

Global Risk Communication: Human Element: The Hidden Secret to Success

Human Element Control programs are a fundamental part of any loss control or risk management plan. These include systems that manage and control hot work permits, smoking, housekeeping, self inspection, and more. Each of these systems are designed to control ignition sources, manage the presence of combustibles and assure systems function as intended.

What is sometimes overlooked is that the success of these programs relies on real human input. The process can therefore be compromised as people can make mistakes — we are all human after all. One of the most common mistakes is holding onto the idea that things have always operated this way and there isn't a problem.

Generally, people do not make mistakes on purpose. The root cause of these mistakes typically falls into one of three areas:

- Cognitive - the person has little to no knowledge of their actions and consequences.
- Skill - the person lacks the tools or proficiency to perform the action correctly.
- Commitment - the person does not value the purpose of doing the work correctly.

Implementation of a successful Human Element program therefore not only needs a good “process” but also leadership support for that process. This support includes employee selection, training, and providing adequate time to complete the program as intended.

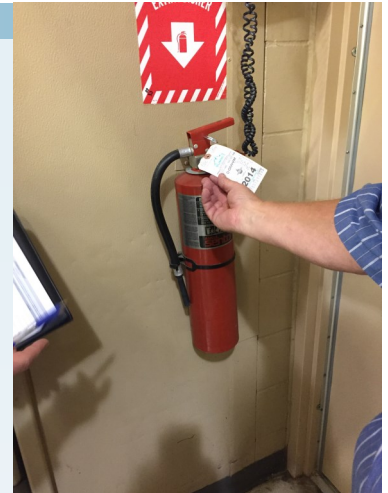
The benefits of adequate training are:

1. People know what is expected of them.
2. They have the skills to do their job correctly.
3. A combination of knowledge and skills can be utilized to meet program requirements.
4. An understanding of the consequences of failing to meet program objectives.

After proper training is conducted, continuous improvement is achieved by asking employees questions to gauge their use of the program. Can they identify key parts of the program such as, its value, the proper application, and do they feel they have the requisite tools and skills to meet the program goals?

A self-inspection/audit program can assist in measuring the success of the Human Element control programs. It also provides effective feedback for training. For example, if the problem is with impairment handling, can the employee define an impairment, are they aware of potential hazards, or is it that they do not know how to report and track impairments? Similar questions can be used for most other human element programs. Is the problem knowledge, skill, or attitude based?

Global Risk Consultants (GRC) provides on-site audits/evaluations through property loss control inspections and assistance with training needs. Our expert consultants can work with the management team to review current processes and where appropriate, clearly define any areas for improvement with associated recommendations.



Summary Points:

- Human element programs assess and manage risks to prevent losses.
- These mistakes are typically due to knowledge, skill, or attitude based problems.
- Management must define and set standards for human element programs. This includes training and explaining expectations to employees.
- There are many benefits of adequate training including people knowing what is expected of them and utilize their knowledge and skills to meet program requirements.

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