



Kudos To Groups Making A Difference: Safety Conferences and Education Efforts

Insights

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Those of you who follow the FP Workplace safety blog or the howardmavity.com site know that I try to generate new product every few days but have of late been conspicuously silent. Part of the reason is that I have been on the road to speak at various safety-related conferences. I was impressed by the groups' efforts and I learned from the attendees and presenters. Please support such groups' efforts.

National Wholesale Beer Association

The NWBA just completed their [Legislative Conference](#) in D.C. The topics were practical and provided in depth coverage of certain issues, especially at the Benefits, Safety and Risk Management sessions at the end of the conference. I was impressed while presenting on Five Practical Areas To Improve Wholesaler Safety and HR Compliance to see a Division President of one of the nation's largest and best know distributors sitting with the VP of safety. I constantly emphasize that supervisors and employees largely ignore official corporate statements of "safety is our number one value," and instead look at the big dog's actions. What effect do you think it will have on this Division President's direct reports and employees at large when they hear that he braved absolutely atrocious weather to stay for these last sessions? That's real safety leadership.

AGC Georgia Chapter

First Annual AGC-Georgia "Construction Professionals Conference and Marketplace." Many AGC Chapters produce outstanding safety conferences such as the Carolinas AGC (CAGC) and Missouri-based Midwest Builders Association. However, the Georgia AGC established multiple tracks, not just safety: Safety, Technology, HR, and Executive Operations. The Chapter Safety Committee was a driving force behind the effort and sought to get professionals to attend sessions in other areas. Many non safety professionals attended safety sessions. I spoke in three sessions on "Marijuana Workplace Issues," "Electronic Communications and Debacles In Social Media" and on Safety Leadership, Engagement and related HR and Safety Issues. Thus I saw safety professionals in my HR session, and managers and HR attendees in my safety session.

The AGC's conference reflects their effort to address a major flaw in many employers' operations ... they silo HR, Safety and Management and the groups do not coordinate their efforts. HR and Safety should be the two closest functions in an employer, which is why I so often speak on "Safety For HR Professionals" and "HR For the Safety Manager." The CAGC is carrying out a similar effort on when it

holds its Safety and Hr Conference during its July 31 – August 1 Division meetings. I’m speaking on “The Care and Feeding of Your Lawyer.”

Zurich Construction Safety Roundtables

Zurich’s twice annual “*Construction Safety Roundtables*” are the most fruitful small group efforts I have seen. These 30 or so companies approach safety not as something to be checked off, but as a genuine part of the building process. No uncoordinated silo thinking here! Representatives of various employers spend several days devising real world strategies for supervisor development, recruitment, crane management and other topics. Last year, some of the nation’s best work on tracking and encouraging “Leading Indicators” in safety came out of this group. The meetings are low on speakers and high on uninterrupted attendee brainstorming.

Charlotte Regional Safety & Health School

This annual conference, like its smaller but excellent sibling, the Western NC Conference in Asheville, consistently provide a wide variety of detailed safety courses and broader offerings such as UT Medical guru, Dr. Emery’s sessions on “Effectively Managing the “Under Exposed,” or my personal favorite, his explanation of Compelling ways To Communicate Safety Data To Achieve Desired decision Making, which basically explains how to pimp up those graphs and tables. The guy is a heavyweight and a humorous speaker. No 2014 conference has provided better instruction in making your written communications, graphs and tables understandable. If your target audience can’t understand the core message at a glance, your work is probably too complicated ... and you won’t get that extra money for safety efforts because your message was lost. The next conference is on April 18 and 19, 2015.

Send us stories of things you have learned at conferences and conferences that you found especially effective.

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