

Learn the Keys to the Success of 'Zero Accident Vision' Programs



The idea of achieving zero safety incidents in your workplace is tantalizing. Even if you aren't able to completely eliminate such incidents, some studies have shown that making such a commitment may, in fact, reduce incidents and improve overall safety culture.

For example, a new study of 27 companies that have made a commitment to 'zero accident vision' (ZAV) found that ZAV is the basis for inspiring and innovative approaches to improve safety, as an integrated part of doing business.

The study, which will be published in the July 2017 issue of *Safety Science*, examined 27 companies in seven different European countries. Managers and workers from these companies took part in a survey (8,819 respondents), company interviews and national workshops. The aim of the study was to identify strategies for safety promotion and accident prevention that are typical for companies that have adopted ZAV.

A common characteristic of all the companies was the high ZAV commitment of their managers and workers, which often were embedded in the companies' business strategies. It's very likely that this commitment is the main driver for long-term safety improvements.

The research also identified the importance of safety communication for ZAV implementation, especially of:

- Specific ZAV or safety promotion programs
- Constant and updated communication on functional tools
- Effective supervisor communication.

Successful communication must ensure 'relevant' information gets to respective organisational levels'not a one-size-fits-all strategy'and allow for 'decentralised' initiatives.

In addition, safety culture was also key to ZAV implementation, with ZAV companies having high survey scores on management safety priority, safety empowerment and safety justice.

Lastly, the study results support the importance of safety learning. Additional

success factors were top management support and an 'open atmosphere,' systematic communication and dialogue on incidents, and a focus on things that go right.

The researchers also noted that it's important that ZAV isn't a quantitative target, but the ambition to make work safe, which will always require a long-term journey and sustained efforts.

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