

Attitude Dimensions of Safety: 24 Reasons Why Employers Sometimes Ignore Safety Procedures (p. 1)

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1. Guilt – “Those prior accidents can’t be my fault.”
2. Fear and anxiety – “I can’t imagine a disaster here.”
3. Depersonalization – “Accidents just happen. Nobody is responsible and nobody can prevent them.”
4. Routinization – “Accidents are statistical and predictable. They’re already in the budget.”
5. Hostility I – “They’re paid to take some risks.”
6. Hostility II – “If they’d pay attention they wouldn’t get hurt.”
7. Hostility III – “Too dumb; too dishonest; too much turnover.”
8. Ego I – “If I can’t prevent accidents, no one can. Who are you calling incompetent?”
9. Ego II – “I do deals ... I don’t wrap duct tape around handles.”
10. Corporate stature – “Our company is no worse than any other.”
11. Autonomy – “I run my own shop.”
12. Achievement – “We have a good record already.”
13. Stability I – “Who’s complaining about our current accident rate?”
14. Stability II – “It’s off my plate. Why take it on?”
15. Stability III – “Where will it lead? Litigation? Union activism? Anxiety?”
16. Stability IV – “That’s not the chain of command.”
17. Productivity – “We’ve got deadlines, budgets, real problems.”

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18. Conflict avoidance – Somebody's not gonna like this."
 19. Corporate culture I – “That won’t work here. *Our* accidents are inevitable.”
 20. Corporate culture II – “We value our risk-taking culture.”
 21. Fear of failure I – “What if we try and it doesn’t work?”
 22. Fear of failure II – “The staff will never go for it.”
 23. Fear of failure III – “The boss will never go for it.”
 24. Cluttered desk – “I have too much to do already.”
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For more about my take on this issue, see:

- Motivated Inattention and Safety Management (Oct 2001) – www.psandman.com/articles/psandman3.pdf
- Coping with employer irrationality about safety (May 2002) – www.psandman.com/gst2002.htm#davis
- Peter Sandman on Safety, Part I (Jul 2003) – www.psandman.com/articles/ishnl.htm
- The Boss’s Outrage (Part I): Talking with Top Management about Safety (Jan 2007) – www.psandman.com/col/bosssafe.htm

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