

5

Things You Need to Build a Self Managing Injury Prevention Program

"Intellectuals solve problems, geniuses prevent them"

~Albert Einstein

We all want our employees to be safe, and improving our own quality of life with less reports, complaints and turnover is also extremely appealing. The challenge for many companies is getting the employees to own their health and safety.

The Self Managing Injury Prevention Program is a program that works whether you are present or not. It continues to evolve into greater safety awareness and actions through the combined interest and efforts of management and labor. So what does it take to get your employees to buy in and manage safety consistently? Let's take a look at 5 key factors that indicate your company's readiness to develop The Self Managing Injury Prevention Program and give you insight as to what it takes to get there.

Take this quick quiz and rate yourself:

1

Your Safety Program

Does your company provide for services only when injuries become Reportable or Recordable? Perhaps they are addressed when an employee identifies pain or discomfort without a formal submission? Or are you truly PREVENTING injuries from occurring in the first place?

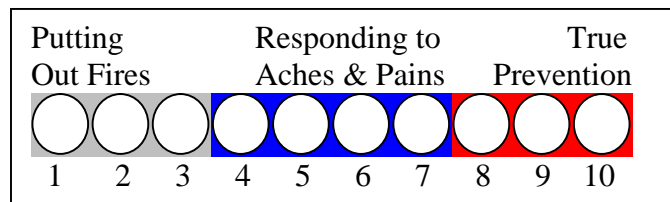
True prevention, especially when it comes to soft tissue injuries and human behavior, means your employees are following rules, taking care of their physical health, consistently lifting and moving correctly, and helping each other do the same. That is a leap that many companies struggle to make, however, it is possible.

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True Prevention is NOT having a nurse or doctor in place to take care of people after they are hurt. True Prevention is NOT Employment Screening. True prevention is NOT just having a stretching program in place. True prevention is NOT teaching an annual lifting class and expecting your employees to do it correctly with all of the varied tasks that they perform. True prevention means correcting the root cause contributors to injury before an injury takes place. In the soft tissue realm that means improving positioning, movement mechanics, muscle flexibility, strength, and endurance. It also means improving what your people eat and drink, how they sleep, and even how they think about themselves, their jobs, and each other.

On the scale from chasing down injuries and putting out fires to true prevention of correcting the root cause contributors leading to injuries, with testing and help with aches and pains somewhere in the middle, where does your company rate?



2 Your Management Team

Even the best managers, if only looking through the keyhole of statistics, are going to miss the big picture when it comes to making the changes that drive the numbers they see. Managers must know and understand their work force, yet many managers rarely get down into the trenches and talk to, or more importantly, listen to their employees. There are, or course, many legitimate reasons for this, with lack of time being high on the list. When it comes down to it, many managers would better interact with employees if there were a way to overcome a couple of hurdles:

Overcome the fear factor

Provide for a legitimate reason to interact

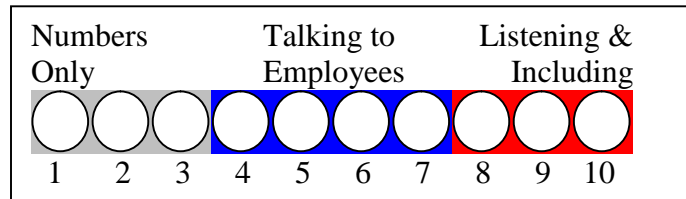
Develop a system for handling complaints, frustrations, safety issues and ideas

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Overcome the time and expectations hurdle

Are the managers in your company letting numbers and stats alone rule the decisions they make or are they talking to their employees, listening to their concerns and ideas, and weighing those with the statistics to come up with a well-rounded solution? Rate your managers at the current level of global thinking and action.



