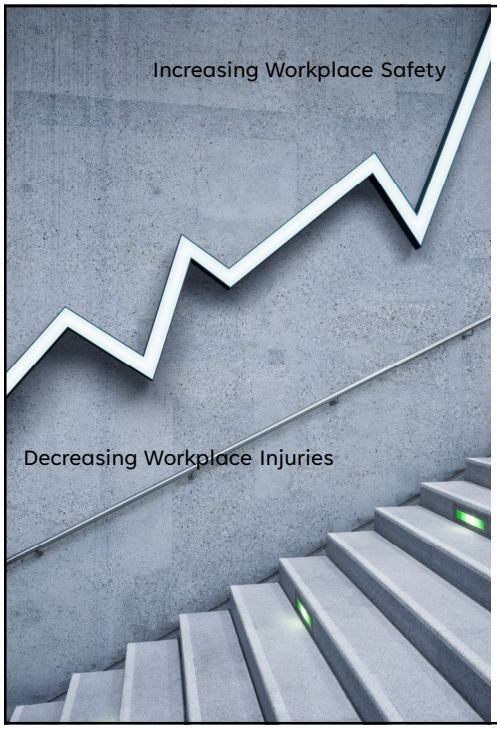

EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING: THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY FROM THE START

Presenter: Phaedra Katopodis, CCSHCO, COSS, COEA, PHR, SHRM-SCP

Aspen Risk Management Group

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INTRODUCTION

Employee Onboarding: The Importance of Safety from the Start explores the critical role of workplace safety in the onboarding process. This presentation will address the importance of integrating safety protocols and training into the orientation of new employees, ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a safe and secure workplace.

The presentation will highlight the importance of establishing a culture of safety from the beginning of the onboarding process, and the ways in which this can improve employee retention, job satisfaction, and overall workplace morale. We will use real-world examples so that attendees can gain a clear understanding of the benefits of prioritizing safety in the onboarding process, as well as the potential risks and consequences of failing to do so. By the end of the presentation, attendees will have a better understanding of the importance of safety in the workplace, and how it can be effectively integrated into the onboarding process to create a safer, healthier, and more productive work environment.

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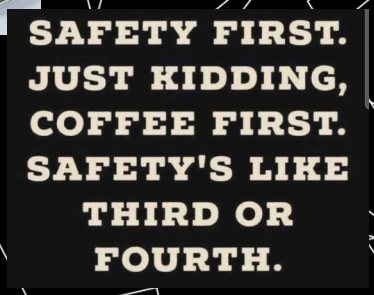
THE WHO, WHAT, WHY AND HOW

The Who: Each of you, your employees and me!

The What: Employee onboarding and safety from the start

The Why: Benefits of effective onboarding which includes linking safety from day one

The How: Partnering with hiring managers, safety department, human resources and building a strong foundation.



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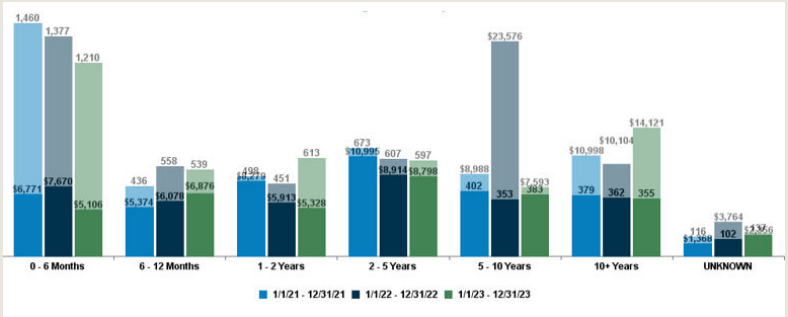
LOSS SNAPSHOT, WHAT IS THE TREND? HOW DOES IMPROVED EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING HELP CONTROL THESE?



