

Accident Review: Identifying the Most Critical Solution

When reaching a consensus on the Most Critical Solution, it is important that the Committee not take the easy road, and attribute everything to the involved employee's actions. The question that must always be asked is:

- "Were there other factors that set the employee up to make the final error?"

The Most Critical Solution will often address those factors that created the risk to which the employee succumbed. For example, the employee trips over a cord due to inattention, but the presence of the cord might be the cause that needs to be addressed. The superficial solution would be to admonish the injured employee to exercise more care, but the dangerous cord remains as a risk for the next employee.

There is no set list of Causes or Solutions; it is the Committee's unique perspective as people working in the various levels of the work environment that gives their potential solutions relevancy. But in general terms examples of possible solutions might include (but are certainly not limited to):

- Decision-Making Solutions: reassign or rotate employee; add or hire people to assist; give employees authority to take preventive action;
- Accountability Solutions: hold supervisors accountable; hold employee accountable;
- Physical and/or Mental Solutions: evaluate performance and/or job duties; accommodate physical or mental problems by adjusting job duties;
- Facilities, Equipment, Materials Solutions: improve housekeeping; improve design/compatibility; provide sufficient facilities, equipment, materials; maintain or repair facilities, equipment, materials; provide proper personal protective equipment;
- Knowledge, Skills, Judgment Solutions: identify and evaluate needs; create or improve expectations, policies, procedures, rules; train and/or communicate expectations, policies, procedures, rules, skills; counsel and/or correct employee; inspect to identify problems; improve the inspection process.

It is within management's discretion on whether, or how, they act on the Committee's analysis; the Committee should recognize that there are many other factors that management considers in making their decisions.