

Prove It!

Safety: Culture is Stronger than Compliance



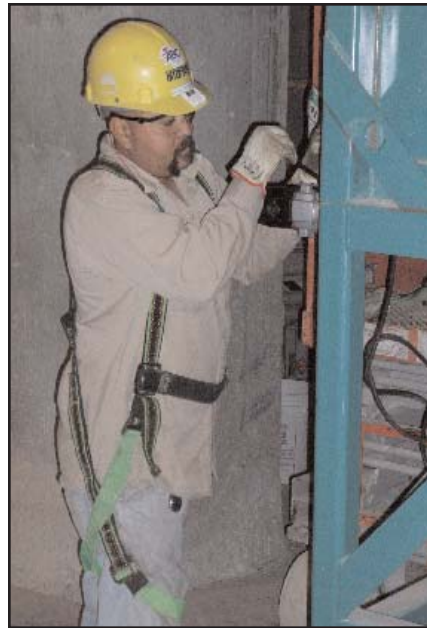
A safe work place should be the right and expectation of every person, yet our industry has struggled to provide it. When was the last time you heard a contractor tell you safety was not important? It is simply not politically correct. So how can you tell the truly progressive and safety conscious contractor from the "imposters"?

For the past four years, Interstates has had a better than average safety record. We knew that the status quo of rule enforcement and the incentive game would only get us more of the same...incremental improvement in an area that simply needed much more. We had worked to improve our Experience Modification Rate (EMR) and recordable incident rates. Although important, these numbers did not indicate the most important element in safety, ***the underlying culture of a company.***

Culture is the unwritten rules of behavior, attitude, and communication in an organization.

In order to bring Interstates' safety culture to a new level, Interstates chose to work with Behavioral Science Technology (BST), a respected safety consultant.

Through surveying Interstates' employees in December of 2002, BST identified core issues that foster or impeded a safe culture. These surveys also identified Interstates' strengths and weaknesses allowing us to implement new programs and procedures. Interstates then chose to focus on training employees and leaders to make accurate observations and develop effective feedback. This instills safe behavior in the workplace everyday.



Later, a weekly conference call between all job supervision, project managers and company executives was created. This call has developed into a continuous source for refining processes and bringing new ideas to the whole Interstates team.

To assess its safety culture progress, Interstates asked

BST to return in 2005. They again conducted the survey and validated the findings with interviews. Interstates' "numbers" for EMR and incidents were going well but were we making progress on the safety culture?



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The answer was yes! When reviewing the results, Interstates' cultural scores all landed in the top quartile of BST's database and most topped the 90th percentile. When compared to nearly 400 other companies, it was clear the Interstates' culture is building the foundation for continued success. Through this continued process, Interstates identified additional areas for improvement and focused on developing a feedback-rich environment with positive reinforcement.

Perhaps the most telling part of the Interstates' safety journey is what you see on the job - people working safely without coercion. Interstates' team members now understand that communication

and proactivity are key factors to safety success. They push other contractors to improve safety by setting the example for everyone. Safety is now an integrated part of operational excellence, not a separate activity. Planning is done holistically to perform the work safely, productively, and with quality.

We look forward to sharing our safety journey with you, our clients. By doing things differently, we expect higher standards, not only for our safety, but for our whole industry. Let us prove the benefits of our culture on your project!

