

Being Respectful to Coworkers

No matter what your job title is or what you are tasked to do at work, everyone should share a common goal to be respectful to one another. Being respectful goes a long way in the workplace. Some of the many benefits include higher morale, better cohesiveness between team members, and higher productivity. Being respectful to coworkers can also play a part in the effectiveness of the safety program at your facility.

How Being Respectful Relates to Workplace Safety

Usually the hazards of the work being performed and the corresponding mitigation actions are discussed when talking about improving safety on the job. However, there are also many factors that affect how effective a safety program is outside of just hazard recognition and mitigating hazards. For example- respect, trust, and good communication go a long way in improving the safety at a worksite in a variety of ways. A few quick benefits to consider:

1. Respect and **good communication** go hand in hand. When employees feel comfortable going up to a coworker or bringing a problem to a supervisor, safety issues can be addressed quickly. In workplaces where there is a lack of respect many employees will adopt a mindset of “it is not my problem” when safety issues arise. This mindset can come from wanting to avoid conflict or just a plain dislike of the person who may be affected by the safety issue.
2. When employees treat one another with respect, issues such as **workplace violence** are far less likely to occur. While many acts of violence in the workplace are committed by someone outside the company, many incidents occur between individuals within a workplace. Many acts of violence between coworkers escalate overtime and seemingly small acts of disrespect or belittling can lead to a very negative situation.
3. Employees who respect and trust one another can more easily focus on their work. When there is a lack of trust or respect, just seeing a coworker that you view as negative can send your mind racing. Workplaces filled with disrespect and a lack of trust serve as a huge disruption for safety as well as productivity.

Summary

Respect, good communication, and trust can be hard to fully quantify at times unlike certain safety statistics such as near misses or recordable injuries. A workforce that exhibits these positive attributes is more likely to enjoy being at work than their counterparts who work somewhere who do not experience the same type of work environment. While there is debate that higher morale equals less injuries one thing is for certain- disrespect, poor communication, and a lack of trust will not improve the safety in a workplace. *Discussion point: How closely related do you think safety is with showing respect to coworkers?*

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