SAFETY
IN FOREMANSHIP

AN EXPLANATION OF
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An Explanation of

"Safety in Foremanship"

IT IS generally agreed that the foreman holds a key position in industry—not only from the standpoints of quantity and quality production—but also insofar as the safety of the workers is concerned.

In the past, industrial managers have appreciated the importance of the foreman, but they have frequently assumed that he knows more about accident prevention than he actually does. Thus, much less effort has been devoted to the education of foremen than to the education of workers.

Meeting the Foremanship Problem

Many managers are convinced that without letting down on other activities, they must formulate some plan whereby they can:

1. Give the foreman a broader knowledge of accident prevention.
2. Inspire the foreman to make accident prevention an integral part of his job.
3. Instruct or remind the foreman concerning the definite things he must do if accidents are to be prevented in his department.
4. Give the foreman a source of ideas for discussion at safety meetings and at times when he is talking to individual workers.

Seven Booklets Now Ready

Accordingly, at the request of its members, the National Safety Council is formulating a series of booklets to be called "Safety in Foremanship", that will help to accomplish these objects. The titles of the first seven booklets are:

1. A Personal Message to You.
2. The Foreman's Opportunity—Production with Safety.
3. Have You Thought About This?
4. Do You Know How Much An Accident Costs?
5. Safeguards—Why and How.
6. Look Out for That First Step.
7. Are You "Following Through"?

Each booklet is short and to the point, and the whole series can be put into one book-size loose-leaf binder.

These booklets are written so they can be used to advantage in all types of industries in either of two ways—by Group Discussion, or by Distribution to Foremen.

Regular production *meetings* of foremen, or foremanship training classes, are held in many companies. In such cases, one booklet in the "Safety in Foremanship" series may be made the subject for discussion at, say, every third or fourth meeting. If regular meetings have not already been organized, a series of special meetings may be held once a week or once a month either on the time of the men or on company time or on both.

Plan for Distribution

Copies of a given booklet should be distributed to all foremen about one week in advance of the meeting at which that subject is discussed. Each man is thus expected to read it and come to the meeting prepared to participate in the discussion. (*Booklet No. 1, however, is not intended for discussion. It is simply introductory, to prepare the mind of the foreman for the booklets to follow.*)

The *discussion leader* should be selected with considerable care. He may be an executive officer of the company, the general manager, the superintendent, the chief engineer, the safety man, or some other natural leader with a pleasing personality and the ability to get others to talk. He should not make speeches. On the other hand, he should make a few introductory remarks and then ask questions which will pump information out of instead of into his group of foremen. These questions of course should relate to the specific subject under discussion. Suggested questions and answers are printed further on in this leaflet, and are not intended for distribution to the foremen.

General Discussion Valuable

The men should be encouraged to volunteer in giving their answers, although it may be necessary (particularly at the start) to call on certain individuals. Three or four answers to the same question may be sought. These answers should then be discussed from the floor in detail.

The men should not be permitted to refer to their booklets in the meetings. Instead they should be urged to talk and cite examples from their own experience. It may often be possible to emphasize certain

ideas by reference to recent occurrences right in your own company.

It is best to organize small rather than large groups of foremen. If too many men are present, each person's participation in the discussion may be so limited that he will not get the benefits that are derived from small meetings. The maximum should be 15 to 20. In many plants, therefore, it may be advisable to organize two or more groups simultaneously.

Send Him a Personal Letter

If it is impracticable in certain companies to hold group discussions of the "Safety in Foremanship" booklets, the managers should distribute them to the foremen at the rate of one a week or one a month. Each booklet, however, should be accompanied with a personal letter such as:

> "Dear Bill: Do you remember when Jim Smith got hurt? I guess we've all been thinking about it in the past few weeks. Just a day or two ago I started reading the enclosed booklet on 'Accidents Cost Money'. It ties in so perfectly with our own case that I at once became interested and read it through to the end. I know it will interest you, too. Other booklets in this 'Safety in Foremanship' series are to follow. I hope you will keep them all for future reference. I just ordered some loose-leaf binders in which to keep them. I'll give you one in a few days.—In the meantime, won't you write me a brief report, telling me what you think of the whole idea in general and this booklet in particular?"

When opening a meeting, it is always well for the leader to review briefly the subject discussed at the preceding meeting—then to continue for just a few minutes in introducing the new subject. As already suggested he should proceed to ask leading questions which will stimulate thought among the foremen present and which will emphasize important facts that may or may not be covered in detail in the corresponding booklet.

