Five practical steps to creating a safety-driven culture

Ryder®

Five practical steps to creating a safety-driven culture

Introduction: driving a focus on safety

When a 75-foot, 80,000-pound 18-wheeler is involved in a collision, given the sheer size of the rig, even the most minor incident is likely to result in damage and injury. Whether the cause is debris on the road, poor driving conditions, fatigue, excess speed, mechanical failure or pressure to deliver goods within too-tight windows - the impact of truck-related crashes is significant.

Fortunately, the focus on safety is growing. New regulatory requirements are demanding higher levels of accountability. As they do, truckers, carriers and fleet owners are stepping up efforts to implement safety programs, train drivers and use new tools, technologies and programs to improve highway safety. One of the most effective ways of minimizing crashes and driving a focus on safety is to implement a safety-driven culture.

Safety: why it matters

Unsafe driving practices have both human and business impacts. First of all, the costs can be staggering, mandating huge increases in revenues just to offset the cost of the crash. However, the primary reason to embrace safety is to minimize or prevent personal injury, vehicle

collisions and property damage. Failure to implement and follow safe business practices can also negatively impact your company's reputation and business results. Conversely, a culture of safety can help you minimize incidents and comply with tougher federal, state and local regulations.

In fact, a company-wide focus on safety is also an effective way to improve productivity and morale. It positions your business as a socially responsible one. And safety and loss prevention programs can help protect your company's physical assets, personnel and intellectual property, saving thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of dollars.

Five practical steps to creating a safety-driven culture

Certainly, building a safety-driven culture is the first line of defense when it comes to preventing crashes, penalties and downtime. It's also an effective way to protect the health and profitability of your business and your brand. With one of the leading safety records in the business and as a recipient of the National Safety's Council's Green Cross of Safety, Ryder has a long tradition of safety that goes beyond our own best practices. We're committed to extending our safety leadership to help you realize the same human, financial and business benefits.

Looking to cultivate a culture of safety? Here are five simple steps you can take to make it happen.

Step 1 — Implement a formal safety program

How do you make safety a part of your organizational DNA? A good place to start is assessing your current safety practices and identifying areas for improvement. Next, put a formal safety program in place. This will provide the scaffolding upon which to build more far-reaching initiatives. Need help getting started? Enlist the support of an experienced safety partner. Then, to ensure success, it helps to:

1. Identify an executive champion to signal the importance of the initiative to your entire organization
2. Designate a safety manager to lead the program and give him/her all necessary resources
3. Engage employees by communicating safety messages on a proactive and continuous basis
4. Make sure policies, employee safety responsibilities and messages are clear and simple
5. Set up processes for hiring, training and monitoring drivers
6. Track results regularly and recognize/reward drivers for safe behavior

Five practical steps to creating a safety-driven culture

Step 2 **Maintain your vehicles and conduct thorough inspections**

In addition to preventing costly FMCSA penalties, CSA interventions and downtime, a well-maintained fleet can help prevent defects that lead to crashes. This is critical in today's litigious environment where drivers and fleet owners are held to a higher standard of responsibility and expected to anticipate, react to and compensate for the mistakes of others. Even if they're not at fault, drivers or vehicles are involved in a crash and proper maintenance could have prevented or mitigated it, the driver and carrier may be held responsible.

Preventive maintenance

With the onus on drivers to go the extra mile in preventing crashes, it makes more sense to replace a part before it fails than to wait for it to cause problems on the highway. A vehicle with worn brakes is more likely to be involved in a crash than one whose brakes are checked regularly.

Preventive maintenance routines should be scheduled at regular intervals – mileage-based, quarterly and annually. At a minimum, technicians should inspect brakes, check warning and fault indicator lights and inspect engine compartments for fluid leaks and tires for air pressure, alignment and tread depth. For example, to identify minor

problems before they compromise safety, Ryder conducts multi-point vehicle safety inspections at service islands and during regularly scheduled preventive maintenance appointments.

