

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

SAFETY CULTURE IN CHEMICALS: EMBRACING THE GENERATIONAL SHIFT TO HELP ENABLE SAFE PRODUCTION

SPEAKER

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Safety is paramount in the chemical industry.

Key to improving safety is creating an effective safety culture.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A SAFETY CULTURE IN CHEMICALS?

PETE:

The first is the generational shift that's occurring right now within the workforce. There are many baby boomers that have reached or exceeded the traditional retirement age and as these tenured workers are leaving the workforce, they're also bringing a lot of institutional knowledge with them as they walk out the door.

The second challenge that I've seen is what we're describing as the polarization of the safety culture versus the production culture. Because these cultures are misaligned, it's creating inefficiencies in how operations are run within a plant and as well, how safe those operations are.

HOW DOES THE CHANGING WORKFORCE IMPACT SAFE PRODUCTION?

PETE:

First, again, it's this loss of institutional knowledge. This knowledge that's walking out the door with these more tenured workers, it's knowledge that's often undocumented in policies and procedures and it's not incorporated into training. So, once it's gone, it's going to be very challenging to get that knowledge back and continue to run your operations safely.

entering the workforce that have different expectations for what the work experience should be. They're expecting more technology to be present within the workforce. They're expecting a more robust communications process and they're expecting to learn on the job in different ways than has been done traditionally.

The second challenge is on the other end of the generational spectrum where you have a new generation of workers that are

All of that leads to the third impact and that's doing more of the same simply isn't going to continue to work.

HOW CAN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES HELP?

PETE:

A more robust digital communication process is going to help you reach your employees at the right time with the right content. And an extension of that is going to be increasing employee engagement through digital platforms like social media. Once you get that communication out to your employees, you need to give them an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. That's going to build engagement with your employees and by having a rich communication platform, you're going to be able to reach the multiple generations that exist within the workforce.

As well, you have this institutional knowledge that's at risk of leaving your operations. If you can capture that knowledge and

transform it with digital technologies into more automated processes, it's going to lead to a more efficient operation and as well, free up your resources to focus on more value-added activities. That also gives bandwidth to embrace technologies like virtual reality and augmented reality. These are forms of on demand and digital communication that can provide your employees with the knowledge they need at just the right time in order to execute their tasks safely and efficiently, leading to a more integrated safe production operation.

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