Simultaneously Improving Safety Awareness, Safety Attitudes and Business Results – A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

“The first duty of business is surviving, and the guiding principle of business economics is not the maximization of profit, it is the avoidance of loss.” - Peter Drucker

Achieving acceptable business results is a priority for all facilities (industrial, chemical, process, etc). Based on this premise, a facility with poor economic performance will also be more likely to under-invest in safety activities. That said, reaching economic goals while maintaining satisfactory safety levels can sometimes be a challenge. This paper describes techniques that were used to evaluate risks at a facility, focusing on major accidents.

It was discovered that there was an inherent cost in not implementing certain recommendations since the cost of personnel exposure, repair, clean-up, replacement, business interruption, etc. far exceeded the cost of implementing the measure. Overall, the facility reduced the personnel risk from major accidents by an estimated 95%. Not coincidentally, their combined safety capital costs and expected losses dropped by 90% from the same measures. The process graphically demonstrated to plant management the positive economic benefits of improving their safety systems. This in turn resulted in a major improvement in safety awareness and attitudes by operators and management alike.