



NOACCIDENT – RADICAL REDUCTION IN ACCIDENTS IN A METALLIC PACKAGING COMPANY

1. Organisations involved

Crown Cork Iberica S.L.U.

2. Description of the case

2.1. Introduction

Historically, the metallography sector is one of the sectors most affected by occupational injuries, on account of the production processes, the raw material and, finally, the lack of risk prevention policies in these companies. CROWN CORK IBERICA decided to implement the STOP programme of occupational safety, not only to reduce the number of occupational injuries in its factory but also to eliminate their causes.

Involvement of a company's managers and participation of the employees are two essential requirements for the success of occupational health and safety initiatives. Accordingly, the involvement of supervisory staff (who organise and supervise production) is of fundamental importance when initiating preventive action. Social dialogue between the company and the occupational safety and health (OSH) representative and with the trade unions is also one of the keys to the success of such action.

CROWN CORK IBERICA is a small company with 43 employees in Montmelo (Barcelona) that specialises in the manufacture and sale of metal packaging. The company is part of a multinational group with 256 enterprises worldwide (including 12 in Spain), with headquarters in Philadelphia, United States.

2.2. Aims

The objective in adopting this programme was to considerably reduce the number of occupational accidents and incidents at the company by looking for the causes and eliminating them through the involvement of all the personnel, from senior management to the workers themselves.

2.3. What was done, and how?

The worker representatives of CROWN CORK IBERICA initiated preventive action that had been developed and promoted by the company's management. This was partly in response to objectives set by the Head Office concerning the reduction of injuries and the costs they entail.

In 1999 the company proposed setting up the STOP programme for occupational safety. This programme was created by the American multinational DUPONT and one of its basic principles is to compare the relationship between productivity and occupational safety.

Accordingly, the company applied a method of occupational health and safety management which involves all the personnel (management, health and safety coordinators, OSH representatives, and the workers in general) with a view to putting an end to occupational injuries.

STOP is based on the observation of people during their work, then taking steps to reinforce safe work practices and correct unfavourable working conditions and unsafe work practices. The programme requires the involvement of the entire company, and, more specifically, of the workers, who must accept the idea of being observed and change their habits at their workstation.

CROWN CORK IBERICA introduced several measures as part of this programme. For example, a safety group was set up, consisting of the safety coordinator and the OSH representative. They hold quarterly meetings with the company manager, covering subjects

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such as the budget and capital expenditure for the current financial year, as well as action plans, training and information plans for the workers, risk assessment on the workstations, human factor engineering, noise measurement, lighting, heat, vibration, accidents and their causes, and a plan for monitoring all these aspects. The reduction in the number of injuries is strongly related to the involvement of the company's executives — management, supervisors and maintenance managers — in other words all those who have the power to implement the preventive actions of the STOP programme.

The STOP initiative promoted a training programme for all the firm's employees, including the manager, the OSH representative and all the workers. The accidents and incidents that still occur are now investigated thoroughly and without delay, in order to help prevent similar accidents or incidents from recurring.

Figure 1. Tidy and safe storage is being emphasised as part of the new system



Once a month the group of STOP supervisors meet (department managers, section heads, etc.) with the health and safety coordinator and the OSH representative. The system implies constant evaluation of situations day by day — with the involvement and help of the workers and never through force or by asserting authority — to analyse the causes of accidents and incidents. The technicians in the occupational health and safety department (both internal and external) also help in this task. A series of preventive measures have also been taken, such as signage in corridors, the clear demarcation of work and rest areas, the adaptation of machinery and a greater focus on order and cleanliness (see Figure 1). The results have been spectacular. For example, the company succeeded in reducing chemical pollutants to 10 times below the limit values.

2.4. What was achieved?

The positive results very soon became evident, and the company won special recognition from its multinational parent company because it succeeded in reducing the number of occupational injuries. Further improvements are nevertheless planned, such as the retrofitting of machinery, the introduction of a method to assess psychosocial risks and the assessment of ergonomic risks.

Problems faced

Until this programme started, neither the supervisors nor the workers had much knowledge of risk prevention. The corporate culture therefore had to be changed very quickly, and everyone had to adopt new habits.

2.5. Success factors

These results were achieved because of the involvement of all relevant parties and through dialogue between the employee representatives and the company, which facilitated good cooperation and participation.



2.6. Further information

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2.7. Transferability

This method of eliminating risks is easily transferable to other firms, in any sector of activity. However, it requires a strong commitment from both management and workers.

3. References, resources:

- <http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/TEWE09001ENC>