


Incident Investigation

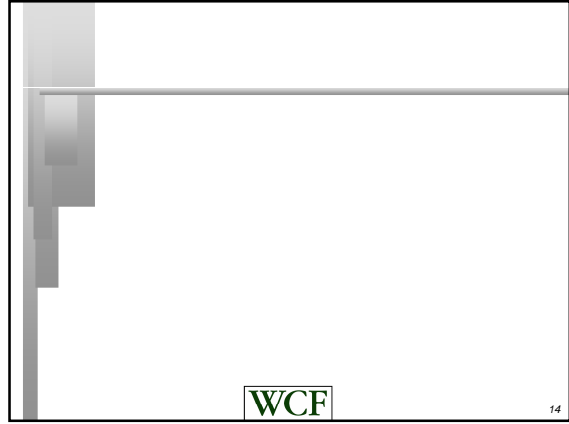
Workers Compensation Fund



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Overview:

- Definitions
- Why Investigate
- What to Investigate
- Goals of Investigation
- How to Investigate
- Documentation
- Prevention - Keys to Effective Program

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Definitions:



Investigation: *Using the physical sciences and human factors to determine factual information regarding a specific event.*

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Definitions:

Event: *an occurrence; something that happens. Incidents and accidents are both events.*

Incident: *Event that adversely affects the completion of a task.*

Accident: *Incident that results in injury or property damage.*

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Why Investigate?


- Determine causal factors of event
- Determine corrective actions to **prevent** future occurrences
- Reduce future costs
- Trend analysis
- Reduce potential for fraudulent claims

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Why Investigate?

Total annual cost of injuries to U.S. Businesses equals \$121 Billion

National Safety Council
Accident Facts

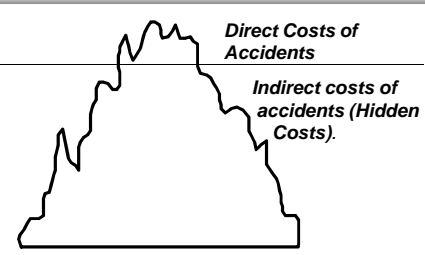


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Why Investigate?

The Iceberg Principle



What we see is the "tip of the iceberg."


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Why Investigate?

Direct Costs

- Medical Costs.
- Lost Wages
- Equipment Damage
- Workers Compensation




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Why Investigate?

Indirect Costs (Includes Hidden Costs)

- Lost Production - Worker Distraction
- Training Costs - Replacement Worker
- Loss of Skill/Efficiency - Slowed Production
- Paperwork & Administrative time
- Pain
- Loss of Morale
- Legal Issues
- Cost to Society



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Why Investigate?

Accident/Injury Sequence

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    graph TD
      A[Performing Work] --> B[Unsafe Act or Hazard]
      B --> C["Contact"]
      C --> D[Accident/Injury]
      E[Interrupt the cycle] --> B
  
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Interruption of the Accident Cycle



Investigation enables us to find the root causes of accidents so we can interrupt the accident cycle.




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Root Causes:

Basic Causes:
Human Factors
Equipment
Environment
Management



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Root Causes:
Human Factors



- **Written job procedures?**
- **Did job procedures anticipate hazard?**
- **Did employee know procedures?**

Did employee deviate from procedures?
Was employee mentally and physically capable of performing task?
Job structured to encourage deviation- (piecework, work pace)

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Root Causes:
Human Factors

Lack of personal protective equipment (PPE)
PPE specified for task?
Appropriate PPE available?
Employee know PPE required?
Employee know proper use of PPE?
Was PPE adequate?

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Root Causes:
Root Causes of Human Factors

Lack of Knowledge (Training)
Lack of Skill
Inadequate physical/physiological capability
Inadequate mental/psychological capability
Physical or mental stress
Improper Motivation

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Root Causes:
Equipment Factors

Defect in equipment?
Hazardous condition reported?
Inspection Program in place?
Correct equipment used?
Correct equipment available?
Properly maintained?

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Root Causes:
Root Causes of Equipment Factors

Inadequate engineering
Inadequate purchasing
Inadequate maintenance
Inadequate tools/equipment
Lack of inspection program
Lack of employee training

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**Root Causes:
Environmental Factors**

Location/position of equipment contribute?
Was hazard recognized?
Was employee informed of hazard?
Was employee permitted in area?
Sufficient work space?
Illumination, air quality, temperature extremes, vibration, ventilation.



