Leading and lagging: The safety climate-unsafe events relationship

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Abstract

Safety climate has been defined as employee perceptions of the policies, practices, and procedures concerning safety (Zohar, 2003). We examined the extent to which safety climate is a stronger leading or lagging indicator of workplace injuries. We obtained data from a large, multinational organization with manufacturing operations involving a number of complex processes, chemicals, and hazardous substances. Over 4500 employees from over 40 manufacturing plants responded to a safety climate survey in late 2007. Individual responses were aggregated to the plant-level and matched to plant-level organizational records of injuries 1 year before and 1 year after survey administration. Results of our analyses will be revealed in our presentation. Implications for safety climate research, study design, and climate change are discussed.