Employee Driven Safety Programs

- The more workers participate in safety, the safer the workplace.
Some of the advantages to greater employee involvement in safety programs

- Workers realize that as the ones most affected by workplace safety and health hazards, they have a vested interest in effective protection programs.
- You lose the Us-vs-Them mentality and become “we.”
- Workers are much more likely to support programs in which they’ve had input.
- Team decisions allow you to tap into a broad range of employee expertise and experience.
- Employees who are encouraged to offer their ideas about safety, whose suggestions are taken seriously, and whose contributions are rewarded are more satisfied and productive, and less likely to take risks.
For an employee-driven safety culture to be successful, all employees—from corporate officers to new hires—need to be fully engaged in making and keeping the workplace safe. Everybody plays an important role.
The role of safety managers is to implement and guide an employee-driven safety culture.

Safety management must also review and revise safety programs to help drive continuous safety improvement.
Senior management’s role is to visibly endorse and actively support workplace safety programs.

Senior management must also empower employees by being receptive to employee input on hazards, corrective actions, and safety and health programs.
Supervisors’ role is to give employees the tools, information, and training they need to work safely.

Supervisors must also be proactive in protecting their workers and share accountability with their employees for the safety in their department.
• Employees’ role is to take ownership of safety by sharing responsibility for their own and co-workers’ safety.
• Employees must also help drive continuous safety improvement by setting personal safety goals, by targeting unsafe work practices, and by sharing their safety stories and ideas with co-workers.
• The Safety Team or Committee’s role is to promote safety throughout the workplace.
• These groups need the full support of the safety manager and general management as well as the support of engaged supervisors and active and vocal employees, so that they can help change and improve processes, procedures, and programs.
For an employee driven safety culture to succeed, employees must take ownership in the workplace.
Point out that all workplace accidents and injuries are preventable but that it is the individuals who prevent them.

- Ultimately, each employee is responsible for his or her own safety. This is a very powerful notion, one that many employees may not have entertained. They may still have the notion that their safety is your job.
- Identify safety leaders. Put the spotlight on the people in the organization who really care about safety and have extraordinary safety records. Other workers will want to share in the limelight and follow these leaders.
- Recognize safe performance. Recognition is reinforcement. Praise someone for a positive behavior, and you’ll see more of that behavior.
- Encourage employees to talk to co-workers about safety, observe one another’s safety performance, and comment on safe and unsafe performance.
- Ask for employee input about safety programs and performance and show action of their suggestions.
- Let employees or departments implement solutions to safety problems.
- Enlist experienced employees to help train other employees in safety.
- Encourage widespread employee participation in safety committees, safety teams, and accident investigation teams.
- Make hazard and incident reporting easy and blame-free.
- Employees must be part of the Job Safety Analysis process, before and after an incident.
Employees and management members of the safety committee developed the following program to recognize employee safety at ecomaine.

- Employees are given points toward safety on an annual basis.
- Each employee can accrue up to 250 points annually.
- Each point accrued is turned into money—one point equals one dollar.
- Supervisors are in charge of issuing required safety training on a bi-monthly basis.
- Quizzes that are completed, graded and reviewed, points are awarded based on the score of the test.
- Retraining and retesting is given when employees do not pass a particular session.
- Quizzes are based on sections of the company safety manual.
- Points are given for completion of annual full day safety training.
- Points are earned for any supervisor led documented safety training topics that are employee driven safety topics.
- Any outside training that pertains to safety can lead to employees being award points.
- Points are given every six months to all employees without a workplace incident.
- Employee safety observations are reviewed by the safety committee and based on the severity of the observation the committee will award points to the employee who initiated the observation.
- Employees are given points for all onsite safety training sessions throughout the year such as fork truck qualified, loader operation safety, respirator qualified, rigging & signaling safety, crane & hoists safety, first aid/CPR, and several other safety topics.
- Employees are updated bi-monthly on their personal points-2-safety totals, so they can see where they stand at any given point throughout the year so they can drive the increase in their safety involvement on their own.
• This is our second full year with this program.
• The second year employees averaged 55 annual points greater than the first year.
• This year supervisors and managers will be assessed during their annual performance evaluations on the overall safety performance of their direct reports using the Points-2-Safety Program system.
• During the first year of the program employee safety observation reporting increased significantly from previous years.
• Overall employee safety incidents are down from last year to this year and the company EMR is significantly trending downward.
• We feel these downward trends have a direct correlation to our employee driven Points-2-Safety Program.

Positive Results from the Points-2-Safety Program