Claims (Jan 2021-Dec 2023):

By Service Year (# of claims). 0-6 months has a total of 4,047 claims (averaging 1,349 per year)

By Average Incurred Top Service Year ($ incurred). 5-10 years is the highest with $13,044 average per claim.

Service Length	1/1/21 - 12/31/21	% of Total	1/1/22 - 12/31/22	% of Total	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	% of Total	Total of 3 Years
0 - 6 Months	1,460	36.8%	1,377	36.1%	1,210	31.6%	4,047
6 - 12 Months	436	11.0%	558	14.6%	539	14.1%	1,533
1 - 2 Years	498	12.6%	451	11.8%	613	16.0%	1,562
2 - 5 Years	673	17.0%	607	15.9%	597	15.6%	1,877
5 - 10 Years	402	10.1%	353	9.3%	383	10.0%	1,138
10+ Years	379	9.6%	362	9.5%	355	9.3%	1,096
UNKNOWN	116	2.9%	102	2.7%	137	3.6%	355
Total	3,964	100.0%	3,810	100.0%	3,834	100.0%	11,608

Service Length	1/1/21 - 12/31/21	% of Total	1/1/22 - 12/31/22	% of Total	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	% of Total	Total of 3 Years	Average
0 - 6 Months	$9,885,068	31.2%	$10,562,162	30.7%	$6,178,107	23.2%	$26,625,337	$6,579
6 - 12 Months	$2,343,247	7.4%	$3,391,589	9.9%	$3,706,045	13.9%	$9,440,881	$6,158
1 - 2 Years	$4,123,097	13.0%	$2,666,928	7.8%	$3,265,920	12.3%	$10,055,945	$6,438
2 - 5 Years	$7,399,756	23.3%	$5,410,568	15.7%	$5,252,554	19.7%	$18,062,877	$9,623
5 - 10 Years	$3,613,230	11.4%	$8,322,359	24.2%	$2,908,164	10.9%	$14,843,753	$13,044
10+ Years	$4,168,380	13.2%	$3,657,697	10.6%	$5,012,845	18.8%	$12,838,922	$11,714
UNKNOWN	$158,693	0.5%	$383,911	1.1%	$322,840	1.2%	$865,444	$2,438
Total	$31,691,471	100.0%	$34,395,214	100.0%	$26,646,475	100.0%	$92,733,159	$7,989

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LOSS CONVERSATION
WHO IS GETTING INJURED?

Who's getting injured?

35% of workplace injuries occurred during a worker's first year on the job, resulting in more than **6 million** missed workdays.

First-year injuries made up **32**% of all workers compensation claim costs.

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EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS
FACILITATING A SMOOTH TRANSITION
PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT

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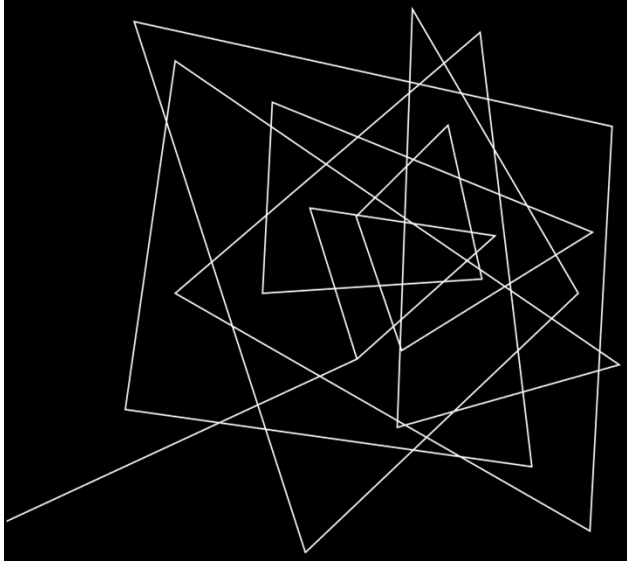

Polling Question

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE AN ONBOARDING PROCESS?

