

What Now? How to Provide Safe, OSHA-Compliant Workplaces in the Age of COVID-19

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Introduction

Greg Zigulis, CSP, CIH

- Sixth Sense Safety Solutions – HSE Consulting
 - Member of American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) and American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
 - Member of ANSI/ASSP Z10 Committee, “Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems”
 - Background:
 - 35 Years in Variety of Industries (USAF/Environmental Remediation/Const Mgmt/Const Fatality Research/Consumable Dental Mfg./Automotive/Tier 1 Mfg./Disaster Restoration/Above Ground Mining)
 - Gap Analyses, Program Guidance/Assistance

The material provided in this presentation is for informational purposes only and is not intended to convey or constitute legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular issue or problem. The opinions expressed in this presentation and on the following slides are solely the opinions of the presenter.

Also, please note that the information shared in this presentation is based on information available as of August 5, 2020. The COVID-19 situation and technical information changes rapidly. Be sure to refer to the latest guidance from your local or state public health and governmental authorities.

Disclaimer

Topics of Presentation

What Now?


How to Provide Safe, OSHA-Compliant Workplaces in the Age of COVID-19

- Brief Review Pandemic's Impact Upon Families, Individuals, Businesses and the Economy
- What It Means to be Safe When Starting or Restarting Operations in the COVID-19 Environment
- Considerations for Minimizing Business Interruptions While Impacted During the Pandemic
- Factors and Considerations for Providing a Safe Workplace Under our "New Normal" Conditions and Going Forward
- Wrap Up, Q & A

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Impact Upon Families and Individuals

- 
- Direct Impact by Illness – Themselves, Family Members, Care
 - Variety of Employment Situations
 - School and Childcare
 - Fundamental Changes to Way of Life
- Financial Strains – Selves or Family
 - Psychological Stresses
 - Rethinking Health, Family, Relationships
 - Ultimately Questioning Their Relevance and Sense of Purpose to Work

Impact Upon Business and the Economy

- Major Costs to Stay Open, Significant Changes in Approach. Examples:
 - Retailers: Target - \$1B, Walmart - \$900 M, Home Depot - \$640 M (6/24/2020 WSJ)
 - Manufacturing, other industries: distancing, work methods, masks, Plexiglass barriers, modifying work teams, shift changes, sick policies
 - Shifts cut, transfers for staffing, hire new (reports of companies struggling to keep enough people on the job)
 - Colleges: Millions in dividing shields, masks, hand sanitizing stations, taking student temps, frequent wipes
- For Many Organizations, It's Make or Break Time
 - Many not doing well, may lack working capital for uptick
 - Banks bracing for wave of loan defaults

Impact Upon Business and the Economy

- In The News: Some Can Work From Home, But Many Others – “Not”
 - “**BREAKING**: Google to adopt work-from-home until at least July 2021” (CNN 7/27/20)
 - New shutdowns looming?
 - Estimated that 75% of US workers can't work exclusively from home (6/23 UW News)
- Employers Worried that Culture Will Fray; “Working from Home is Overrated” – Temptations
- Employees Sometimes On the Flip Side:
 - Feel there is a lack of communication with workers
 - Concerned about return: “making us work real close,” “lax safety protocols”
- In Some Cases, Debates Over Masks, Precautions for Companies and Individuals



Impact Upon Business and the Economy

In Fact, Some Are Doing Well

- Often due to position in market (critical manufacturing, IT, pharmaceutical) but not always

Seeing:

- Companies affirming the responsibilities of leadership
- Knowing where people are “at,” credibly providing safe workplaces
- Positive environments, ensuring success & achievements are acknowledged

Critical Issues Include:

- Supply chain
- Change products/services?
- More IT and automation
- Evaluation of the present plus future scenarios
- **Reassessment of risk in consideration of planned or actual business changes, more collaboration**
- Many companies developing own guidelines/methods for safe operation

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So How Do We Do That?

- Provide An Environment Where the Organization Has:
 - Assessed risk within business context, planned
 - Controls, with processes for compliance and conformance, flexible response and adjustment
 - Capacity to respond – not static, and not an “end state”
- Continued OSHA Compliance - Rules Have Not Gone Away:
 - See [osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov) pages for review of regulations for your industry, temporary enforcement discretion
- COVID-19 Prevention and Control Planning?
 - Precise requirements vary by state
 - Several common elements, often corresponds to OSHA Pub 3990, Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
 - Hazard identification and risk assessment – before, during, after/categorize risk levels
 - Make sure you check State rules for specific requirements; task by task v. other

So How Do We Do That?