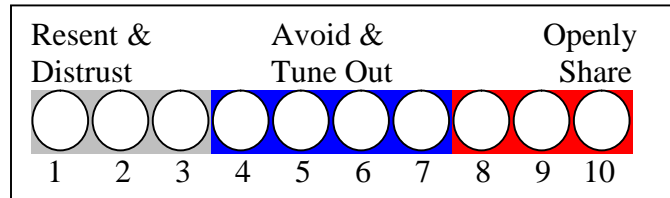
3
Your
Employees

When it comes to safety, your employees want the same things you do and this means you already have something to stand together for. These “things” are what we call TIPS Universal Truths and we build them into our approach to behavior change and injury prevention. TIPS Universal Truth 1: No One Wants to Hurt! That includes you, the entire management team and all of your employees. This one is a no brainer and it can be a powerful force for change, but there is another truth we have to deal with first...TIPS Universal Truth 2: No One Wants to Fail! Again this applies to your whole company and every person in it. So how does this work for The Self Managing Injury Prevention Program? Consider this; most people will avoid putting effort into something that they do not believe will work or that they do not believe they are likely to succeed at. The first obstacle is understanding the value of the change, not just in general, but for them. The second obstacle is that they need to believe that they can successfully make the change. When management and employees are working for a jointly agreed upon goal, with a plan that they believe in, they all can become part of the solution.

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How does your company's work force feel about supervisors, managers and upper managers?

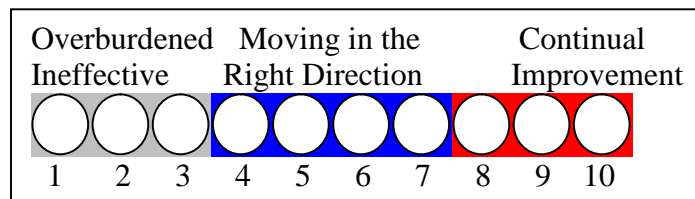


4 The Safety Manager

As a Safety Manager, do you feel as though you are fighting a mighty battle with a hatchet rather than a hefty sword? Perhaps you already have a great safety record and are looking for ways to up your company's game and assure the safety and well-being of your employees. If you are closer to the former group, take heart, a solid plan followed one step at a time will get you out of the danger zone. It is continually surprising to me how one or two

smart changes, followed with what I call Intelligent Tenacity, can change your experience in transformational ways and make each subsequent step easier.

If you are the Safety Manger, rate yourself on your current actions and approach to safety for your company. Be as honest with yourself as possible, then look for ways to improve so you can give yourself a better score later.



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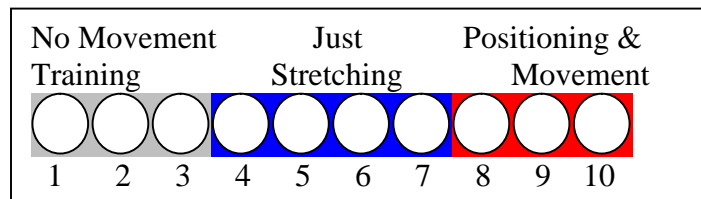
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The Guts: Your Soft Tissue Injury Prevention Program

Many, not all, companies have a stretching program in place. Most know that implementing a stretching program is a good idea and is something that they should do. How do you know you are doing the right stretches? With more than 600 muscles in the body, there is a lot that needs stretching. Our bodies also need stabilization, strength, endurance and balance, to be healthy and safe. So how do we go about addressing these physical needs so that we have a more complete solution without making exercise a full time job?

One of the ways TIPS makes a global change to the overall musculoskeletal system, is by implementing our 3-Point Positioning System™. This system acts as a switch to turn the muscles on and then with a couple of well chosen movements, we progressively build this into habits and patterns that lead to movement success. Done consistently, this process can correct compensatory movement issues that have been increasing your risk and negatively impacting the health of your employees.

On the scale of correcting movement problems and developing the physical tools your employees need to move efficiently, comfortably and safely, where does your company rate?



It takes time to make changes but keep in mind that every change makes the next one easier. If you would like to skip the learning curve and go right to results, contact us about our SPARCS (Strategic Participation and Results Core Solutions™) program which provides all of the training, programs, tools and resources to launch

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an effective, progressive and sustainable injury prevention program. We would love to hear from you and welcome any comments or questions you have regarding our new website or this article.

How do You Rate?

The higher your score on each of the 5 categories, the easier it will be to build a Self Managing Injury Prevention Program. If you are at an 8 or above on all 5 questions, you are primed to make great progress with the right plan. Either way, it should become clearer where you need to strengthen your team or your company to achieve success.

Whats Next? Your scores to the questions in this article will help you identify areas to consider in strengthening your safety program. We invite you to contact us to get the complete version of this article or to discuss your needs and what the next step may be for you. Please visit our website at www.TIPSpvention.com to find out more about our programs. To contact us directly, email info@TIPSpvention.com or call 763-428-9280.



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