Injury/Incident Review Rationale

All too often the actual causes of losses that occur within an organization go unrecognized. Management needs to understand why an accident has occurred to effectively work on preventing a similar recurrence. Traditional accident investigations may uncover the circumstances leading to an employee injury, but oftentimes this does not identify the true causes. Many times this information is not shared among members of the organization, so the organization does not gain knowledge as a whole on accident prevention. The Injury/Incident Review Process closes this gap and develops information which is utilized throughout the whole organization.

Objectives of the Program

- The process is an information gathering tool, it is not meant to be punitive nor fault finding. The process should be kept positive at all times. (If an employee was injured due to a violation of a safety rule, the reprimand should be given the day of the injury or after the investigation by the supervisor, not during the meeting.)
- Reduce the frequency and severity of accidents through the development and implementation of corrective actions. Corrective actions should prevent recurrence of the same injuries in the workplace.
- Increase overall safety awareness by management and employees through discussions regarding operations, loss exposures and development of safety controls.
- Strengthen communication between all levels of management and employees. This process elicits the involvement of line level employees, line management, and mid to upper level management. The process will provide a forum to foster open communication between all levels.
- Provide for a safe and healthy working environment. Eliminate loss exposures thus reducing opportunities for claims to occur in the work environment.
- Minimize or eliminate malingering claims and/or prefabricated injuries.
- Determine root causes of accidents.
- Instill a teamwork approach to encourage employees to return to work. This can be done by identifying jobs that may lend themselves to difficult restrictions.

Program Structure

The Injury/Incident Review Process can be established with an existing safety committee or can be an off-shoot with a specially established Injury/Incident Review Committee. Either way, the size of the committee is important and should not be excessive in size. Ideal committee membership should be around 5 members. The committee should meet regularly, be comprised of upper and middle management, and meet to discuss accidents and near misses which have occurred. The injured employees with their supervisors should be scheduled to meet the committee and describe the injury and any corrective actions taken to date. Each review should be scheduled and take no longer than 20 minutes. A maximum of three to five injuries/incidents should be reviewed each meeting. Each employee and the supervisor should be scheduled for the review independently of other employees and supervisors. The employee and supervisor should be thanked for their time and cooperation. Minutes and conclusions of the meeting are documented and distributed to the appropriate people within the organization.

Committee Selection

As with any committee, the success is predicated on the members involved and their ability to communicate and follow their agenda. The committee should be comprised of top management, middle management, safety director and any other appropriate personnel. Once again, the size of the committee should be restricted to around 5 members. It is critical that top management be involved. Their involvement shows commitment to keeping employees safe.
President of Company/CEO – involvement demonstrates commitment and credibility to the process and injury prevention within the organization.

Human Resources Director – familiarity with day to day company operations, company rules and policies. Controls training documentation.

Plant Manager – familiarity to plant processes and operations including job tasks employees are required to do and safety aspects of the job.

Safety Director – development of safety programs, procedures within the organization.

Injured Employee’s Supervisor – aware of injured employee’s responsibilities, training requirements, physical hazards of the job, past direction given to employee. First line of accident investigation, able to provide insight as to what employee was doing at the time of the accident or near miss.

Injured Employee – can describe the accident in detail, actions leading up to the accident, what occurred after, etc. Can relay past training, experience and safety concerns.

Union Representative – where required by contract, a union representative is always welcome, reviews are positive in nature and accident prevention benefits all.

Loss Control Consultant (if requested) from insurance company – can coordinate the review, keep the meeting positive, direct the discussions, and assist in developing corrective actions for loss prevention.

After the committee has been selected, they should schedule a meeting (prior to the first injury review) to review program objectives, establish meeting dates, determine accident review criteria, determine employee notification process, and program documentation process.

Determining Which Injuries or Incidents to Review

When and how often an Injury/Incident Review is conducted is somewhat predicated on the frequency and severity of accidents a company incurs. This is why a game plan has to be established as to when and how often the committee will meet and what accidents should be included in the review process. Company’s that incur a high frequency will be limited as to the number they are able to review and how often they can review them. The idea is the quality of review verses the quantity of the review.

The frequency of meetings should be established prior to implementing this review process. Over time, the frequency of reviews should be reviewed. The goal of the review is ultimately to reduce frequency and severity of injuries/incidents. If the frequency of injuries/incidents is reduced, the committee will not need to meet as often.

- Focus on the major source of injuries for your company’s operation. Your Loss Control Representative can provide you with statistical data that identifies this information
- Focus on the trends in your facility  (Examples)
  - 4 back injuries with CNA’s doing resident transfers
  - 3 lacerations in one week after the new assembly line was installed
  - 5 slip/falls in the aisleway leading to plant #2
- Focus on the frequency of injuries. Remember, it has been said that frequency can breeds severity and if we can reduce the number of injuries reported, we have gone a long way in reducing the chance of a serious injury
- Review injuries/incidents where one employee has multiple incidents
- Review malingering claims or questionable claims
- Review reported near misses

*** Claims being litigated for their compensability should not be reviewed.
The Process
Employees whose accidents/incidents will be reviewed should be notified of the meeting date a minimum of 5 days before in writing. Those who may be off on a lost time injury case can be expected to participate as well. Employees who don’t make their scheduled appearance should be rescheduled for the following meeting. A specific time agenda for each review should be established with each review established in succession, no review exceeding 20 minutes.