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BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE ONBOARDING

- Reduced Turnover
- Increased Productivity
- Improved Job Satisfaction
- Enhanced Safety Performance

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LINKING ONBOARDING TO SAFETY PERFORMANCE

Improved Safety Outcomes	Improved Accident & Incident Prevention	Improved Hazard Awareness	Increased Safety Mindset
Safety programs and processes are more engrained in the employee from early on and become "second nature".	With improved safety knowledge employees are better informed and can aid in accident prevention.	Advanced understanding of the workplace and the ability to recognize potential hazards (this can help reduce incidents).	It's a bit of that see something say something concept. When employees understand more about the how and why they are more likely to pay attention to it. Building an improved safety culture overall.

THE ROLE OF SAFETY IN ONBOARDING

Safety as a foundational element of onboarding

No matter the building, item or concept the foundation matters.

With a strong foundation a better long-term outcome is far more likely.

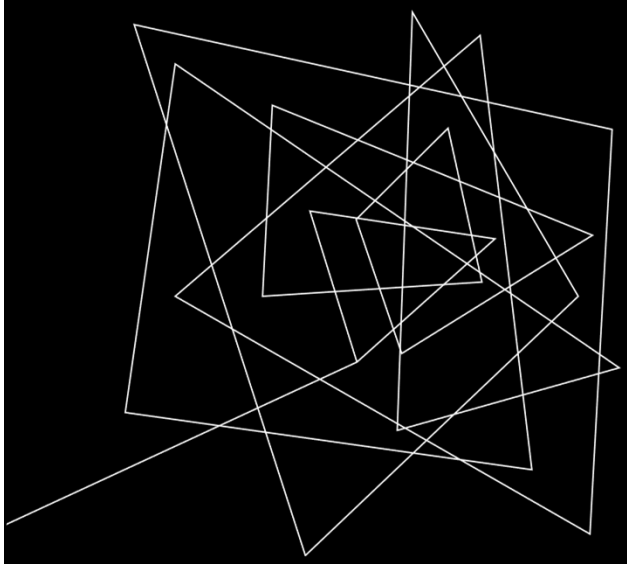
The better the foundation then the better the safety culture.

Legal and regulatory requirements

Compliance is the bare minimum; however, it is also an expectation.

Working within regulatory requirements is not an option it is an expectation.

Reduced fines as well as reduced exposure for injuries.



Polling Question

DO YOU FEEL LIKE SAFETY CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT PRODUCTIVITY, PROFITABILITY AND RETENTION?

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CREATING A SAFETY CULTURE FROM DAY ONE (ACTUALLY BEFORE DAY ONE)

INCLUDE SAFETY-BASED QUESTIONS IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.

LAY THE FOUNDATION DURING THE NEW HIRE AND ONBOARDING TRAINING DAYS/MEETINGS.

SET EXPECTATIONS, REAFFIRMING COMPLIANCE WITH COMPANY POLICY IS MORE THAN ABIDING BY THE "RULES" IT IS DOING THINGS SAFELY AND CORRECTLY SO THAT EVERYONE GOES HOME EACH DAY WITH ALL THEIR DIGITS INTACT.

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IDENTIFYING ESSENTIAL SAFETY TOPICS

Hazard Recognition

Provide hazard recognition and reporting process.

Follow-up with employees on reported hazards.

Emergency Procedures

Evacuation routes

Meeting places

Fire extinguishers

First Aid / CPR / AEDs

Numbers to call

PPE Requirements

PPE for each task/job/exposure.

Variety of shapes and sizes.

Reinforce PPE isn't optional, be open to the need for a different fit.

PPE training and inspections.

Safe Work Practices

Train employees on best practices.

JSA's/JHA's/SOP's

Ask questions for understanding.

Do Not rely upon past job history.

WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS?

