


# Michigan Safety Conference Industrial Division April 8, 2009



O/E Learning Presents...


## Selling Safety in Hard Economic Times

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## Introduction

- Housekeeping
- Introductions




## Barriers to Selling Safety

- No budget
- Perceived as discretionary spending
- Viewed as an overhead cost
- Often seen as important but not urgent
- “We might get lucky” attitude



## Keys to Selling Safety

- Get Operations’ buy-in.
- Run Safety like a business.
- Integrate Safety into Operations’ activities.
- Demonstrate the value of Safety.
- Demonstrate the urgency of Safety.
- Avoid fads or complex initiatives.



## Get Operations Buy-In

- Speak the language of your business.
- Use Safety to support the goals of Operations.
- Provide information—not data—to Operations.
- Don’t use scare tactics.
- Advertise the real costs of injuries.




## Run Safety Like a Business

- Use zero-sum budgeting to develop a budget.
- Calculate realistic Return on Investment (ROI) for all your initiatives.
- Distinguish discretionary spending from non-discretionary spending.
- Look for—and present—other, lower cost options.
- Apply for training grants or safety grants to offset the costs of regulatory training.
- Look for ways to improve your efficiency and lower your costs.


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**Integrate Safety Into Operations' Activities** 

- Understand the Operations business model and ensure your business model supports it.
- Train Supervisors to conduct regular Safety inspections.
- Train Supervisors to conduct incident investigations on workers hurt in their area.
- Expand Safety in QOS Reviews/Scorecarding to include trailing and leading indicators.
- Assist Operations' leadership in developing a safety strategy.

**Demonstrate the Value of Safety** 


- Calculate the real costs of your injuries.
- Use hard numbers and avoid the soft/fuzzy costs.
- Tie Safety to other Operations' measurables.

**Demonstrate the Urgency of Safety** 

- Calculate your risk of injuries.
- Calculate the cost of those injuries.
- Express that projected cost in terms of profits lost or additional production necessary to replace the money spent on injuries.
- Avoid "blood on the floor" tactics.
- Don't lay a guilt trip on Operations.


**Avoid Fads or Complex Initiatives** 

- KISS.
- Recognize that lasting cultural change can come out of economic stress.
- Make "simple, practical, fast" your mantra.
- Choose your battles.
- Implement organizational development that will produce an ROI within a year or less.
- Avoid rigid, complex, or otherwise confusing Safety initiatives.

**Don't Cop Out** 


Don't blame the economy for:

- The lack of Operations' buy-in.
- Your lack of a viable Safety business model.
- Operations lack of interest in cost avoidance instead of cost reductions.

**Conclusion** 

- Selling Safety in hard economic times is not all that different than selling Safety in good economic times.
- The secret to getting Operations to value Safety is to make Safety valuable.
- You can never sell **anything** unless you understand your customers, speak their language, and demonstrate the value of your products and services in relationship to what's truly important to them.
- Questions?

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**Thank You!**

This presentation is available  
at [www.safety-impact.com](http://www.safety-impact.com).



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