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## *Weekly Safety Tip*

*Life Is All About Choices!*<sup>®</sup>

December 14, 2015

### SCI Safety News: Influencing behaviors for better safety performance Part 1

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

By *Ana Ellington, Legal Editor*

Date: *December 8, 2015*

At this year's New England area American Society of Safety Engineers Professional Development conference, Keith Robinson, corporate safety director at Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc., presented a lively session on how behaviors impact safety performance in workplaces—safety culture is key.

Robinson used the ABC model to explain what exactly influences behaviors. The ABC model involves Activators (antecedents), Behaviors, and Consequences.

#### **Activator**

An *activator* is a person, place, thing, or event that comes before a behavior and encourages or triggers a behavior. Activators in the workplace can be signs, written procedures, and training. According to Robinson, strong activators must be specific. He provided two examples and asked which would be a strong activator.

- “This is an extremely dangerous chemical. Wear proper PPE.” *or*
- “Sulfuric acid is a corrosive chemical that can cause burns to the skin and eyes. Wear butyl gloves, rubber apron, face shield, and goggles when handling.”

The second specifies the dangers and specific personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used for safety. That is a strong activator.



#### **SCI Safety Slogan**



**James Lehrke-SCI**

**Behavior**

Robinson explained that *behaviors* are observable, can be predictable, and are a choice made by the individual. Generally, a behavior makes sense to the person who does it at the time. The same is true for unsafe behavior. “Unsafe behavior is normal behavior. It is the result of normal people reacting to the environment in which they work,” Robinson said.

Typically, employees do not do things knowing they will result in injuries. Robinson said the reasons for unsafe behavior include:

- Skill deficiency—or lack of training.
- Skills not used often enough.
- Failure to recognize warning events/near misses.
- No positive consequences for safe behavior.
- Unclear management expectations.
- Physical obstacles.
- Employees believe *they* will not get hurt.

**Consequences**

*Consequences* are anything that directly follows a behavior. These can include injury, discipline, praise, money, or satisfaction. Consequences control behavior—activators influence it. And like activators, stronger consequences are more effective.

How do you determine the strength of consequences?

- Timing—Soon/later
- A consequence that follows soon after a behavior is stronger than one that occurs later.
- Consistency—Certain/uncertain
- Consequences that are delivered consistently after a behavior are stronger than those that are uncertain or unpredictable.
- Significance—Positive/negative
- Positive consequences are stronger than negative.

The most powerful consequences occur **soon** after a behavior; **certain** and consistent; and **positive**. Unfortunately, many strong consequences can create unsafe behaviors. For example, there may be the perception that it will be more comfortable not to wear a face shield.

**Behavior change**

According to Robinson, many believe that unsafe behavior contributes to more than 90 percent of all injuries. “If unsafe behaviors contribute to injuries, then it makes sense to find ways to encourage employees to make better choices,” he said.

There may be systemic and cultural issues at play as well, but ultimately, an employee chooses to do a behavior or not. Those other issues become part of the activators and consequences.

Behavior change requires a systematic approach:

- Set clear expectations of workers—activator
- Define success—activator
- Identify the crucial activities, behaviors, and metrics—activator
- Monitor performance metrics and crucial activities—activator/consequence
- Provide feedback and recognition—consequence
- Apply accountability—consequence

*Continued next week... What went wrong?*

## SCI OSHA News: Hospitality employers take note— your next guest may be an OSHA inspector

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: December 11, 2015

An attorney who specializes in OSHA compliance is warning hospitality industry employers not to become complacent because they have never been inspected. Find out why he’s urging vigilance.

Howard Mavity, a partner with Fisher & Phillips, LLP, cochairs the firm’s Workplace Safety and Catastrophe Management Practice Group. He says that while hospitality workplaces are not generally considered high hazard and typically are not inspected, there are reasons for concern.



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**Quick Tips for Healthy Living**

**Kick the Winter Blues!**

As the days get shorter and nights get colder the “winter blues” start to settle in. The “winter blues” can be characterized by mild depression, lack of motivation and low energy that many people experience during this cold season. Luckily, there is a lot you can do to both prevent the blues and to get yourself back to on track.

**1. Exercise**

As if you needed another reason to get fit! Exercise is not only for maintain your weight but for also staying healthy and relieving stresses in your life. The effects of a good workout can last for several hours after you hit the shower. You will see that you have more energy throughout the day, and your metabolism will stay elevated to. Exercise also helps your mind by releasing those “feel good chemicals” that improve mood

**2. Eat a Healthy Diet**

What and when you eat has a huge effect on your mood and energy. Avoid refined and processed foods, these foods are not only devoid of nutrients your body needs, but they zap your energy level and can affect your mood. Try to incorporate more complex carbohydrates and get 8 cups of water daily. These

**3. Get Some Sun**

Most people know that sunlight provides us with Vitamin D. But did you know that it also improves your mood? Winter days are shorter and darker than other months, and because of the cold weather, a lot of people spend less and less time outdoors. Lack of sunlight can cause many people to become depressed—without knowing why! Similar to exercise, sunlight exposure releases neurotransmitters in the brain that affect mood. Try to spend a little more time outdoors. Keep your shades up during the day to let more light in. Sit near windows in restaurants and during class. Try changing the light bulbs in your house to “full spectrum” bulbs. These mimic natural light and actually have the same effects on your mind as the real thing.

**4. Act on your Resolutions**

A recent study from the CDC showed a strong link between healthy behaviors and depression. Women who exhibited healthy behaviors (like exercising, not smoking, etc.) had less sad and depressed days than those whose behaviors were less than healthy. Although researchers studied women, the results are likely similar in men.

Among them:

- Since January 2015, employers have been required to report a single employee hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye. OSHA acknowledges that one reason for the change was to gain access to previously unvisited employers.
- The agency is focusing on companies with multiple locations, which can yield more opportunities for error and noncompliance. For example, OSHA can base repeat citations on any previous violations found at other company sites in the past 5 years.
- OSHA is attempting to expand the definition of employer, which may pose a risk to hospitality groups with franchise arrangements.
- OSHA is focusing significantly on temporary employees and is heavily citing both hosts and providers for violations.
- The agency is taking a hard look at ergonomic and workplace violence hazards, both of which affect the hospitality industry.
- The recent federal budget agreement authorized OSHA to increase penalties by 82 percent starting in August 2016.

Mavity concludes that in view of the above, “employers should tune up their OSHA compliance efforts and train site management on how best to respond to OSHA inspections.”

*What do you think?  
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