Human Resources (HR)	Supervisors/Managers	Safety Professionals/Safety Managers	Employees
HR engages in the beginning hiring functions of employees and can add questions to the interview process. Conduct background checks and job history reviews.	Working with each stakeholder to improve the process and set the expectations for the positions. Aid in training development, hands on training and continued monitoring.	Develop safety programs and processes. Work directly with HR, supervisors and managers to make sure best practices are known as well as regulatory compliance (OSHA, etc.) in known.	Each employee needs to know and understand the expectations to be safe and further build on the safety culture.

ONBOARDING PROCESS OVERVIEW

- Pre-employment safety communication and expectations
- Safety training and orientation programs
- Completion of necessary paperwork and documentation

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TIME TO DIG IN DEEPER:
WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED AND EXPANDED ON

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KEY SAFETY TOPICS FOR ONBOARDING

Hazard Recognition and Reporting

How to identify hazards (what is a hazard)

How to report a hazard

Openly discuss near misses

Emergency Response Procedures

Protocols, what to do when an emergency happens. Muscle Memory!

Fire

Medical

Weather

Or Workplace Violence

KEY SAFETY TOPICS FOR ONBOARDING – (CONTINUED)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

Conduct PPE hazard assessments to ensure the proper PPE is available for employees

Train employees on PPE

Provide PPE (ensure fit)

Inspect PPE

Continue to remind employees about the importance of PPE

Safe Work Practices and Procedures

Provide:

Job specific training

Equipment specific training

Guidelines and best practices

Each employees' safety and safe work environment matters.

KEY SAFETY TOPICS FOR ONBOARDING – (CONTINUED)

Incident Reporting and Investigation

Train employees on the procedures for:

Reporting incidents/accidents

Near Misses, Near Hits, Close Calls

Hazards (including potential hazards)

Reinforce the importance of timely reporting, documentation and follow-up.

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ENGAGING NEW HIRES IN SAFETY

Effective Communication Strategies

Flexible communication styles and formats

Regular (consistent) safety meetings

Open communication (open door).

Three-way communication and open to feedback.

Providing Accessible Safety Resources

Safety programs and manuals (regularly reminded of the location and means of access)

Posters, signage, newsletters (variety of formats)

Current and updated.

Encouraging Participation and Feedback

Active participation

Feedback with and from new hires

Involve them in safety committee

Suggestion boxes

Recognition programs.

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EVALUATING ONBOARDING EFFECTIVENESS

Assessing knowledge retention and comprehension.

Tracking safety performance metrics.

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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF ONBOARDING PROCESSES

Ongoing evaluation and improvement by utilizing:

- Feedback loops
- Analysis of data
- Lessons learned

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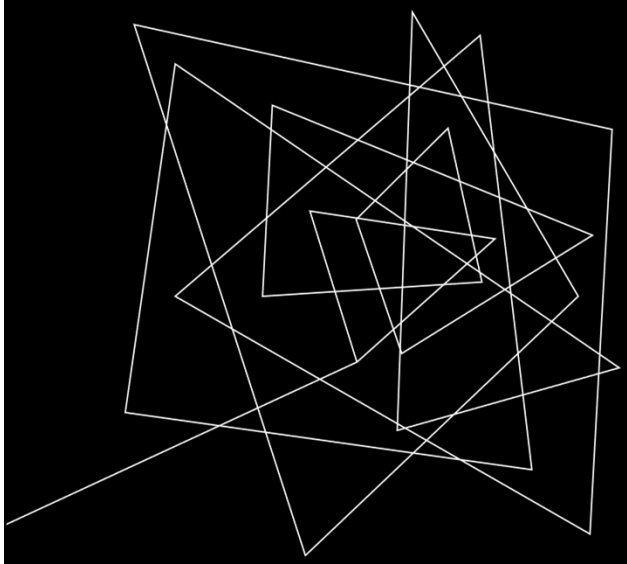

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES

Engaging New Hires through Safety Mentoring:

A construction company, assigned safety mentors to new hires during their onboarding period. These mentors provided guidance, answered safety-related questions, and emphasized the importance of safe work practices. The mentorship program improved safety knowledge retention, reduced accidents, and fostered a sense of support and camaraderie among employees.

