

February 2017. Everyone would like to see dramatic improvements in safety despite limited resources. Three principles have proven successful as triggers for significant and sustaining safety breakthroughs.

1. Energize the workforce to become enthusiastic about safety. Focus on tangible, personal benefits to workers when they apply safety principles and techniques both at work and at home. This method has proven to elicit a high level of worker attention and interest when used in businesses. Workers are encouraged to find and activate ways to get others to share in “going above and beyond” to get their jobs done safely. Positive motivation is key.
2. Engage everyone to the highest extent possible. Where this is most successful, workers are selected and trained to become high-level peer safety advocates. They present, communicate and spread preselected safety methods, strategies and techniques, then remind others to look for ways to apply these. Selected workers may be those with particular interest, such as safety committee members. One example might be giving workers a chance to test new equipment or methods as a friendly competition to improve.
3. Develop higher-level expertise. This involves imparting skill sets that go beyond standard safety mantras, such as “Think before your act.” The focus is on selecting and transmitting practical principles and applications that workers can see make immediate and positive difference to them.

How can the above suggestions accomplished?

- Elevate workers’ ability to sense potential risks. Regular pre-shift meetings that have a different focus each time can be a platform to ask workers to share easier, smarter and safer ways to perform their jobs.
- Decide on the safest course. Provide some options to workers rather than prescribing one best way to accomplish any task. This allows workers to select what works best in their specific circumstances and conditions.
- Act. Focus on providing mental skills and physical skill sets to offset forces/circumstances that would otherwise lead to injuries.

Pater, R., and R. Bowles. "Leveraging Lessons From Remarkable Breakthroughs." *Professional Safety* Jan. 2017: 18-21. Print. This is a publication of The American Society of Safety Engineers.