

Risk Control Bulletin

Motion is Money

RISK CONTROL



As the workforce ages, soft tissue injuries become the leading frequency and severity loss drivers in warehousing/distribution. CNA has a proven business solution to address these soft tissue issues. Motion is Money is a focused process designed to address the musculoskeletal disorder risk factors driving these losses while positively affecting the production, efficiency and quality of operations.

While it's impossible to eliminate 100% of the risk factors that occur in a distribution operation, much can be done to significantly reduce exposure to risk. Once a process such as Motion is Money is established, it can take 14 to 18 months of data gathering and analysis (measuring the frequency and severity of injuries) to see proof of positive results. Given the length of time it takes to achieve results, it's easy to lose focus on the goal. However, if you can make small changes that affect your productivity, efficiency and/or quality, then you can develop measurable results much more quickly.

Employee health and safety are the overriding objectives, but consider also the productivity and efficiency impact on your business. Motion is indeed money in the distribution business, which relies on employees' physical movement to accomplish job tasks. Recognizing opportunities to minimize movement is the start toward a more healthful and efficient operation. Walking, bending, carrying, pushing, pulling and working overhead are classic examples of movement in the workplace. Our insureds must begin to see these motions with a different set of eyes; namely, as a production and efficiency issue, not just as risks factors (our classic approach). We must still address risk factors, but we have to move beyond this approach.

Make a point of observing these movements with "a different set of eyes." As with the old adage about not seeing the forest for the trees, it takes special concentration to view the scene and see other than what you're used to seeing, especially because distribution operations have work techniques that have not changed in many years.

Viewed in relation to productivity you will start to see them differently.

For example: An employee bends over and picks up material from the floor or from a 4-inch high pallet. How many times does the employee bend over in an hour or a day? It takes approximately three seconds to bend over. The average distribution worker will bend over 25,000 to 30,000 times a year. Multiply this by the number of employees and then the number of days worked. This number will make you wonder: How much wasted time do we have in a year from bending? That can only be answered by knowing what percentage of the 25,000 to 30,000 bends can be eliminated.

Observing what really occurs in your operations is critically important. The classic Harvard Business Review article, "Learning to Lead at Toyota," states that the first lesson learned in manager training is there's "no substitute for direct observation." No combination of indirect methods (reports, surveys, narratives, etc.) can possibly take the place of direct observation.

Take the time to observe every single movement by every person walking, bending, carrying, etc. Start by spending 45 minutes just observing. Turn off your cell phone, do not have conversations. You will be amazed at the wasted motion you see during this time. Make notes about what strikes you as unexpected—what you notice that seems extraneous to the task. When you get used to observing these wasted motions, they will become easier to identify.

The concept of annualizing is one of the most important concepts everyone should begin to execute. Everything should be annualized. When we say this we mean everything! Most supervisors see something happen once or twice and it does not make a big impact, however if annualized it creates a different picture. You can make a better business case when you annualize, which takes into account the number of work days per year.



The goal of CNA and our insureds is to be able to affect the bottom line by 3% to 5%, (which has been shown to be easily achievable in pilot studies) altering how we do business by understanding the wasted motion or non-value added motion in the operations. Once you have evaluated a job task and understand where the waste or non-value added motion is occurring, then you can baseline the job task as it is currently completed. Work with the operations area, engineering, safety, or committees to develop sound business solutions. Once these solutions are put in place then re-measure the task for efficiency, productivity, quality, and risk factors. Compare the two and figure the savings you have achieved.

A key factor is looking at the small changes. Everyone wants to look at developing and offering large changes that affect the overall operations. Create successes by executing small changes that can have a big impact. After several months of this type of execution you will have dramatically affected how an operation runs.

As you read this bulletin, it should inspire some thoughts about ways you can change your operations. It takes each individual in an organization to affect change and enhance productivity, improve quality and reduce risk factors. By employing the Motion is Money process you can change how you do business and affect bottom line profitability as well as reduce your risk.

For more information on the Motion is Money process call 866-262-0540.