Takeaway: Safety mentors can play a crucial role in engaging and educating new hires, resulting in a smoother onboarding process and enhanced safety awareness.

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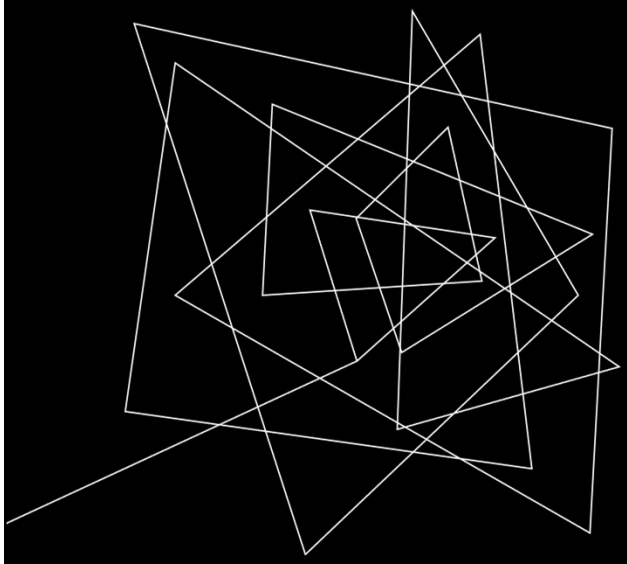

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES – (CONTINUED)

Leveraging Technology for Interactive Onboarding:

A technology firm, incorporated interactive and gamified elements into their safety onboarding process. New employees completed online modules, quizzes, and virtual reality simulations that simulated workplace hazards and emergency scenarios. This approach increased engagement, knowledge retention, and compliance with safety protocols.

Takeaway: Utilizing technology-based tools and simulations can make safety onboarding more interactive, engaging, and effective.

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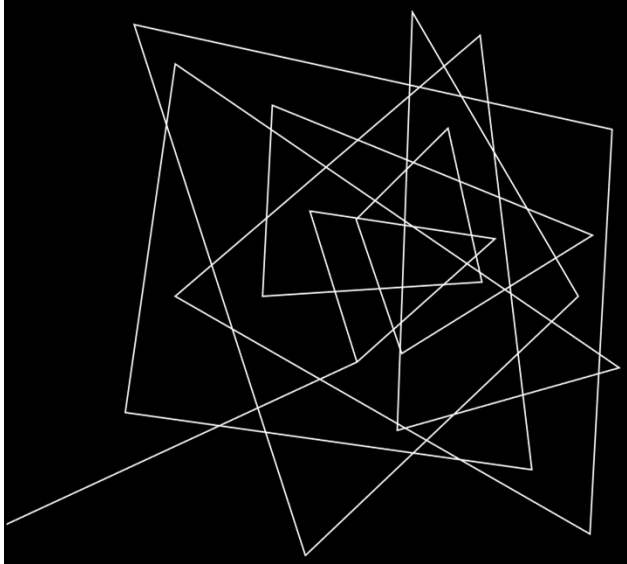

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES – (CONTINUED)

Integrating Safety Training with Job-specific Onboarding:

logistics company, integrated safety training seamlessly with job-specific onboarding. New hires received safety training tailored to their specific roles, such as forklift operations or material handling. By integrating safety measures directly into job-specific training, employees acquired the necessary safety knowledge while learning their job responsibilities.

Takeaway: Integrating safety training with job-specific onboarding ensures that employees receive relevant safety information right from the start, enhancing their understanding and adherence to safety protocols.