- People Want to Know They Will Be In a “Safe” Environment
 - Not “tell them one thing but do another”
 - Not “tell them we want them to be safe” but then not provide the means and consistent messaging from the very top and through supervisors
- Need That Plan, Communication, Training
 - To be sustainable, intentional “system” can be best bet – more on this, later
- Let’s Start With the Plan
 - (Some may have a plan but not have content that meets requirements?)

So How Do We Do That?

- Plan Resources
 - OSHA, CDC links
 - May have other State or Local government requirements

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

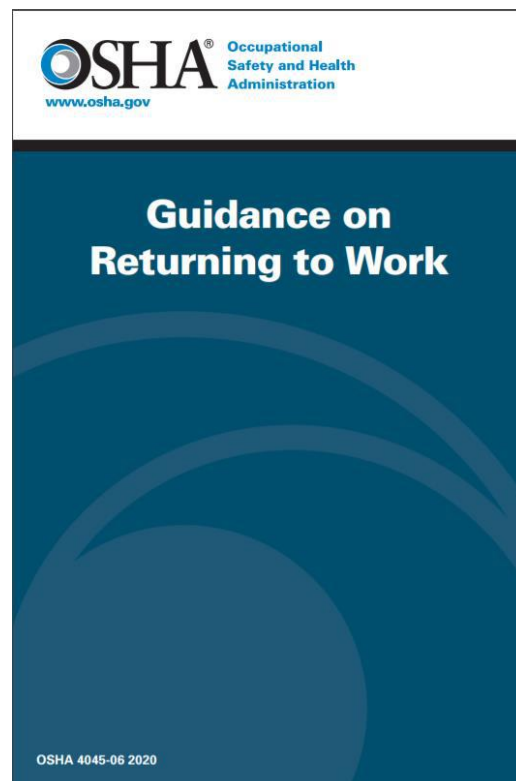
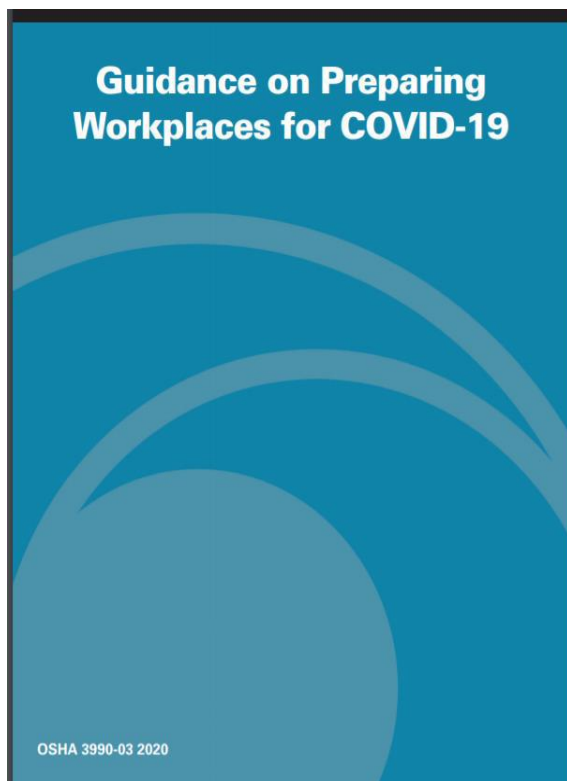


OSHA provides guidance and resources for employers and workers on the control and prevention of COVID-19. Some sections of this guidance apply to control and prevention for all workers and employers, while other sections specifically focus on those at at lower risk of exposure and those with increased risk of exposure, including workers involved in:

- Airline operations
- Border protection and transportation security
- Business travelers
- Construction
- Correctional facility operations
- Dentistry
- Emergency response and public safety
- Environmental (i.e., janitorial) services
- Farmworkers*
- Healthcare
- In-home repair services
- Laboratories
- Manufacturing*
- Meat and poultry processing*
- Oil and gas operations
- Postmortem care
- Retail operations
- Seafood processing*†
- Solid waste and wastewater management

*Developed in partnership with CDC; †Developed in consultation with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

[More >](#)



So How Do We Do That?

