Managing Safety Risks through the Employee Induction Process

Andy Johnson and Frederick J. Goodall
KBR Energy & Chemicals
Fred.Goodall@halliburton.com

Abstract

The process industry is rife with potential hazards and inherent risks. Aside from the many mechanical, electrical, biological, and radiation hazards, one of the greatest areas of risk is in the human element. Since people’s decisions, values, and mental state can have a negative impact on their own well-being as well as the people and property in a process facility, it is important that contractors and owner make wise choices when hiring employees.

Unfortunately, many contractors’ hiring processes are too weak and allow undesirable employees to enter owners’ process facilities. KBR understood that this was a significant problem and took steps to shore up its own hiring processes. Having a process in place that can reliably determine an employee’s safety attitude, aptitude and risk taking profile has allowed KBR to recognize tremendous improvements to its overall safety and execution performance.

As early as the 1980s, KBR was changing its hiring practices by instituting drug testing. Whereas this practice is commonplace today, KBR was an industry leader in this area. After 9/11, KBR reexamined their hiring practices through the lens of safety and security. As a consequence, they instituted background check criteria as well as a psychological assessment. All of these processes were implemented quickly at the jobsite level.

These hiring enhancements have significantly reduced KBR’s recordable injury rate. In 1995, the recordable injury rate was 2.39. Currently, it is 0.34 (as of August 2005). This 86% reduction has much to do with the changes in the induction process. In addition, the quality of KBR’s work has improved due to the company’s being more selective with the employees that they hire.