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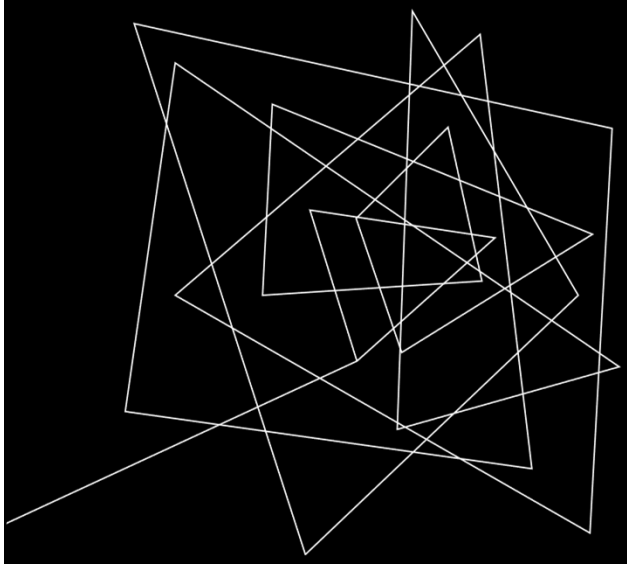

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES – (CONTINUED)

Continuous Improvement through Feedback and Evaluation:

A healthcare organization, implemented a feedback-driven onboarding system. New hires were encouraged to provide feedback on their safety onboarding experience, and their input was used to identify areas for improvement. Regular evaluations were conducted to assess the effectiveness of the onboarding program and make necessary adjustments.

Takeaway: Feedback and evaluation mechanisms enable organizations to continuously improve their safety onboarding processes and address any gaps or shortcomings.

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THE MAIN POINTS

SAFETY ONBOARDING FORM DAY ONE (PREFERABLY BEFORE): IS CRUCIAL FOR A SAFE AND SECURE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

LEADS TO IMPROVED SAFETY PERFORMANCE, ACCIDENT PREVENTION, AND HAZARD AWARENESS.

BENEFITS INCLUDE; INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY, REDUCED TURNOVER, IMPROVED JOB SATISFACTION, AND ENHANCED OVERALL WORKPLACE MORALE.

WITH A STRONG SAFETY CULTURE FROM THE BEGINNING ORGANIZATIONS CAN CREATE A SAFER, HEALTHIER, AND MORE PRODUCTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

WE DISCUSSED SOME REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES WHICH DEMONSTRATE THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES ORGANIZATIONS HAVE EXPERIENCED BY PRIORITIZING SAFETY IN THE ONBOARDING PROCESS.

CONVERSELY, NEGLECTING SAFETY DURING ONBOARDING CAN RESULT IN POTENTIAL RISKS, INCIDENTS, AND NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES.

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Q & A

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ADDITIONAL NOTES

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), effective safety and health training can result in a substantial decrease in injury rates among workers. https://www.osha.gov/businesscase

A study by Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety found that companies with strong safety onboarding programs experienced a reduction in work-related injuries within their first year of employment. https://business.libertymutual.com/insights/2022-workplace-safety-index/

Research conducted by the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) showed that organizations with comprehensive onboarding programs had a reduction in the number of workplace incidents and accidents. https://www.assp.org/docs/default-source/jsher/jsher-v9n1.pdf?sfvrsn=35c8fc47_6

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) reported that organizations with strong onboarding processes experienced 54% greater new hire productivity and 50% higher retention rates. https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/dont-underestimate-the-importance-of-effective-onboarding.aspx

A survey conducted by the Human Capital Institute (HCI) revealed that companies with well-structured onboarding programs witnessed an increase in employee engagement, leading to improved safety awareness and adherence to safety protocols. https://www.hci.org/system/files/2019-11/Onboarding-Retention-Whitepaper%20%282%29.pdf

The National Safety Council (NSC) highlighted that organizations with robust onboarding practices had a decrease in their overall injury rates compared to those without structured onboarding programs. https://www.nsc.org/safety-training/workplace

THANK YOU

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