time and keep your plate as free as possible. The plan operates less expensively because the plan assets and administrative costs are pooled, spreading costs over many organizations. Along with these costs go the responsibilities to one professional fiduciary administrator who takes care of all operational obligations.

CMTA members receive a FREE REVIEW of their 401k and pension plans!

We encourage you to learn what you can gain from the CMTA plan and take advantage of the complimentary review. Contact Pentegra's **Ken Jackson** at **303-921-3109** or kjackson@pentegra.com to get more information.



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