

*"For safety's sake—do something."*

## A "Safety Always" Culture Message from SSOE's Safety Scott™

At SSOE Group, we have a **"Safety Always"** vision; a mission of **"For Safety's Sake, Do Something"**; a goal of **"0 Recordable Injuries"**; and a motto of **"At home, work, or play, its safety every day"**. While that all sounds good, and we are trying to instill a safe culture in our employees, it can be challenging. I honestly don't believe that employees got up from bed, got dressed, and went to work thinking *"today is the day that I am going to get hurt"*! No one wants to get hurt or even cause an accident. What I do think is that we get caught up in something that causes a distraction to us, therefore exposes us to risk. I do believe that we are willing to take chances due to cost, time, and behaviors that expose us to the dangers we encounter daily. We believe that nothing will happen. Quite frankly, this most likely is not the first time doing the task. So why?

### **Employees cannot be forced to be safe.**

Employees cannot be mandated to act or perform a certain way. When the boss is watching, they will do what they need to do. If unsupervised, it is often a different story. I admit it, I have done things that I am not supposed to do. I know that I am the Safety Manager, but I have done things that were unsafe. Studies have shown that a person will do whatever they need to do in order to complete a task, even if it could expose them to risk. Employees must be engaged, involved in the process, and yes, even accountable for their actions. Tell them what is in it for them, which could be their own well-being. We can do a better job and here is how.

- Look beyond the numbers. Recordable injuries, incidents, deficiencies, etc.
- Understand the work before enacting a rule. Walk in their shoes.
- Explain why something is happening and the risk associated with not doing it.
- Be truthful.
- Aim small, miss small. Don't try to eat the elephant in one bite.
- Celebrate the smallest of victories.
- Make it personal by involving families, friends, and co-workers.
- Motivate others to identify, and eliminate, anything that could cause someone to get hurt.
- Get commitment from the top down. Everyone must buy into the culture and success of the company.

**Safety Scott says,  
"Safety always is  
ALWAYS!"**

### **Companies must show employees they care.**

It is important that employees are safe. Compliance with regulatory agencies is important, but your employees are your most valuable asset! Everyone must show compassion for others, and realize that it truly must be a team effort. All managers must buy into the concept that the company must be successful. In order to do that, we have to have people. This requires that we protect our people, keep them safe, encourage them to be successful, and follow the rules.

Employees need to understand that the rules could be for a host of reasons; compliance, site requirements, safety, and liability. What can employees do to help make the shift?

- Report incidents, unsafe conditions, and near misses. Leading indicators.
- Seek to understand the work, and ensure the safety of yourself and others.
- Follow the work, or project rules, and requirements.
- Continuously train and seek opportunities to better yourself.
- Lead by example and hold others to the same.
- Hold yourself and others accountable, but without punishment, when possible.
- Be positive and look at safety as an opportunity to go home to your loved ones.

You may not like all the rules and the requirements to do the task, but by making the situation a positive experience, you will complete it. Negatively, you might just receive an injury. Worse yet, lose your life.

**Safety is personal. It's about YOU. Be the difference.**