

Taking Leadership In Building A 'Safety Culture' In Industrial Work Environments

Safety starts from the top...prioritizing safety, setting goals, supporting a safety improvement plan; & then inspiring all employees to commit to the program.

MARLTON, NJ, UNITED STATES, November 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- According to the

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We prioritize Conrail's "Safety Culture" initiative because we prioritize our employees and strive to make Conrail a safer environment, one that attracts the best and brightest people to our mission."

Brian Gorton - President & Chief Operating Officer of Conrail Corporation

Association of American Railroads, "since 2000, for all railroads, on-duty fatalities declined 71% and reached an all-time low in 2023. For Class I railroad employees, the rate of injuries and fatalities has dropped by 63% since 2000 reaching an all-time low in 2023." Brian Gorton, President and Chief Operating Officer of Conrail Corporation, the nation's largest rail terminal and switching service provider, said, "although great strides have been made, the railroad industry still has a way to go improving safety, because even one injury is one too many."

To achieve safety improvements, Gorton believes that developing a "Safety Culture" is the key to nurturing safer work environments. Gorton says, "Safety starts from the top, beginning with prioritizing safety, setting goals,

supporting a safety improvement plan; and then inspiring all employees to commit to the program." Gorton has cultivated a "Safety Culture" within Conrail, one that he believes is responsible for increasingly positive results, including achievements like Conrail's recent Human Factor Derailments (HFD) number, that has been cut in half to 11 compared to 22 at the same time last year.

Gorton acknowledges that railroads and other industrial work environments are prone to safety risks, but that they don't have to become hazards. To minimize risk and maximize safety, Gorton recommends establishing a "Safety Culture" to achieve critical benefits such as:

- Saving lives.
- Preventing injuries.
- Reducing time off lost days due to injury.
- Attracting more employees by promoting a safer environment.
- And other benefits.

To create a “Safety Culture” Gorton recommends building a program that includes the following components:

- Prioritize safety, period.

Starting with management, but pervasive throughout the organization, safety must be a top priority because employees are a priority.

- Develop a plan and goals around your safety vision.

A “Culture of Safety” starts with a vision, but a vision alone won’t make things happen. A plan with goals is critical in providing a roadmap with the steps and resources needed to achieve that vision.

- Communicate the plan throughout the organization.

Develop a communications strategy designed to inform each employee of the plan and goals, and to illustrate the importance of this mission to the entire organization. Reinforce this communication frequently.

- Institute safety training programs.

Training provides the safety skills and awareness employees need to reach the company’s safety goals. Training also communicates self-esteem as each employee appreciates his or her role in making the environment safer for everyone.

- Track and communicate goals and results

Success builds upon success. As results are communicated, the entire team will feel that they are a part of the improvement, deepening their commitment and attachment to the culture. Reward exceptional results and communicate stories about your organization’s “safety heroes”.

- Reflect on results and update your plan.

At least once a year, take stock of your “safety culture.” Take into account what you have achieved so that you can then evolve your plan going forward.

Gorton said, “Safety can never rest because the potential risks never rest. We’ve prioritized Conrail’s “Safety Culture” initiative because we prioritize our employees and strive to make Conrail a safer environment, one that attracts the best and brightest people to our mission.”

ABOUT CONRAIL CORPORATION

Founded in 1976, Conrail is a premier terminal and switching service provider, operating about



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1,200 miles of track for its owners CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern. The company provides safe and efficient rail service to local freight customers in the areas of Detroit, New Jersey and Philadelphia. Operating in shared asset areas, Conrail connects customers to the national rail network through CSX and NS. Guided by the core values of Safety, Service, Value and Leadership, Conrail remains committed to providing excellent rail services. For more information, visit <https://conrail.com>.

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