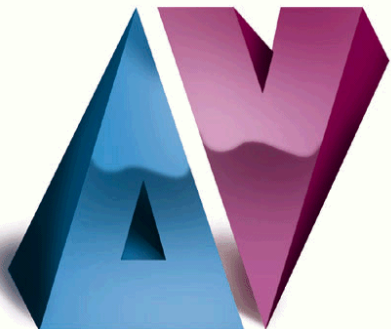




# “How to make a safety committee work for you”

Facilitated by: Chris Troutman  
Bernadette Heckman  
Greg Famous



AVI Risk Services, LLC  
985 Old Eagle School Road  
Wayne, PA 19087



# Training Goals

- Provide direction on how to develop and integrate a workplace safety committee into your organization.
- Provide ideas and tools on how to achieve and maintain an effective safety committee.
- Discuss safety committee benefits and pitfalls.
- Open discussion



# Definitions

- Committee

- a group of people who are elected or appointed for a specific task.

- Safety Committee

- A joint employer and employee group established at a workplace for the purpose of workplace safety and incident reduction and prevention.



# Common Attitudes

- “A committee is a way of postponing a decision”
- “A committee is a group of people who individually can do nothing and who collectively decide nothing can be done”



What creates negative attitudes towards committees?

Lack of Structure

Group vs. Team



# Groups

- Goals are discussed in general terms.
- Roles and responsibilities are not explicitly defined or developed.
- Rules and expectations are not formally developed and evolve according to the group's needs.
- Members interact and the work may be divided among members.



# Teams

- Clear, elevating goals are defined.
- Roles and responsibilities are explicitly developed and communicated.
- Rules and operating procedures are clearly defined to assure teamwork.
- Collaboration, coordination and interdependence.



Is your committee a group or a team?



# Developing an Effective Safety Committee

- Organizational Support
- Mission Statement
- Committee Charter
- Committee Members
- Committee Climate
- Cohesiveness
- Effective Communication
- Leadership
- Goals/action oriented



# Organizational Support

- Executive Management
  - Creates a culture of safety
  - Provide Resources
- Management/Supervision
  - Promote the culture
  - Safety over production
  - Accountability
- Employees
  - Commitment to the culture
  - Employee participation/ownership



# Mission Statement

- Mission statement should be developed using your “S.M.A.R.T.S”.
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Attainable
  - Relevant
  - Time-bound
  - Stretching



# Committee Charter

- A document defining the formal structure of the committee.
- Committee Charter includes:
  - Purpose and Scope
  - Organizational Support Statement
  - Membership Requirements
  - Membership Term
  - Meeting Procedures
  - Roles and Responsibilities
  - Committee Authority
  - Rules and Enforcement
  - Letter of Agreement



# Committee Members

- Should be “volunteer”; not “voluntold”
- Effective Members are:
  - Experienced
  - Problem-Solving Oriented
  - Open and Supportive
  - Action Oriented
  - Positive
  - Collaborative



# Committee Climate

- The emotional environment of a group that affects and is affected by interaction among members.
- Defensive vs. Supportive
  - Defensive: Counterproductive, disconfirming and adversarial
  - Supportive: Productive, cohesive, confirming and goal oriented.



# Cohesiveness

- Degree of attraction members feel toward one another and the group.
- Cohesiveness develops around task relationships and conflict resolution skills; not similarity in interpersonal attraction.
  - Self-selected groups are usually less cohesive, productive and experience groupthink.



# Effective Communication

- Communication Network
  - Tri-level: Committee-Management-Labor
- Communication Style
  - Quantitative vs. Qualitative
  - Transactional vs. Interpersonal
- Communication Barriers
  - Poor Active Listening
  - Power and Status
  - Environment



# Leadership

- A behavior or communication that influences, guides, directs or controls a group.
- Leaders:
  - Set direction
  - Create and maintain commitment (motivation)
  - Meet adaptive challenges
- Democratic style works best in a safety committee.



# Goals and Action Oriented

- Goals are the purpose towards which an endeavor is directed.
  - Should be established annually and communicated to all level of organization.
  - Should be continuously monitored.
- Action is the drive to get things accomplished.
  - Action plans should be completed at the conclusion of each meeting.



# Safety Committee Benefits

- Employees
  - Safer work environment
  - Injury/Illness prevention
  - Better communication
  - Increased safety awareness
  - Enhanced employee morale



# Safety Committee Benefits

- Organization
  - Prevents and reduces workplace incidents
  - Promotes involvement
  - Accomplishes more safety projects
  - Increases productivity
  - Saves money
    - Directly
    - Indirectly



# Money Savings

- Direct Savings
  - Reduction in medical and compensation costs
  - PA Workplace Safety Committee Certification: 5% Policy Premium Discount
- Indirect Savings
  - Reduction in lost time costs
  - Reduction in recruitment and selection costs
  - Reduction in orientation and training costs
  - Reduction in consultant/contractor costs



# Savings

- PA Compensation Rating Bureau found that companies with a certified safety committee achieved a 24-28% reduction in claims costs.



# PA Workplace Safety Committee Certification Program Requirements

[www.dli.state.pa.us](http://www.dli.state.pa.us)



# Safety Committee Pitfalls

- The safety committee becoming the safety police.
- All safety program responsibilities are delegated to the committee.
- Certification maintenance becomes the focus.
- Complacency and Stagnation.



# Steps to Achieving and Maintaining Effectiveness

- Formal Structure
- Annual Training
- Monthly Meetings
  - Agenda, Minutes and Action plans
- Accountability
- Goal Development and Monitoring
- Recognition
- Continuous Improvement
  - Performance Audits
  - Satisfaction Surveys



Questions/Comments



# Conclusion

Chris Troutman

570-339-1636

[ctroutman@avinternational.net](mailto:ctroutman@avinternational.net)

Bernadette Heckman

717-805-0505

[bheckman@avinternational.net](mailto:bheckman@avinternational.net)