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

The screenshot shows the CDC website's coronavirus page. At the top left is the CDC logo with the tagline "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™". A search bar contains "Coronavirus" and a magnifying glass icon. To the right of the search bar is a link for "A-Z Index" and an "Advanced Search" icon. Below the search bar is a teal header with "Coronavirus (COVID-19)" and links for "ASL Videos" and "Languages". A navigation menu includes "Your Health", "Community, Work & School", "Healthcare Workers & Labs", "Health Depts", "Cases & Data", and "More". The main content area features a section titled "Get the Facts About Coronavirus" with the text "Take steps to care for yourself and help protect others in your home and community." Below this are two buttons: "HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF" and "WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SICK". To the right is a vertical list of four icons with text: "Symptoms of COVID-19", "Self check symptoms", "People at increased risk", and "Should you get tested?". At the bottom, there is a row of four images: a map of the United States, a person wearing a blue face mask, a group of people in a meeting room, and a hand holding a red pen.

This screenshot shows a section of the CDC website titled "GOING OUT & DAILY LIFE". At the top, there are four white buttons with teal borders: "Cases in the US", "Masks", "Returning to Work", and "Back to School". Below these is a horizontal bar with a yellow-to-orange gradient. The main heading "GOING OUT & DAILY LIFE" is followed by the text "What you need to do at home and when going out to stay safe" and a "Learn more" link with a double arrow icon. To the right is a vertical list of four items, each with a right-pointing arrow: "Masks", "Going out", "Travel", and "At home". Below this is a section titled "HELPING COMMUNITIES PLAN AND RESPOND" with the text "CDC provides health considerations and tools for operating during COVID-19". This section contains a grid of six buttons: "Schools & Childcare", "Colleges & Universities", "Businesses & Workplaces", "Parks & Recreational Facilities", "Health Equity", and "Faith-Based Organizations". A "View More" button is located at the bottom right of this section.

So How Do We Do That?

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

(Also consider word searches)

The screenshot shows the CDC website's 'Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)' page. The main navigation bar includes 'Your Health', 'Community, Work & School', 'Healthcare Workers & Labs', 'Health Depts', 'Cases & Data', and 'More'. The 'Community, Work & School' section is active, displaying a sidebar with categories like 'Health Equity', 'Community Mitigation Framework', 'Cleaning & Disinfecting', 'Businesses & Workplaces', 'Worker Safety & Support' (highlighted), 'Schools & Child Care', 'Colleges & Universities', and 'Parks, Sports & Recreation'. The main content area is titled 'Worker Safety and Support' with the subtitle 'Plan, Prepare, and Respond'. It features a banner image of an airport tarmac with a truck and workers. Below the banner, there are two columns of content: 'Workplace Guidance' and 'For Employees'. Under 'Workplace Guidance', there is a link for 'Possible Exposure of Critical Workers' with a 'Critical Workers' button. Under 'For Employees', there are links for 'Employees Returning to the Workplace' and 'Employees: coping with job stress during COVID-19', each with a corresponding button.

Make sure you scroll to the bottom. Resources on left side but also down to bottom

So How Do We Do That?

- Plans Under Several Names, May Be Related (e.g., MI: COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan)
- Content – Sometimes Exact Categories/Content is Mandated
- States and Associations May Offer Templates, Some Based on Risk Level

So How Do We Do That?

- Regulatory Requirements May Include (*Be Sure to Check “Your” State/Local Requirements*)
 - Content consistent with OSHA Pub 3990, **available** to employees, unions, customers
 - Designation of supervisor, to be on-site (sometimes thought of as “COVID **coordinator**”)
 - **Training**: workplace controls, proper use of PPE, notification of symptoms/suspected or confirmed diagnosis, reporting of unsafe conditions
 - Communication/training in languages in use
 - **Posters** about staying at home when sick, cough/sneeze etiquette, hand hygiene
 - Entry **screening**/self screening, questionnaire on symptoms, exposures
 - **Distancing**, 6’ to extent possible, markings, signs, physical barriers
 - Provision of face coverings, encourage always but required <6 ft, consideration of **additional face shields** when cannot maintain 3 ft
 - **Required covering** in shared spaces (halls, restrooms, meetings)
 - **Increased cleaning and sanitation** – common touch, shared eqpt; added protocols in event of positive cases
 - Cleaning supplies available, **time provided** to wash/use provided facilities/sanitizing stations
 - **Notification** protocols – health dept., coworkers/contractors/suppliers

So How Do We Do That?

