

The importance of safety excellence in manufacturing

Fostering a culture where safety is a core value can improve employee morale and create an environment where manufacturers meet and exceed their production goals.

Equipment maintenance is one of the most important components of a safe facility. Properly maintained equipment ensures the factory floor remains predictable and streamlined so it is critical for manufacturers to have a robust, safety-focused maintenance program.

Workplace safety is fundamental

Compliance-based employers focus on meeting standard OSHA regulations in three key areas: a compliance base, personal protective equipment (PPE), and training. Top employers, like **Advanced Technology Services (ATS)**, know safety excellence is core to their culture and success.



“Employees are more motivated when they feel safe in the workplace,” said Dave Miller, Senior Director of EHS at ATS. “They feel more valued. Safety is a critical element of productivity for both the company and the employee.”

Workplace safety risks and challenges

Both human factors and physical conditions can

present risks and challenges to workplace safety. “Human factors relate to how people interface with their environment,” Miller said. Human factors leading to safety risks include:

- Ineffective training and unclear procedures
- Physical and mental fatigue
- Lack of resources for a safe working environment
- Conflicting expectations and goals
- Other distractions related to overall well-being

Personal items such as family issues or work relationships also pose risks. “These can take your mind off the task,” Miller said.

Physical conditions leading to safety risks include:

- Proximity to moving parts including machinery
- Poor lighting or environmental hygiene
- Lack of protective elements such as guard rails
- Poorly maintained or misused equipment
- Uneven or otherwise unsafe walking surfaces

“Many factories have machinery that’s designed to bend, crush, reform, and burn metal and steel that can easily harm an employee in seconds,” Miller said. “There also are risks of explosion, exposure to toxic chemicals, falling and shifting debris, chemical exposures, and missing guard rails on walkways.”

Implementing workplace safety best practices

Steps toward putting improved workplace safety strategies in place include:

- Assess the current state and address any missing safety measures
- Implement a maintenance program with safety at its core
- Implement and evaluate safety training to ensure effectiveness
- Establish safety excellence as a core element of your culture

“Create a company culture where employees feel free to speak up if they have safety concerns,” Miller said. He also advocates reducing the need for reactive maintenance. “Reactive maintenance is where many injuries occur. Technicians feel under pressure to get the machine up and running again as quickly as possible, so safety becomes less of a focus or priority. With predictive and preventive maintenance, typically safety compliance increases, and recordable incidents decrease.”

Results of implementing a safety excellence program

Focusing on the importance of workplace safety yields many benefits, including:

- Improved uptime and productivity
- Proactive versus reactive maintenance
- Increased production with greater output
- Higher employee satisfaction and retention
- Enhanced recruitment for open positions



The Beyond Zero safety program at ATS is best-in-class and award winning. “Beyond Zero” means going beyond just having zero incidents, stated Miller. “We created a model with five interdependent elements: physical, emotional, social, and financial well-being, along with Live Safety 24/7— in and outside the workplace.”

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