Prior to the review, the meeting agenda and accident reports should be distributed to all committee members. This will allow members to appropriately prepare by reviewing the accidents at hand. The committee chair will initiate the review, thanking the employee and supervisor for their attendance and discuss the objectives and benefits of this review. The importance of communication should be stressed between the employee and management, emphasizing a common goal of accident prevention and providing a safe workplace. The employee should be asked to describe in detail the accident that occurred. The supervisor can discuss his knowledge of the accident. Corrective actions can be reviewed and other safety concerns explored. The meeting should remain positive at all times. No reprimands should be given for safety violation or rule infractions (these are to be given out during the initial accident investigation by the supervisor). Providing the employee with the opportunity to discuss what may prevent future injuries/incidents is an important step in the review process. The individual review should not exceed 20 minutes. Thank the employee and the supervisor for their participation in the organization’s efforts to eliminate accidents.

All meetings should be documented with either minutes or a memo generated detailing results of the reviews. Any corrective action should be followed up as to its disposition and target date for implementation. It is imperative that items to be corrected are done so in a timely fashion. This will establish credibility to the committee activities. Employees reviewed should receive a copy of the memo, or the results of the meeting posted for employee review (names of any employee involved in the Injury/Incident Review should not be entered onto this document).
Sample Employee Notification Letter

Injury/Incident Review Process – Employee Notification

Employee Name: ________________________________

Department Supervisor: ________________________________

Date of Review: ____________________ Time of Review: ____________________

Location: ________________________________

Your attendance at our monthly Injury/Incident Review Committee Meeting is being requested at the above date and time. The committee will be reviewing your accident/near miss which occurred on _____________________. As an organization we are committed to accident prevention and feel that involving all employees will assist us in reaching this goal. The intent of this program is to develop information surrounding your accident to ensure that such an accident will not recur in the future. Management has realized that employees and their supervisors are most involved in the day-to-day operations of this company, and therefore are in the best position to help develop possible solutions to existing conditions which may cause on-the-job accidents. Your involvement in this meeting is not meant to be punitive, and you will not be disciplined for any reason. We ask for your support and input in this effort. If you cannot make the above scheduled meeting, we will reschedule at a time mutually convenient.

Injured Employee Questionnaire
To utilize the review processes time effectively, developing information about each accident before the meeting is important. Information can be developed by the supervisor using the standard company accident investigation report. Other companies may choose to have the injured employee develop information specific to their injury. Through either form, this information will allow committee members to adequately prepare before the meeting date.

Our safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are made solely to assist your organization in reducing hazards and the potential of hazards and accidents. These recommendations were developed from conditions observed and information provided at the time of our visit. They do not attempt to identify every possible loss potential, hazard or risk, nor do they guarantee that workplace accidents will be prevented. These safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are not a substitute for ongoing, well-researched internal safety and risk management programs. This report does not warrant that the property inspected and its operations are compliant with any law, rule or regulation.

United Heartland is the marketing name for United Wisconsin Insurance Company, a member of AF Group. All policies are underwritten by a licensed insurer subsidiary of AF Group.
Sample Injured Employee Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Hire</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Date of Hire</th>
<th>Restricted Duty</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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1. Please describe how the accident occurred?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

2. How could this accident be prevented in the future?    
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

3. What is your current health status at this point in time?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

4. Do any of your job tasks or functions cause you pain or discomfort? If yes, what tasks?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

5. What type of training did you receive in order to do your job?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

6. If you could do one thing to improve safety in your department, what would it be?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

7. How would you go about correcting an unsafe working condition?  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________  

Our safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are made solely to assist your organization in reducing hazards and the potential of hazards and accidents. These recommendations were developed from conditions observed and information provided at the time of our visit. They do not attempt to identify every possible loss potential, hazard or risk, nor do they guarantee that workplace accidents will be prevented. These safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are not a substitute for ongoing, well-researched internal safety and risk management programs. This report does not warrant that the property inspected and its operations are compliant with any law, rule or regulation.
8. If you have voiced a safety concern in the past, has anyone addressed that concern?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. Are safety rules and procedures consistently enforced?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

10. Do you have any additional comments or concerns you would like to express which would have an impact in improving overall safety and health within the company?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

For Loss Review Committee Only

Follow-up to employee suggestions.

Suggestion to be implemented: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Can suggestion be implemented? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, why? ______________________

________________________________________________________________________

If yes, who will implement the suggestion? _________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Date suggestion is to be implemented? ______________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Date suggestion was implemented? _________________________________________
Injury/Incident Review Process Benefits

- Committee speaks directly to the injured employee
- Discuss details otherwise not noted through normal accident investigation procedures.
- Receive employee input for future prevention
- Educate the group as to the cause of the injury
- Provide for diverse representation, i.e. management, supervision, line employees
- Identify day to day exposures otherwise overlooked
  - maintenance/repairs
  - change in procedures/equipment
  - provision for additional personal protective equipment, tools, etc.
- Can bring forth improvements to production, and quality as well as safety
- Improve employee’s morale
- Supervisor’s experience enables them to ask specific questions
- Suggests formalized program
- Proactive vs. Reactive approach towards injury prevention
- Reinforce to all employees that the company believes all accidents can be prevented
- Help maintain interest in safety