Suggested Outline of Discussion

The following questions are suggestions which the leader may use in leading the discussion on a given subject. Some leaders may discard one or more questions or add others. In general, the best results will be secured if the discussion can be adapted to, and reflect, actual conditions and experience of your own firm.

Typical answers are given in this leaflet to many of the questions suggested, but it must be borne in mind that these answers in many cases are exceedingly brief and sketchy. They are, in the main, simply indicative of the correct answers to be given.

Suggestions for Discussion
BOOKLET No. 2

"The Foreman's Opportunity—Production with Safety"

1. What are some of the qualifications a man must have to make a good foreman?

   (Knowledge of the job, initiative, ability to give instruction clearly, ability to give proper supervision, leadership, loyalty, fairness, willingness to accept responsibility.)

2. Do you know of any actual cases where one or more of these qualifications made for a foreman's success—or where the lack of these qualifications made for a foreman's failure?

3. If it is true that these qualifications make a foreman good for quality and quantity production, what additional qualifications does he need to succeed in preventing accidents in his department?

   (None! The same qualifications make for success in both fields.)

4. What are the causes of bad production records?

   (Failure to issue clear instructions, failure to follow-up, inexperience, too much speed, etc.)

5. Do you know of any actual cases to illustrate these causes?

6. What are some of the causes of accidents?

   (Same as the cause of bad production records.)

7. If the foreman can cure the causes of bad production, he automatically eliminates the causes of accidents, doesn't he?

   (Yes.)

8. Can you think of any accidents that result from causes that are beyond the control of the foreman?

   (Accidents caused by "Acts of God.")

Suggestions for Discussion
BOOKLET No. 3

"Have You Thought About This?"

1. How many people in the U. S. lose their lives in accidents each year?

   (97,000 total. 20,000 in industry. 3,000,000 workers injured annually; each one is forced to lay off work at least one day because of the injury.

2. What percentage of accidents is preventable?

   (At least 98 per cent.)

3. What types of accidents are unavoidable?

   ("Acts of God"; lightning, floods, earthquakes. Even here the effects of such "accidents" can be minimized by proper precautions.)

4. What about explosions, fires, chain failures, breakage of lumber in scaffolds? Are accidents from such causes preventable? How?

5. Does anyone recall an accident in the company that he didn't know how to prevent?

6. Does anyone recall an accident where the price paid by the injured worker involved loss of his home—his wife or children going to work—or other kinds of privation?

7. What is Workmen's Compensation? Who pays it? Why is it a good thing for the workers?

   (Compensation is paid by the company. It is a good thing because payments are uniform and automatic; no lawyers or court proceedings are necessary.)

8. Does compensation pay for the injured worker's losses?

   (Merely a percentage of his lost wages. Pain, suffering and a sorrow cannot be paid for with money, nor can any amount replace a father or husband, or put back a lost finger, eye, or leg.)

9. Who loses through accidents?

   (The employer, the injured worker, his family, merchants, the community, the country.)

Suggestions for Discussion
BOOKLET No. 4

"Do You Know How Much an Accident Costs?"

1. Are compensation payments, doctors' bills and hospital expenses the only costs of an accident?

   (No.)

2. What percentage are those costs of the *total* cost?

   (20 per cent.)

3. What are some of the other costs?

   (Loss of production; damage to tools and equipment; loss of time of injured worker, of foreman and others in getting the worker to the hospital, in investigating, reporting, and discussing the accident; cost of hiring and breaking in new men.)

4. Consider a typical accident occurring in our plant and calculate the total cost?

5. What is the cost of industrial accidents in the U. S. every year?

   (Approximately 3 billion dollars.)

6. Who pays this loss?

   (You and I.)

7. How do accident costs affect the sale of our own products?

   (Accident costs must be included in figuring manufacturing costs. If our costs are too high, our competitors will undersell us and drive us out of business.)

8. How does this affect us as individuals?

   (Our individual success is to a great extent dependent upon the success of our company.)

Suggestions for Discussion
BOOKLET No. 5

"Safeguards—Why and How"

1. Will safeguards around machinery and plant equipment prevent accidents?

   (Yes! Some, but not all.)

2. What per cent of accidents can be prevented by safeguards?
   (10 to 20 per cent.)

3. If that percentage is so low why are safeguards so important in industry?

   (a. Guards do prevent accidents—i. e. A man can't put his hands in a set of gears if the gears are properly guarded.

   b. Guards give the worker a sense of security.

   c. Guards prove that the firm is sincere in its efforts to prevent accidents.

   d. They prove the foreman is sincere in his efforts to prevent accidents.

   e. Guards help bring out safety suggestions from the workers.

   f. The accidents occurring on machinery are usually more serious than non-machinery accidents.)

