

TOOLBOX TALK – EXECUTIVE SERIES

Toolbox Talks promote a sense of personal accountability and help to build a sustainable culture of safety excellence at all levels in a business. To access more Toolbox Talks, visit CAT.COM/SAFETY



Safety in Numbers

We live in the age of big data and data analytics. Wearable devices and trackers appear in both our private and professional lives. The amount of data that is available at our fingertips is beyond comprehension. At the push of a button, leaders have access to production targets, manufacturing defects, cycle times, all the way through to the time each employee entered the facility. From a safety perspective, managers can see trends in injury frequency rates, identify which part of the organization has what types of incidents, track employee reporting trends and even monitor their health.

This data helps individuals and organizations understand, learn and make more informed decisions. Indeed, leaders are more informed today than ever before.

More than meets the eye

As more and more data becomes available, there is a risk that leaders develop an over-reliance on the numbers, graphs and spreadsheets and sight of what the numbers actually represent. Once the numbers are collected, and move into a database, the context in which the numbers were gathered is lost. In safety, the charts and figures remove the human element –people with feelings, insights and concerns. The people who can shed light on the social and environmental conditions that were occurring when those numbers were gathered.

Behind every unsafe behavior, or unsafe act, is a reason the person or people involved engaged in the behavior. Often it has to do with the management system -- the way people are measured and rewarded, or a culture that accepts unsafe behavior for one reason or another.

What do your numbers tell you about the safety culture of your organization?

If you really want to understand the safety data of your organization, step away from the computer and talk to your people – they are the real experts on safety and what is going on in your business.

Next time your executive team is making decisions about your safety program, rather than being driven solely by the numbers on a spreadsheet, why not:

- Ask yourself...
 - “How” are we (our leaders, managers and supervisors) contributing to these statistics?
 - “How” are our messaging, goals and reward systems contributing to the patterns on the page?
 - “What” might be the morale of the people behind this data?
- Spend some time in the workplace and simply observe what does and does not happen, what is said and not said, what is measured, what gets ignored, etc. These factors will bring meaning to the data you discuss during leadership meetings.

CATERPILLAR SAFETY SERVICES CAT.COM/SAFETY

Caterpillar believes in the importance of safety and we want our customers to arrive Safely home. Everyone. Every day.” This requires safe and reliable equipment, well-trained operators, properly designed job sites and a commitment to safety throughout the organization. Wherever you are in your safety journey, Caterpillar Safety Services is committed to providing you the tools, resources and knowledge to develop a sustainable culture of safety excellence.

© 2018 Caterpillar. All Rights Reserved. CAT, CATERPILLAR, ZIP, and their respective logos, “Caterpillar Yellow,” and the POWER EDGE trade dress, as well as corporate and product identity used herein, are trademarks of Caterpillar and may not be used without permission.