- Some Requirements May Include (“Systems” Related?)
 - Response plan for dealing with confirmed infection
 - Restriction of travel to “**essential only**”
 - Encouragement of use of PPE and hand **sanitizer on public transportation**
 - Promotion of **remote work** to extent possible
- Other provisions for where work in primarily/traditionally outdoors
 - Prohibit gatherings where cannot maintain 6 ft
 - Limit interactions to extent possible
 - Provide and require PPE as appropriate
 - Have protocols to limit sharing, ensure frequent cleaning and disinfection

So How Do We Do That?

- Some Requirements May Include:
 - For construction
 - Daily entry screening (all), questionnaire, and if possible, temp screening
 - **Dedicated entry** points (*but without having people pile up, right?*)
 - Instructions on PPE distribution, **collection of soiled face coverings**
 - Gloves to prevent contact with contaminated surfaces
 - ID high-risk areas, control their access and use, ensure distancing
 - Ensure sufficient hand washing/hand sanitizing stations
 - Notification of confirmed cases
 - Restriction of **unnecessary movement between** project sites
 - **Minimize contact** during deliveries

What Are Some Doing?

- Technical
 - Not always industry specific guidance; some creating their own approaches
 - Risk assessments: identify hazards, assign some level of risk, take appropriate control actions
 - How does COVID-19 impact work processes/methods, how do those process changes affect risk?
 - A note on the use of respirators vs. masks
 - Methodologies for Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis: FMEA analysis (?) ...what problems might you encounter? What might you need to do?
 - Controls:
 - Ventilation system changes/ASHRAE committee
 - Areas for failed screenings, isolation
 - Disabling hand driers

What Are Some Doing?

- Organizationally
 - Teams for more rapid data collection and sharing of info and decision-making
 - More coordination and less functional reporting
 - Auditing against requirements and plans for continued compliance/conformance
 - Demand management, supply and inventory management
 - Ramping up communication

When Is It Good Enough?

That's Up to Your Organization to Determine
(Although "Legal" Compliance is a Minimum)

➤ COVID-Related Lawsuits are Here:

- Don't know the theory of the cases
- Lots of unknowns
- State orders may not always be clear
- - Some interim laws may become permanent?
-

Who Is or Are the Experts?

Information and recommendations change

Plan:

Based on best available info, and document:

- - risk assessment, actions to control and to train, and enforcement

Base your risk assessments upon credible science, your controls on what a reasonable and prudent person would do; do not knowingly place persons in imminent risk