4. Do you know of any actual cases illustrating one or more of these points?

5. What are some of the fundamentals that should be followed in designing, constructing and installing safeguards?

   (a. Guard should eliminate the hazard of accidental injury to operator and passersby.

   b. Should not interfere with production.

   c. Should be attached to machine—not to floor.

   d. The equipment guarded must be easily accessible for oiling, inspection, and repair.

   e. Guard should not interfere with sweeping and cleaning.

   f. Guard must be strong enough to stand use and abuse.

   g. Guard should preferably be made of metal.

   h. Guard should preferably be interlocked with operating mechanism.

   i. If possible, guard should prevent excessive wear on the part guarded.)

6. Are there examples of our own equipment guarded in accordance with these fundamentals?

7. How can we get advice in deciding what to guard and how to guard it?

   (a. From insurance and state inspectors.

b. From members of our safety department.

c. By making a study of processes and methods.

d. By getting suggestions from the workers.)

8. How can you get men to use the safeguards provided? Goggles—saw guard—etc.?

(Man-to-man talk; explain why safeguards are necessary and what would happen to him and his family, if he were injured; ask if the guard is OK, if it isn't ask for suggestions for improvement; in an extreme case resort to discipline.)

Subjects for Discussion

BOOKLET No. 6

"Look Out for That First Step!"

1. Why is a new worker usually more susceptible to injury than the "old-timers"?

   (His surroundings are new, he's anxious to make good right at the start, he hesitates to admit ignorance, it takes some time to get the "feel" of his job.)

2. What can the employment man do to impress the men he hires with the necessity of "being careful"?

   (Tell them the management is wholeheartedly interested in preventing accidents, management has provided safe working conditions and is proud that the workers are doing their part, too, etc.)

3. What can the foreman do to get the new man started right?

   (Be friendly, tell him the firm and particularly this department has a good safety record, encourage him to help make the record still better, introduce him to his neighbors in the department, encourage him to consult you on anything he's not sure about, do his job for him for a few minutes, and explain the hazards, then watch him do the job for a few minutes, come back to him from time to time and make sure he doesn't develop wrong and unsafe habits, etc., etc.)

4. How can a foreman study and learn about the accident hazards of all the jobs performed in his department?

   (By thinking back over the accidents that have occurred to his men, by consulting the firm's statistics and accident cause classifications, by learning of the experience of similar departments in other firms, by reading trade journals, NATIONAL SAFETY NEWS, pamphlets of the National Safety Council and other organizations, through safety posters, by watching men work, etc.)

5. What about the "old-timers"? How should you treat an old-timer who is transferred to another job or to another department?

   (Treat him almost like a new man insofar as the hazards of his new job are concerned.)

Suggestions for Discussion

BOOKLET No. 7

"Are You 'Following Through?'"

1. What are some of the reasons for most of the accidents occurring to men in our firm?

   (The most obvious answer is "carelessness." Explain why "carelessness" is too broad; why it is simply an alibi. More definite answers are inattention, poor judgment, haste, work improperly planned, disobedience of rules, interference by others, lack of experience, lack of skill, instructions incomplete, or not enforced or not given at all.)

2. Is it important for the foreman to differentiate between these "causes of injuries"?

   (Yes, because different causes call for different methods of correction.)

3. Out of 330 "mishaps" on a given job, how many times on the average will the worker be seriously injured?

   (1).

   How many times will he suffer minor injury?

   (29).

   How many times will near-injuries result?

   (300).

4. If injuries occur to workers usually after repeated unsafe practices, isn't it important for the foreman to detect these unsafe practices before the workers are injured?

   (Yes.)

5. Isn't it likewise important for the foreman to study and learn what unsafe practices are common on each job under his supervision?

   (Yes.)

6. Take any typical operation familiar to the foremen—such as using a ladder, or an emery wheel—and analyze it to determine how many separate unsafe practices and conditions may result in injury to a worker.

   (For instance, take an emery wheel: wheel out of balance; tool rest set too high, too low, too close, too far away; hood guard removed; failure to wear goggles; grinding on side of wheel, etc., etc.)

7. Can the foreman get all workers in his department to help him bring about the elimination of unsafe conditions and unsafe practices?

   (Yes.)

   How?

   (By developing team work.)

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