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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices![®]

December 21, 2015

SCI Safety News: Influencing behaviors for better safety performance Part 2

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

By *Ana Ellington*, Legal Editor

Date: December 8, 2015



Stopping normalization of deviance

Robinson used the space shuttle *Challenger* tragedy to define the normalization of deviance term, its safety consequences, and how individuals and teams can defend themselves from the phenomenon.

Normalization of deviance is defined as: “The gradual process through which unacceptable practice or standards become acceptable. As the deviant behavior is repeated without catastrophic results, it becomes the social norm for the organization.”

An accident ... an unplanned event? What went wrong?

The investigation into the explosion of *Challenger* pointed to equipment difficulties. When O-rings designed to seal the joints of the solid rocket boosters failed, fuel leaked and set off a chain of events that destroyed *Challenger* and claimed the lives of the seven crew members on board. That was a day that most of us will always remember.

There is, however, more to the story of *Challenger*. What had originally been considered an unacceptable event—in this case,

SCI Safety Slogan

Merry Christmas



*We wish you health, comfort, prosperity and an abundance of happiness this holiday season.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

James Lehrke-SCI

O-ring failure—had occurred so often over prior launches that it had become an expected event and, finally, an accepted event. O-ring failure during launch had gone from being an unacceptable event to an acceptable event—normalization of deviance.

Simply put, normalization of deviance is present when events that were initially considered to be unacceptable occur so often that—over time—they come to be expected and then accepted as normal.

The cure: A strategy for full recovery

Robinson provided a “cure” for this problem.

Be an example of change

The first step of treatment is to accept the fact that the only change you can truly affect is change within yourself. Are you committed to safety? Do you start work tuned in for safety? Do you look at the workplace to consider whether it is safe or unsafe? Would you notice if the work environment has changed? “I’ll bet that many of us come into the workplace in autopilot,” Robinson said.

The next step of the treatment then is to demonstrate those changes within you. Have you considered the influence you may have on others? Many of your coworkers take the cues from you. Let them see the change.

Recognize the symptoms

Recognize the symptoms of *normalization of deviance* and intervene early:

- Comments like “Don’t worry about it!” or “What’s the harm?”
- Casual dismissal of issues that others appear to think are really important.
- Belief that safety is OK in the workplace since there have been no incidents ... no recordable accidents.

According to Robinson, safety is not a priority in the workplace; it is a value!

SCI OSHA Compliance: This Time, it’s Personal: OSHA Clarifies Whether Non-Job-Related Activity Resulted in Recordable Injury

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

By Jennifer Busick

Date: December 18, 2015

Here’s the scenario: An employee brings a plow to work in his truck that he intends to loan to a coworker. After the two employees have clocked out for the day, they go to the company parking lot to move the plow to the coworker’s truck. In the process of moving the plow from one truck to the other, one of the employees injures his back. Is this a recordable, work-related injury?

That’s the question an employer posed to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) earlier this year. On November 6, 2015, OSHA issued a letter of interpretation answering the question and clarifying its position on the work-relatedness of injuries that occur when workers perform personal tasks in the work environment.

Confusing FAQs

In its letter, the employer noted that in OSHA’s Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the recordkeeping standard (29 CFR part 1904), OSHA states that an injury or illness that occurs in the work environment before or after an employee clocks in or out is considered work-related. Specifically, the FAQ reads:

“An employee experienced an injury or illness in the work environment before they had ‘clocked-in’ for the day. Is the case considered work-related?”

Yes. For purposes of OSHA recordkeeping injuries and illnesses occurring in the work environment are considered work-related. Punching in and out with a time clock (or signing in and out) does not affect the outcome for determining work-relatedness. If the employee experienced a work-related injury or illness, and it meets one or more of the general recording criteria under section 1904.7, it must be entered on the employer’s OSHA 300 log.”

Based on this answer, the employer noted, it sounds as if the worker whose back was injured while moving the plow suffered a work-related injury—even though he was not doing anything work-related at the time. Could that be right?