Pre- and post-trip inspections

Pre- and post-trip inspections can help identify equipment defects before they cause failures - and prevent costly roadside repairs and downtime. Part 396.11 of the U.S. DoT rules and regulations requires drivers to complete Vehicle Driver Inspection Reports at the end of each working day. The report assesses several vehicle components. These include brakes, steering mechanisms, lights and reflectors, tires, horns, windshield wipers, rear-view mirrors, wheels, rims and emergency equipment.

In addition, Ryder lease customers' vehicles are inspected automatically at every fuel stop. The checklist includes cleaning windshields and mirrors, checking engine compartments, lights, tires and reefer truck fluid levels, calibrating air gauges and making any necessary repairs.

While documentation is not required, the checklist is great for pre-trip inspections as well. See the FMCSA DoT website at **www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/eta/part396.htm**

Step 3 **Find and keep good drivers.**

When it comes to drivers, the correlation between a history of safety violations and crashes is powerful. According to the Transportation Research Board, "there is clear evidence that experience (in years driving) and time spent working within a company's culture are key to an organization's ability to develop a safety culture."[1]

Here are the keys to success:

1. Hire the right drivers from the start: keep unsafe drivers off your payroll with rigorous pre-hire screenings, interviews and hiring practices. Before you hire, check Motor Vehicle Records, accident histories and legal records, run criminal background checks and conduct drug and alcohol tests.

2. Provide driver orientation: the onboarding of new employees is a perfect opportunity to make sure new drivers understand your policies, processes and safety focus. Train every new driver on safety and driving skills from day one. This includes mandated U.S. DoT training for entry-level drivers in driver qualification, wellness, hours of service and whistleblower protection.

1. *CTSSB Synthesis 14: The Role of Safety Culture in Preventing Commercial Motor Vehicle Crashes, Sponsored by the FMCSA, Transportation Research Board, 2007*
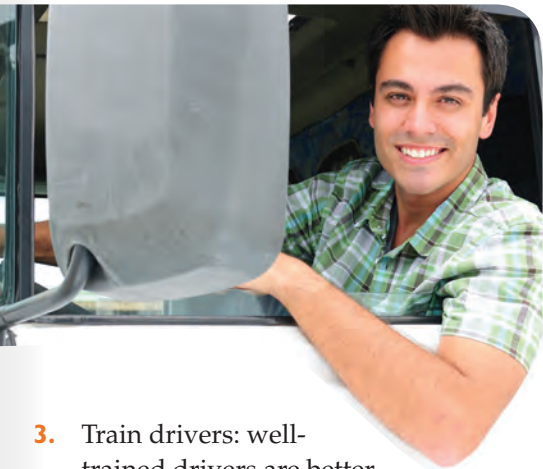
3. Train drivers: well-trained drivers are better equipped to handle the daily challenges of transporting cargo safely. Training improves the skills of your entire driver pool, helps retain drivers for the long term and makes everyone safer. Ongoing training should include a regular schedule of courses to refresh driving skills, keep drivers up to date on rules and regulations and encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

4. Reward with incentives and recognition: in addition to encouraging/rewarding safe driving practices, incentives reduce driver turnover.[2] Popular incentives include annual safety bonuses for crash-free driving and mileage-based rewards and promotions. Driver recognition programs that reinforce your safety focus such as Driver of the Month or Driver of the Year awards are also effective.
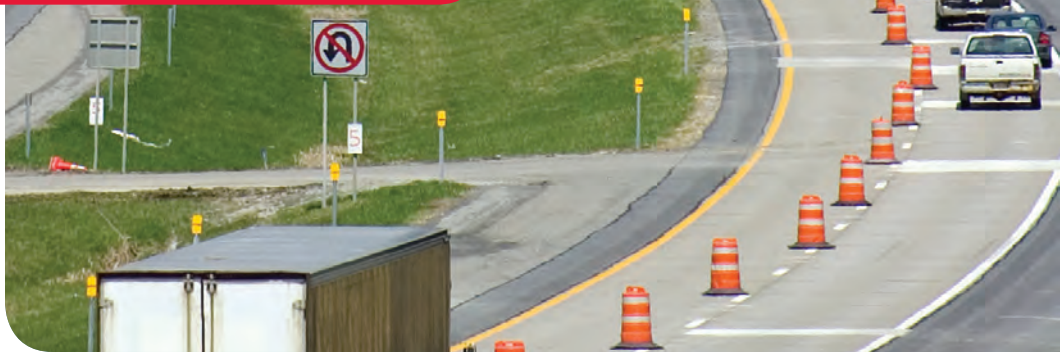
Step 4