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**Root Causes:
Root Causes of Environmental Factors**

Inadequate workplace conditions
Inadequate hazard recognition
Lack of employee training



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**Root Causes:
Management Factors**

- **Failure to detect hazard?**
 - **Failure of supervisor to correct deviation from job procedures?**
- Hazards reviewed with employees?**
Was supervisor responsible/ accountable for safety in his area?
Was supervisor trained to fulfill duties?
Failure to initiate corrective actions for known hazards.



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**Root Causes:
Root Causes of Management Factors**

Inadequate leadership/supervision
Lack of supervisor training
Lack of accountability



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What to Investigate?

Company Policy may determine.
Compensible Injuries.
OSHA recordable injuries.
First Aid injuries.
"Near-miss" accidents.
Suspicious claims.



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What to Investigate?
Compensible Injury Criteria:

- Accidental** from the injured's point of view
- Arise out of the individual's employment**
- Arise in the course of the individual's employment**



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What to Investigate?
OSHA Recordable Injury:

- Medical treatment by physician.**
- Lost time**
- Prescription**
- Stitches**
- Broken bone**
- Therapy**
- Follow up visits to physician**
- Any injury requiring more than first aid**



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What to Investigate?
Suspicious Claims:

- Fraudulent cases do not meet the compensible injury criteria.**
- What to do if you suspect fraud:**
 - Form 122 - Do you doubt the validity of this claim? Attach sheet.**
 - Fraud Hotline- 288-8140**



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Goals of Investigation

- Determine root causal factors of event**
- Specify what equipment or systems that could prevent future incidents**
- Specify improved employee safety performance in objective terms**
- Determine validity of claim**
- Fact-finding, not Fault-finding**



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How to Investigate?

- Who investigates**
- When to investigate**
- Facts & Information to Obtain**
- How to Obtain Information**



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***How to Investigate?
Who Investigates?***

- Company Policy to Determine -**
- Supervisor or Manager**
- Safety Committee**
- Safety Manager**
- Human Resource Manager**
- Operations Manager**
- Company Owner**



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***How to Investigate?
When to Investigate?***

ASAP!

Timeliness is critical to ensure important facts are obtained about the scene and witness accounts. Time allows for changes in evidence and witness memory.



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***How to Investigate?
Facts & Information to Obtain:***



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***How to Investigate?
How to Obtain Information:***

- Observation**
- Inquiry: The Interview***
- Review of Past Records***
- Survey: What Do Other Companies Do?***

Be Objective!!



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Observation

Investigation Kit:

- 35 mm camera & film (some like to use poloroids)**
- 8 ft and 50 ft measuring tape**
- Paper & pen**
- Barrier tape**
- Tape recorder/dictaphone**



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Observation

- Physical evidence**
 - skid marks**
 - point of contact**
- Work environment**
 - physical hazards**
 - health hazards**
- Worker**
 - unsafe behaviors**
 - illegal or prescription drug use**



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Inquiry: The Interview

***Injured Employee
Employees Involved in Process
Witnesses***

***Remember this is not to lay
blame or find fault - only to find
facts!***

Be Objective!



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Inquiry: The Interview The Injured Employee

***Problem: It may be difficult to get
injured employee to fully
cooperate or tell the truth.***

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Inquiry: The Interview The Injured Employee

***Reasons Why Employees May Not
Fully Cooperate:***

***Fear that truth will jeopardize injury
compensation.***

Fear of reprimand or discipline.

Fear of being ridiculed.

Fear of embarrassment.

Fear, fear, fear.



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Inquiry: The Interview The Injured Employee

Solution:

Don't place blame

***Minimize fears that hide or distort the
truth.***

***Conduct yourself in an unbiased
manner.***

***Avoid saying anything that would
intensify fear of ridicule.***

Be objective and yet sympathetic.

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Inquiry: The Interview The Injured Employee

5 Steps to Interviewing Injured

Employee:

***Remind employee that purpose is to prevent
similar incidents.***

Ask for their version of incident.

Ask questions to fill in gaps.

***Check your understanding of accident by
repeating what you understand from the
employee's account to ensure no
miscommunication.***

Discuss how to prevent similar occurrences.

