

PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT SAFETY

By

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Recently I have taken up playing golf. Since I have not played a lot in the past, I find learning to play well is a challenge. When you watch one of the professionals on television it does not appear to be all that difficult. But that appearance comes from a high degree of talent, dedication and years of practice. As with most of us, I have not had the time to practice in the past with raising children and developing a professional career. I also recognize that I do not possess the necessary talent to be outstanding, but I hope to learn to play reasonably well.

In practicing recently at a driving range an individual lined up next to me. As I watched him he made it look so easy and effortless. He took his time and shot after shot landed right where he wanted it to. As he was satisfied with each club he moved up to the next and repeated the process over and over. He ended up with his driver hitting the ball straight down the range well over 275 yards each time. As he finished up, I complimented him on his performance and told him that I hoped someday to hit the ball as accurately as he did.

I advised him that I had just started to get serious and practice on a regular basis. He told me he had been practicing almost every week for the past 15 years and had taken and is still taking lessons. He then told me that to be really good at golf took more than just random practice, it takes Perfect Practice all of the time. I realized then that this individual had by design along time ago determined he wanted to be a good golfer and was willing to do all the things necessary to get to that level. I also realized, I had a much more difficult task ahead of me than I had thought. Many times we think safety is easy and that it should not take any work. After all isn't it simply Common Sense? Unfortunately we don't always use Common Sense and we do not Practice Perfect Safety. Most of us including myself are not naturally safe. In fact, it is easier to be unsafe and we think if we can get away with it we are often unsafe. If we get away with it we will probably do it again and in many cases it becomes a habit and we will do it without thinking about it. Just like golf we learn a bad habit and it is almost impossible to break.

Safety is not a sometime thing. Safety needs to be an all time thing. Employees need to be safe 100% of the time. Every time an employee deviates from the safe way to do a job he/she needlessly puts him/herself at risk. The more often employees work unsafely the more likely a serious accident is going to take place.

If we are going to have the safest work force we need to get all of our employees to practice safety everyday and everytime. However, this will take dedication and commitment from senior management. We need to establish high safety performance goals, develop safe work procedures, train employees in safe work practices, follow-up regularly, enforce safe practices and provide a positive safety environment. Clearly it is not an accident that good golfers are good, and it is not an accident that companies have a good safety program. It takes perfect practice and willingness to do what it takes. Safety has to have a high degree of importance placed on it within the company. Employees have to understand that working safe is not an option, it is a job requirement all of the time. Golf is a past time or recreational activity for most of us, but safety needs to be a way of life. Every day when employees come to work the single most important thing should be their safety. Every time they make a decision that affects their safety they need to make the decision to be safe. This takes practice over and over again. In fact Perfect Practice without deviation. Without change. It is not the big things that affect a golf swing and it is not the big things that cause most employee accidents.

If you need any help with your Safety Program or have any safety related questions, please call American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc., 1-800-356-1274.