

First Thursday Safety Topic

March 2019



You Don't Have to Like Me

We teach others how to treat us. ~ Dr. Phil McGraw

Happy people are safer people according to most people asked. This doesn't take years of in-depth research to figure out or confirm because it is just common sense to about 99.9% of the earth's population. If you are unhappy it makes sense that you may become distracted by the issues making you unhappy.

So, I get on a hotel elevator with another guy and we have that moment of 'who is going to push the buttons.' Being a machine type who flies airplanes and gyrocopters, and has operated all kinds of construction equipment, I am, by nature, a button pusher. Being a gentleman, I use a hand gesture, and a nod towards the buttons, offering the honor to my elevator friend. and he says, "No, be my guest." I push my floor button and ask with a grin, "Going to the top-floor?" Suddenly the guy grits his teeth, face turns red, and he asks, "What makes you think I am on the top floor?" To this reaction I fumble around, and he moves toward the buttons and pushes a floor that is lower than mine and returns to the back of the elevator to stare at the ceiling. When we come to his floor he is still looking up at the ceiling and walks off the elevator in a huff. It was fortunate that the elevator stopped level with the floor, or he would have tripped. To this day I wonder what it was that I said!

Most of us learned in grade school or Sunday school learned the basic principle that a smile will change your attitude as well as that of others around us. Crissy Butts, one of the Associates at the Safety Institute has done extensive research in the area of happiness and its effect on workplace safety. This month, I've asked Crissy to discuss the relationship between worker happiness and safety.

Let's hear from Crissy...

It's true, Happy Workers Are Safer Workers. The quality of our life is based on the quality of our relationships. Unfortunately, the world seems to be experiencing a Happiness Meltdown. It's estimated that 87% of the world's population lives in countries with

marriage rates that have fallen since 1980, which explains why 50% of pregnancies are unwanted. Child abuse and neglect has increased 134% in the last two decades. In addition, 85% of youth in prison grew up in fatherless homes. Addictions and self-destructive behaviors of all kinds are on the rise and according to Forbes, suicide isn't just a U.S. problem, but a global health epidemic. This should be a concern for every company CEO.

This leaves many people asking, "What can be done to counterbalance this mudslide of negative circumstances?"



Like the man on the elevator, everyone is operating at different happiness levels, and it's easy for misunderstandings to occur. How to respond to a grumpy hot head you did nothing to provoke is a skill that can save friendships, marriages, business partnerships families, and workplace relationships. There are a few key mitigation strategies that can be used by companies to help employees engage, connect, and thrive.

These mitigation strategies are what I call The Sunshine Strategy. This strategy is a mental resiliency assessment tool so simple a five-year-old can understand it and people get to have their own 'aha moments' where their happiness is stuck. It works well when coupled with a Perpetual 21 Day Happiness Challenge. The more we

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<https://potterandassociates.wistia.com/medias/u5doentn2p>

communicate, the more we care. Some other tools such as my Table Topics Menus can be kept in the break room to help coworkers improve communication.

My best work is helping individuals and teams engage, connect and thrive using what I call Workplace Power Hour which requires little planning. Only one hour each week or month is needed to achieve raw organic laughter and a deeper respect and appreciation for one another.

Thanks, Crissy. It has been said that “You are the only one who can make you happy.” On the other hand, I think Crissy makes the point that if you attend one of her programs and have resources that help you find your way to being happy, the results can be positive.

Increasing workplace happiness is a multiple role process. It starts with the recognition that an organization’s overall goal is to create an environment where people want to work and feel safe. Leaders who understand the role they play can help foster this goal by learning to use tools such as those Crissy offers and spend some time with their workforce to find out what changes could increase the happiness level in their work group.

We must all keep in mind that work is work. Some people see work as dreary while others enjoy doing what they are doing and are fulfilled. **It is well researched that “you” are the only one who can assure your happiness.**

At the Safety Institute we are constantly researching ways to create a workplace where it is difficult to get hurt and I hope this month’s 1st Thursday Safety Topic has helped. See you next month.
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What’s the Hazard?