#### 1999 Construction Safety Conference

### Safety Strategies and Annual Awards

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### THE "DEADLY THIRTEEN"

### MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS OF CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

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### **Outline**

- **■**Background
- **■**Myths and Realities
- **Recommendations**

### ...It is always best to start at the beginning.

Glinda, The Good Witch of the North in "The Wizard of Oz"

### What is a Myth?

- A commonly held belief
- Thought to represent reality
- A kernel of truth lies at its core
- A shortcut to thinking
- A guide to action

### **Key Focus**

Problem Definition:
You must start with diagnosis

### Why Worry About Myths?

- At best, you get a gap between expectations and results
- Usually, you get all kinds of undesirable problems
- Worst case, you wind up with a disaster

#### Results of Misguided Efforts

- An Exercise in accelerated error
  - not easily halted or corrected
- Insidious damage from poorly conceived solutions
  - the 'fix' is worse than the problem
- Cascading failure
  - each problem drains resources away from new initiatives, starving them and leading to failure with them as well

GIGO: Garbage In, Garbage Out

Intelligent planning and problem solving starts with, and depends upon, a valid perception of reality

Alia Tentanda Via Est

### SAFETY IS ACHIEVABLE, ZERO ACCIDENTS IS NOT

### MYTH #1

SAFETY IS ACHIEVABLE, ZERO ACCIDENTS IS NOT

Reality: Zero Accidents is an achievable goal, Safety is not

### SAFETY IS A "THING" OR AN ACTIVITY

### MYTH #2

SAFETY IS A "THING" OR AN ACTIVITY

Reality: Safety is a result. It is what you get if things are done right

### SAFETY IS BEST DEALT WITH SEPARATELY

### MYTH # 3

SAFETY IS BEST DEALT WITH SEPARATELY

Reality: Separation severs the connection with the system

### OSHA COMPLIANCE GENERATES SAFETY

### MYTH #4

OSHA COMPLIANCE
GENERATES SAFETY

Reality: OSHA compliance gives you compliance with OSHA

## THOSE WHO DO NOT INCLUDE SAFETY HAVE THE LOW BIDS

### MYTH #5

THOSE WHO DO NOT
INCLUDE SAFETY HAVE
THE LOW BIDS

Reality: Safer contractors have lower costs of production and the lowest evaluated bids

## JUST SETTING UP A SAFETY PROGRAM SOLVES THE PROBLEM

### MYTH # 6

JUST SETTING UP A
SAFETY PROGRAM
SOLVES THE PROBLEM

Reality: A program is not a system, it is only part of one

## AUDITING AND INSPECTIONS DELIVERS SAFETY

### MYTH # 7

AUDITING AND INSPECTIONS DELIVERS SAFETY

Reality: Inspection only tells you the defect rate of your process

### OSHA STATISTICS MEASURE SAFETY PERFORMANCE

### **MYTH** # 8

OSHA STATISTICS
MEASURE SAFETY
PERFORMANCE

Reality: Statistics measure nonsafety, the rates of failure

## INCENTIVE PROGRAMS PRODUCE LASTING RESULTS

### MYTH # 9

### INCENTIVE PROGRAMS PRODUCE LASTING RESULTS

Reality: Incentives are toxic, long term, as they become entitlements

### DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS ARE THE KEY TO ENFORCEMENT

### MYTH # 10

DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS
ARE THE KEY TO
ENFORCEMENT

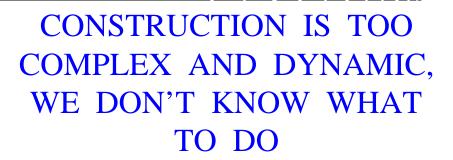
Reality: Individual ethics are the key, discipline is a support

## THE SOLUTION LIES IN FINDING SOME NEW TECHNOLOGICAL "FIX"

### MYTH # 11

THE SOLUTION LIES IN FINDING SOME NEW TECHNOLOGICAL "FIX"

Reality: Accident prevention is a major social system issue



### MYTH # 12

CONSTRUCTION IS TOO
COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC,
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT
TO DO

Reality: Zero accidents, and we know how to do it

# THE SAFETY PROFESSION IS REALLY INTERESTED IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM

### MYTH # 13

THE SAFETY PROFESSION
IS REALLY INTERESTED
IN SOLVING THE
PROBLEM

Reality: The safety profession is deeply problem co-dependent; no problem, no profession.

### Respice Finem; Venienti Occurri to Morbo

If you don't run the job right, it doesn't matter how much noise you make about safety-it won't be the result

#### **PRE-EMPTION**

## Mishap prevention through Intelligent Intervention

### **Primary Emphasis**

- Focus on organization and structure
- Process
- Majority of activities are pre-construction
  - a construction project is like a rocket: the trajectory is set at launch

**Objective:** A coherent strategy

#### Risk Management System

- Designed to reduce or prevent unacceptable risks
  - mission of resilience: giving the business the capacity to resist and survive shocks and other disturbing events
- Includes multiple processes and programs
  - programs have finite boundaries
  - processes are open-ended, a sequence of activities that continually cycles
- Must be integrated to function together

**REALITIES** 

#### **SAFETY** IS **NOT**:

A SEPARATE PROJECT ISSUE,

IT IS AN INSEPARABLE PART OF THE PROCESS OF RUNNING A GOOD PROJECT,

IT IS AN END, THE RESULT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE JOBSITE

#### It's Your Choice

### **Pay Attention**

or

### **Pay The Price**

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