Minimize accidents

The three most common causes of crashes include unsafe driving, fatigue and health issues. Fortunately, preventive actions can help mitigate these factors.

1. Unsafe driving: use onboard technology to track unsafe behaviors like hard braking and speeding. Telematics also monitors fuel consumption, idle time, truck location and other vital statistics, while providing feedback to drivers on how safely they're driving.

2. Fatigued driving: Fully 37% of drivers surveyed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration admitted to falling asleep at the wheel. Encourage drivers to get enough sleep, avoid driving between 12 AM and 6 AM, maintain a healthy diet, take naps, avoid medications that cause drowsiness, and recognize the signs of drowsiness.

3. Driver health issues: Drivers work long hours, are sedentary for long periods of time, have irregular sleep patterns – and are categorically one of the unhealthiest populations in the country[3]. Encourage your drivers to have annual physicals, consider a company-sponsored health program, offer incentives that reward healthy behaviors and encourage on-the-job exercise.

Step 5

Be protected

Even under the best of circumstances, crashes happen. When they do, it's important to be protected. Make sure you have adequate insurance and not just the minimum required. Your cargo may be worth more than the vehicle transporting it, so be sure your insurance policy covers cargo too.

Ryder customers enjoy access to comprehensive physical damage and liability protection with fast claims handling, immediate repair authorization, split fleet coverage and free spill kits. In the event of a total loss, gap protection covers the difference between a vehicle's market value (covered by most physical damage policies) and book value (not covered by most policies).

As for the accident itself, make sure you have procedures in place and your drivers know what to do if they are involved in a crash of any type.

2. *CTSSB Synthesis 14: The Role of Safety Culture in Preventing Commercial Motor Vehicle Crashes, Sponsored by the FMCSA, Transportation Research Board, 2007*

3. *Corporate Wellness Magazine, American Crisis: Health of our Nation's Truck Drivers, Stewart Levy, 2/1/2012*

Five practical steps to creating a safety-driven culture

Ryder can help you make safe business good business

At Ryder, safety has been a defining philosophy since our company's founding nearly 80 years ago and continues to inform our approach to business. From our own safety-driven culture to the programs, services and tools we offer customers, Ryder is committed to making safety an integral part of our business and yours.

As our record demonstrates, we believe in safety. We also understand that it's about more than processes and programs. It's something you live and breathe. At Ryder, we know that businesses that build a culture of safety report higher levels of driver satisfaction and deliver better customer service. That's why we're committed to helping you realize the benefits of improving safety every day.

Ryder offers a comprehensive suite of safety services, products and programs:

- Fleet safety assessments, reviews and loss-prevention services
- Pre-hire testing services to keep your trucks and drivers safe
- Expert vehicle maintenance to keep trucks safe and inspection-ready
- Fleet safety and regulatory compliance solutions – including CSA training and webinars, special reports, manuals and handbooks, log audit service, DOT/MTO record-keeping review and mock audits
- Extensive choice of online, CD and video training options
- Driver and fleet safety recognition and reward programs

Contact your Transportation Services Advisor at 1-770-569-6460 to learn more

1-770-569-6460

www.ryder.com