Aurora Health Care®

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Holiday Health Tip

The holidays are here, which means there is likely more to do than you have time for. Since you can't clone yourself and Santa seems to have the monopoly on elves, staying calm amid never-ending to-dos can be tough. Before you have a meltdown and vow to skip Christmas next season, it's time to introduce some stay-calm strategies. We put together some of our easiest and most effective seasonal stress-busters to keep you calm this holiday season

Get outside

It may be cold outside but that doesn't mean you're allowed to hibernate until June. Fresh air can make a huge difference in how you feel, especially when stress starts creeping up on you. And no, walking from the car to the mall doesn't cut it. This season, make time to get outside once a day, even if it's just for 10 to 15 minutes. Walk the dog, head to a nearby park and back again, or bundle up as a family and wander through the neighborhood to check out the Christmas lights on display. The more you can get outdoors amid the holiday chaos the better you'll feel

Fit in fitness

You might not feel like you have time to shower on a regular basis during the holidays, let alone exercise, but, as with getting outdoors, fitting in some form of fitness is key for keeping stress at bay. No time to hit the gym for an hour? No problem.

- Go for three brisk 10-minute walks at different times throughout the day. By the evening you'll have fit in 30 minutes.
- Do squats and lunges as you wait for something to finish roasting in the oven.
- Keep a yoga or exercise mat ready on the [living room](#) floor. Whenever you have five minutes, do crunches, push-ups or your favorite yoga poses to tone, in between holiday chores.
- Park as far away from the mall as possible. While you shop, walk briskly rather than stroll from store to store.

Eat for energy

Eating well despite the abundance of sugar (or lack of time) is important if you want to maintain a sense of calm as you work your way through your list of holiday must-dos. Nibbling on Christmas treats may seem like a (tasty) time-saver but the sugar will only give you a temporary boost. Your energy level will soon nosedive, taking your festive mood with it. Instead, make sure you eat small meals consisting of lean protein and lots of colorful fruit and vegetables. Snack on whole fruits, cut vegetables with hummus, raw nuts and low-fat yogurt. The healthier you eat while you're on the go, the more stable your mood will be.

Schedule breaks

You may have 1,000 things on your holiday to-do list but we suggest adding one more: breaks. This may seem counterproductive to your Christmas plans but if you don't schedule your breaks, you likely won't take them. Every day (ideally twice a day), make sure you take a 20-minute timeout. Read a chapter in the book you have going, sip a cup of tea, and listen to music – anything that isn't related to your holiday to-do list. Breaks will help keep you refreshed and ensure you don't get too bogged down with everything you need to accomplish.

Don't do it all

Santa has his elves (he'd likely be stressed without them) and you should enlist some holiday help of your own. You might be tempted to do everything on your own, but that's a recipe for stress. Ask for help. Your husband can hit the mall, your kids can start getting the house organized for guests, your mother can handle the dessert portion of holiday dinner – let other people shoulder some of the responsibility so you stress less and actually have time to enjoy the holiday season.

A Clarification

In its reply, OSHA noted that Section 1904.5(b)(2)(v) in the recordkeeping standard specifies that an injury or illness is not work-related if it is:

- Solely the result of an employee doing personal tasks (unrelated to his or her employment) at the establishment, *and*
- Outside of the employee's assigned working hours.

In order for the "personal tasks" exception to apply, the case must meet both of the stated conditions. The exception is intended to apply to just the sort of situation described by the employer, giving employers enough flexibility to exclude from their recordkeeping situations where the employee is using the employer's premises for purely personal reasons during his or her off-time.

To further clarify the applicability of the standard in this situation, OSHA noted that "assigned working hours" means "those hours the employee is actually expected to work, including overtime." This encompasses the time between the employee's expected start time of the day and the expected end time of the day and includes formal and informal break times.

The injury described in the employer's scenario meets both conditions in Section 1904.5(b)(2)(v) and is not work related. Moving the plow was unrelated to the employee's job, and the task was performed after the employee had clocked out for the day. At the time of the event, the injured employee was not present in the work environment as a condition of employment.

With regard to its FAQ, OSHA noted that "FAQ 5-11 addresses injuries and illnesses that take place in the work environment that do not involve purely 'personal tasks.'" In the standard, Section 1904.5(a) specifies that a case is presumed work-related if, and only if, an event or exposure in the work environment is a discernable cause of the injury or illness or of a significant aggravation to a preexisting condition.

The exception in Section 1904.5(b)(2)(v) that addresses work-relatedness when employees are on the premises outside their assigned working hours thus applies to work-related, not personal, tasks. Therefore, FAQ 5-11 does not apply to the scenario because, at the time of the injury, the employee was engaged in a personal task unrelated to work.

*What do you think?
Send us an email at:
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