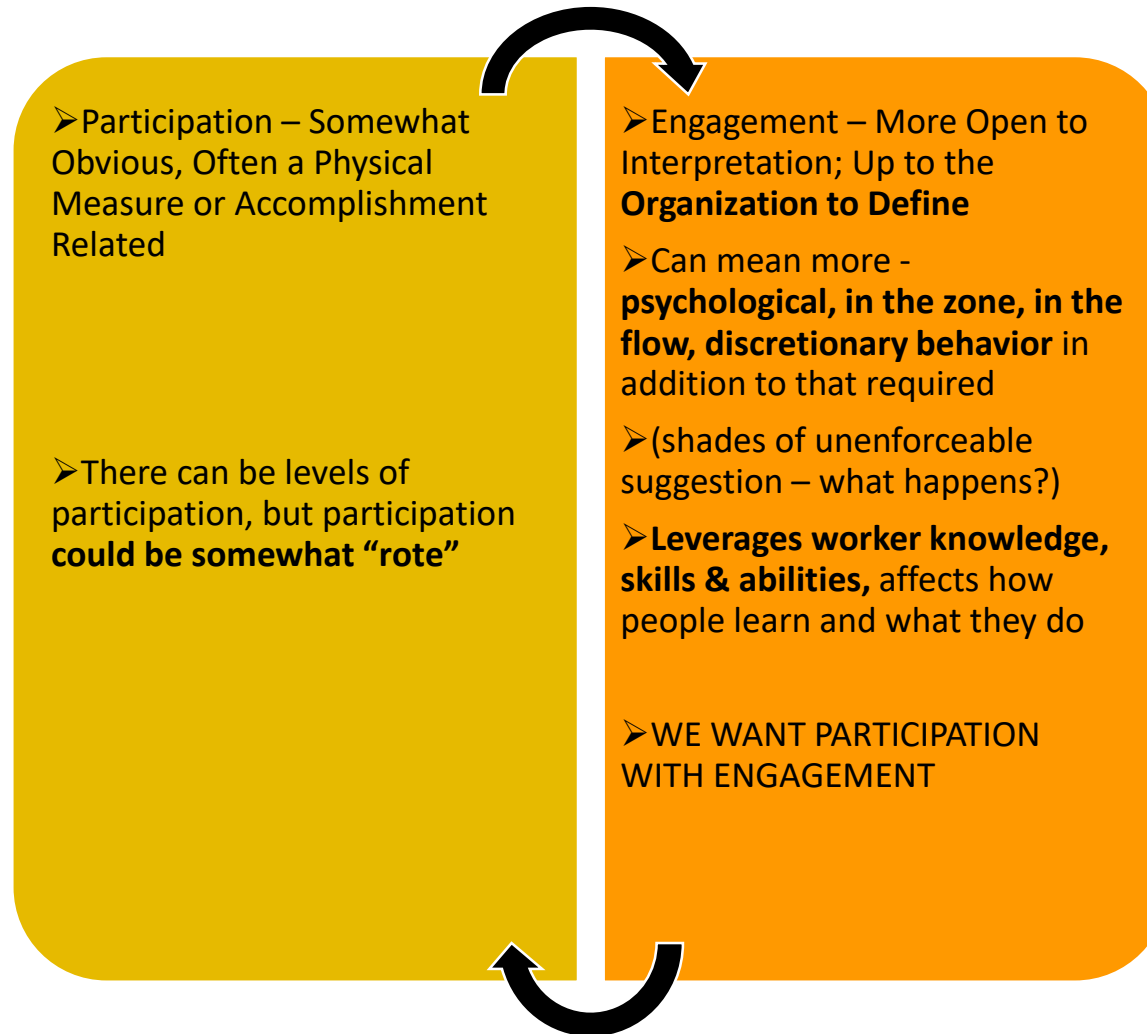
I'm An Advocate of Participation and Engagement

“Meaningful worker participation relies on management/leadership support and commitment to allot the appropriate resources (both time and money) and to communicate the value of worker engagement to the strength of the organization. Sustainable risk reduction is dependent on worker participation through mechanisms such as reporting of hazards, recommending solutions, and problem solving.”

- *ASSP Z10.100 Guidance and Implementation Manual, p.100*

Worker participation helps organizations see the issues and the interdependencies between processes so that appropriate things can take place.

Participation v. Engagement (?)



ANSI/ASSP Z10.0 Talks Directly About Participation:

- Section 5.2, Worker Participation, Involvement in Multiple Areas:
 - Acceptable levels of risk, understanding why work may be done differently than planned, time/resources, access to information, participation in specific processes involving:
 - **Context**, leadership/participation, **planning**, support, **implementation and operations**, evaluation and corrective action, management review
 - E5.2, Performance of the Management System is Tied to COLLECTIVE Participation
 - Engagement on issues
 - Action on worker suggestions
 - Enhanced competence
 - Learning teams, reviews
 - Positive observations
 - Safety committees

*How to Get that
Participation?*

Opportunities:

- Businesses Are Trying to Solve Survival-Level Issues
- Not All Engagement Needs Immediate Tie to Safety, But Can Ultimately Contribute to Safety
- OHS Staff and Other Workers - Help in Areas that Impact the “Business”/Security, Directly
 - Development of newly required plans: By State government, and for ID of needed (new) teams
 - Look at workflows and processes, are there ways to help supply chain?
 - Data security?
 - Participate in staff assignment; keeping teams together vs mixing, review of remote work options
 - Suggestions for enhanced learning and communication?



