

ASK ME NO SECRETS AND I'LL TELL YOU NO LIES

Want to get good information about what's going on out in your yard? You gotta ask. And you gotta ask the right people. Who are the right people? They're the ones running the machines and operating the equipment. They're the ones with the torches in their hands and mud on their boots. Sometimes the folks with the best information are the ones who don't like to speak up in a crowd, like in a safety meeting. So, how do you get these quiet ones to talk? Here's an idea: I call it simply a Safety Survey. Take a piece of paper and lay out the following information in a way that people have space to write (fill up one sheet):

Your Company Name

Location: _____

SAFETY SURVEY

Date: _____

No Names! Not yours. Not theirs.

- 1. Tell me about one thing that's not safe here in our yard.**
- 2. How do we make it safe?**

Hand these out at your next safety meeting. I'm always amazed when I do this. I get things that I had no idea were going on. Machines that need repair. Processes that need to be changed. Yeah, sure, you get a few wise crackers, and you won't get one returned from everybody. Over the years, though, this simple little Survey has brought me great dividends. What's more, it lets your people know you care about what they have to say. It lets them say it in a non-threatening, anonymous way. You'll get comments here you won't get anywhere else.

When you get them back, take a look at what's written. Compile a list and take special note of conditions that are listed more than once. This lets you know you may have a real problem. Some of the issues will be solved easily (low-hanging fruit). Taking care of these minor situations will let your workers know the Survey means something and that you are responsive to what they see as problems. Review the list on a regular basis with your workers. Celebrate progress and explain why some issues may take a little longer or are impractical. Post a list and note improvement for all to see by marking off each item when it's resolved.

This little tool will help you get closer to . . .

SAFELY OR NOT AT ALL!

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