

Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 5 – Monday, January 26 – Friday, January 30, 2026

From Blame to Learning

Introduction

Whenever an accident occurs in the workplace it is often easiest to focus on the person closest to the incident. Unfortunately, by focusing on the individual and not what led to the incident occurring in the first place, we leave open the door of opportunity for it to occur again. This week we will discuss shifting away from blaming the associate involved and towards learning from the incident.

Monday- Recognize the Opportunity for Growth

The cultural shift begins with awareness. Openly acknowledging how blame currently shows up in the workplace and the impact it has on behavior can be the first step. Fear of being blamed discourages people from speaking up, reporting issues early, or experimenting with new ideas. By honestly examining current reactions to mistakes, we create a shared understanding that blame undermines trust, learning, and performance.

Tuesday – Reframing Mistakes as Data

To learn from mistakes, we must start by reframing them as valuable sources of information rather than personal failures. Errors reveal weaknesses in systems, processes, or assumptions, not individual worth. Language shifts from asking who caused a problem to exploring what conditions allowed it to occur. This reframing helps employees see mistakes as a natural part of improvement and innovation, reducing defensiveness and encouraging problem-solving.

Wednesday – Speak Openly

Today we are focusing on building open conversation, so employees feel secure admitting mistakes and raising concerns. Leaders can model the desired behavior by sharing their own errors and lessons learned, signaling that vulnerability is acceptable. Clear expectations are reinforced that honest mistakes should not be punished or shamed. As open conversation increases, team members become more willing to speak up, ask questions, and surface risks before they escalate.

Thursday – Continuous Improvement

Learning should be embedded into everyday work through structured practices. Teams can conduct after-action reviews to assess what worked, what didn't, and what can be improved. Lessons learned should be documented and shared, so insights extend beyond a single team or incident. The focus must remain on improving processes and systems rather than assigning fault, turning mistakes into drivers of continuous improvement.

Friday – Sustaining the Cultural Shift

As a team, we can reinforce learning behaviors by recognizing curiosity, transparency, and improvement rather than perfection. Success is measured not by the absence of mistakes, but by how effectively the organization learns from them. Consistent team responses grounded in curiosity and support ensure that learning replaces blame as the default reaction, creating a resilient and high-performing culture.