Look at What We Can Do to WIN in the Post-Pandemic Environment

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Some Considerations to Minimize Interruptions

- Stay on Top of Things, Consider Special Teams. Who is Working On What?
- Accelerate Data Collection, (Safe) Interactions and Decision-Making
- Other Things:
 - A lot of planning and consideration of “alternate futures” and “what-if’s”
 - Event of illness: who will replace?
 - Supply chain, materials/inputs you need, things your customers need
 - Continued relevancy/feasibility of services, products
 - ERT/first aid, cleaning, EAP, employee assistance, anticipate HR issues
 - Conflict resolution
 - Sourcing of PPE
 - Continued risk assessments (especially Serious Injury and Fatality (SIF) precursor related)
 - Ergonomics
 - Travel: quarantine requirements, advance coordination: what do THEY have in place?
 - Have someone scanning the regulatory agenda and CDC/OSHA and country/regional information

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Thinking Beyond the Pandemic



- We Operate in a Dynamic Environment, Many Business Processes – One Impacts Another
- COVID-19 Will Impact Us, But Much More Needs to be Considered
 - Must take other forces, factors, influences that can impact safety into account
 - If we ignore those competing pressures, then our safety systems may fail
- Need Something to Ensure Sustainable Processes Including Leadership, Participation, Risk Assessments, and related

Free Safety Assessment Tool



- Send a **text to 64600** and in the text field, enter the code: **SixthSense** to receive a complimentary assessment tool to review the adequacy of your “systems” approach.



- Use it to conduct an honest organizational assessment; it might point out all things are GREAT but could also point out areas that could be worked on.

Thinking Beyond the Pandemic

- Here is How You'll See:
(After sending a **text to 64600** and in the text field, entering the code: **SixthSense**)
 - Reply with your email address, and you will receive a thank you note, "Thanks for requesting your free digital assessment."
 - You will then receive a link to click on (best viewed and with scoring features that work on laptop or tablet)
 - If you are asked about what to open it with, click "Excel"
 - Complete the assessment at your convenience

Systems-Thinking Approach, Elements from ANSI/ASSP Z10.0:

- Understand the **Context of Organization**, Consider Needs & Expectations of **Interested Parties**
- Expects Active Management **Leadership and Worker Participation** (*More on This, Later*)
- Ops Planning, **Identification of Hazards, Risk Assessment**, Hierarchy of Controls, Management of Change, Procurement, Contractors, **Occupational Health, Emergency Preparedness**
- **Planning**, Both Strategic and Tactical (Includes Objectives and Targets)
- Support: Resources, **Education, Competence**, Awareness
- Evaluation and Corrective Action (Includes Monitoring, **Measurement, Assessment, Feedback** and Organizational Learning)
- Management Review Processes, Outcomes, **Follow-Up**

Opportunities

1. Maintain the Safety Message, Help People Stay Focused
2. Risk Assessment: Continue and Adapt
 - Workers should be involved in changes to what they will be doing
 - Include the traditional safety concerns but then also COVID related hazards
 - Establish how pre-task analyses will continue, will job assignment changes/remote work impact?
 - Assessments for site, process, task and individual levels; continued SIF precursor ID and controls
 - Science/adequacy of controls (Identification of the symptomatic, spacing, routes of entry, barriers, masks & PPE, HVAC % return of fresh air, cleaning protocols, etc.)
3. Determine New Processes for Ensuring Conformance/Compliance

Opportunities

4. Keep An Eye on Pre-existing Processes: Will “They” Need to Change?
 - Group JSA’s, etc.
 - Safety walks/communication
 - Respirator fit testing (sanitation of tubing, hoods, fit test components)
 - Training
5. Modify/Adjust Policies and Requirements
 - Worker Protections from Contractor/Supplier, Customer Interaction, Prevention of Spread
6. Special Teams, Alignment, Communication

“When reason and instinct are reconciled, there will be no higher appeal... “

Jean-Philippe Rameau, 1734

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Summary of Points

- What It Means to Be Safe When Starting/Restarting Ops in the COVID-19 Environment:
 - Similar to before but different considerations
 - Provide the environment and tools
 - Do your homework

- Minimizing Business Interruptions:
 - Lots of planning
 - Risk assessments/what-if's
 - Keep current
 - Processes for compliance
 - Continuity issues:
 - Staffing/replacements
 - Incoming materials
 - Outgoing product
 - Reinvention

- Worker Participation and Engagement – More Important than Ever
 - Need to know and feel that when they are at work they will be “safe”
 - Planned and Enhanced Communication
 - **Use a Sustainable Approach**

Use the Free Assessment Tool! **text to 64600** and in the text field, enter the code: **SixthSense**

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Continue the discussion?

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