

“We Got Lucky This Time.”

If you have been around construction long enough, and I had over 40 years in the construction industry, you are going to hear, “We got lucky this time.” You might also hear, “We dodged a bullet that time,” or “Wow, that was close,” or “Man, that was a serious near miss,” or “We’re lucky nobody got killed or seriously hurt,” etc.

I’ve looked into the eyes of people who were either involved in or who witnessed an accident. Some were visibly shaken; some were upset enough to need to sit down as it had been that person who had just experienced a serious near miss in which they very well could have been killed. It is a real sobering moment.

As a Project Safety Manager, I’ve heard all of these statements and, back in the day of being a foreman and superintendent, have even said some of them. When an incident or accident happens, whether or not it was a near miss or someone suffering a minor injury but the accident could have been a fatality, there needs to be an immediate investigation after which preventative measures must be put in place.

You can’t keep wishing and hoping that people will be safe as they work. What you can and need to be is proactive in a serious way in order to set clear safety expectations that also spell out forms of accountability for violations of company policies and procedures, as well as OSHA Standards.

From an investigation standpoint, and it needs to be done if you are serious about safety, it’s vital that you get to the real root cause of an incident or accident. Keep asking questions until all the facts are known. Stress the importance of open and honest communication. Convey that the intent is to avoid such an incident or accident from happening again. As well, there should be an Incident Alert written up and shared on the project with everyone, and company-wide if it can represent a learning tool that has as its primary goal to see that such an incident or accident does not happen again. And lastly, accountability and or any disciplinary action taken must be documented.

For more answers and insight, I invite you to look at our book, *Safety Under Construction—A Quest for Safety Perfection Utilizing Inventive Thinking where we discuss in depth the psychological aspects of safety that include how we are affected mentally, emotionally and physically*. It is a must-read for individuals and anyone who wants to dramatically improve the Culture of Safety within your organization and make unlimited strides for safety success.

Go to: <http://www.SafetyUnderConstruction.com> in order to obtain a great sense of this newly published book on safety and risk. There you will see a representative preview and reviews of a book that needs to be read, taken to heart and shared. Lives depend on it.

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