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Inquiry: The Interview The Witnesses

***Witnesses are an important
source of information. A
witness may be able to clarify
the circumstances better than
the injured employee.***

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Inquiry: The Interview The Witnesses

5 Steps to Interviewing Witnesses:

- Interview each promptly and separately.***
- Reassure the witness the purpose is to prevent similar occurrences.***
- Get the witness' version with minimal interruption.***
- Ask specific questions to fill in gaps.***
- Summarize your understanding. Repeat the witness' account as you understand it to ensure no miscommunication.***



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Inquiry: The Interview Don'ts of Interviewing

- Don't say anything that blames or threatens the employee who had the accident.***
- Don't badger the interviewee or give him/her a hard time.***



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Inquiry: The Interview Don'ts of Interviewing

- Don't resort to sarcasm, open skepticism, or accusations.***
- Don't try to write down what the witness is saying while they are trying to explain.***



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Inquiry: The Interview Do's of Interviewing

- Handle discrepancies with tact.***
- Let the witness or injured employee feel that he/she is a partner in the investigation.***
- Listen carefully to those being interviewed.***
- Be objective and Open Minded. There may be a hidden cause to the accident that will not be recognized by a closed mind.***



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Review Past Records

- Review accident history for trends.***
- Review records to see if similar incidents have occurred involving the same employee, equipment, location, etc.***



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Documentation

***Incident Report
Employee's Report of Injury
Supervisor's Report of Employee Injury
Employer's First Report of Injury (E1 - also known as form 122)
Accident investigation form.***



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Documentation

***Incident Report
Aids in gathering information about incidents such as "near misses" or other "occurrences."***

Why Investigate "near misses?"



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Documentation

***Employee Report of Injury:
Employee's written account of accident/injury.***

Employee should fill this out as soon after the accident as possible. Why?



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Documentation

***Supervisor's Report of Employee Injury:
Supervisor's written report of initial investigation.***

Supervisor should fill this out during same shift if possible. Why?



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Documentation

***Employer's First Report of Injury (E1 or Form 122):
Form required to obtain compensation.
Required by State and Federal Law.
To be filled out and forwarded to Labor Commission within 7 days* of company being notified of injury.
WCF will forward for you.***



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Documentation

***Exception to the 7 day rule:
"Each employer shall, within 8 hours of occurrence, notify the Utah Occupational Safety & Health Division of the Commission (801) 530-6901 of any work related fatality; of any disabling, serious or significant injury; and of any occupational disease incident."***



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Documentation

Ways to File Form 122 with WCF:

Fax (801)288-8275

Phone (801)288-8285

Internet (www.wcgroup.com)

call (801)284-8919 for user id & password (toll free 1-800-446-2667 ext. 8919)

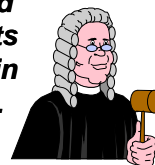
Mail (392 E. 6400 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84107)



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Documentation

All documentation in incident or accident cases may be used as legal documents and may be used in legal proceedings.



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Some Helpful Info About Filling Out Documents

- **Avoid interjecting personal opinions. State only the facts. (Just the facts Ma'am!)**
- **Fill out all necessary information on document.**
- **Clarify personal observations by beginning with phrases such as "It appeared as if..."**

Do not state personal opinion or observations as fact. Use words such as "alleged," or "claimed" when referring to eyewitness accounts.

Write neatly in black or blue ink. If you make a mistake, line out or transfer the information to a new blank form.

Be Objective!



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Prevention: Key to Effective Program

Resolution:

Supervisor-employee alliance.

Positive approach, rather than judgmental.

Aim at discovery of root causes.

Core is mutual problem solving.



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Prevention: Key to Effective Program

Analysis for cause(s) (Investigation).

Formulation of corrective action plan that eliminates the cause(s).

Assigning responsibility for corrective action.

Follow through!



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Video: "The Big Picture"



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Summary

Ultimate goal is to find underlying causes of incidents.

Fact finding, not fault-finding.

Use findings to effect change and corrective action. (responsibility and authority must be given to effect such change.)



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Question or Comments?



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***For more information,
contact your safety
representative or WCF.***



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Thank You!



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Incident Investigation

***Presented by Darren Spencer
Workers Compensation Fund***



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