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Maintenance
Management
Newsletter

Operationally Induced Events (OIEs)

How to Know Who is Damaging Your Assets

By David Tod Geaslin
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8% and 60%

8% of your operators are directly responsible for 60% of your maintenance dollars spent.

I have been involved in the management of maintenance for over 40 years and have measured this statement many times and it holds true.

I have come to this statement by tracking Operationally Induced Events (OIEs) which are maintenance events that were not caused by the normal operation of the asset. If an asset came to harm by an operator, tenant, student, designer, or some other outside force it was classified as an OIE. The maintenance department did not cause the problem but was tasked to correct the problem.

This number has been derived using failure analysis and includes only causes of maintenance that were proven to have been impacted, over sped, over temped, dropped, under spec'd, or intentionally operated to failure.

By tracking OIEs as a simple check box on the work order (WO), a maintenance department can isolate the causes of machine or facility failures and attribute the failure to a specific person, procedure, or policy. Once a dollar value has been attached to the cause of the maintenance event, the leadership can create a remedy.

This very large dollar amount is usually a modest number of work orders but each has a very high dollar value. Let me break down these numbers further. Of the 8%:

The Top 4%

These operators do not understand what they are doing wrong. They have not been properly trained. They want to do the job right but do not know

how. By tracking OIEs the organization can create one-on-one training events to correct a specific behavior or change a procedure. This is called Training on the Job (TOJ) and is considered to be the most effective form of procedural training. TOJ should not be confused with On the Job Training (OJT) where a worker is allowed to make mistakes until they get it right. OJT has many bad legal ramifications. This 4% is usually very happy to correct their behavior because they want to improve.

The Other 4%

Of the remaining 4%, these people do not care about the organization or the assets. Fortunately, half of them are willing to change their behavior to keep their jobs. They change because they know their behavior is being tracked with a dollar value.

The Bottom 2%

The bottom 2%, they do not care and never will and will continue to wreck your facilities, buildings, and equipment and your maintenance department will never be able to keep up with the damage they do. These people think that they are protected. They are husbands or wives or brothers or sisters or sons or daughters or lovers or golfing buddies or fishing partners or whatever of someone in power and think they do not have to be held accountable for their negligent actions. I have seen people hold threatened litigation over the organization for perceived wrongs. And, I have seen some just

plain ol' bad people who are so bitter they have to strike out in any direction.

Quick ID Results

When OIEs and dollar values are tracked, it doesn't take 90 days to identify the people who are responsible for destroying the organization's assets. Even in an organization where it is difficult to release a people, a person who has been identified as a threat to the facilities, machines, vehicles, or safety can be moved to a task where they pose no threat to the organization or safety.

Exact ROI on Training

There is one other significant advantage to tracking OIEs. Once the dollar value for a certain type of behavior is known, that is exactly how much you can spend on training to make the problem go away.

Feeding Kitties

Take feeding kittens for example. One organization had a lady who worked in one of the medical laboratories and had taken up the cause of feeding stray kittens around the building. Eventually she was putting out about 100 pounds of cat food a month to take care of the poor kitties.

Her intentions were good, unfortunately, she was also creating a food magnet that attracted rats, raccoons, opossums, and armadillos. The maintenance department was constantly filling in holes dug by armadillos under the sidewalk near the food source to mitigate possible ankle injuries.

The health department was worried about rabid animals being attracted, rat infestations, and fleas. The maintenance department had tried for years to get her to stop, yet the woman would not stop feeding the cats no matter how many times she was asked. The maintenance effort required to remedy this feeding of cats was clearly not the fault of maintenance, yet maintenance was expending precious resources to clean up the mess.

When I asked why she thought she was protected it became known that she was the wife of a very important director elsewhere on the campus and could not be fired. It was decided that the Operationally Induced Event (OIE) should be tracked.

It didn't take long before the cats and rats penetrated the basement of the medical building and it had to be cleaned out and fumigated for fleas.

At the next quarterly meeting the WOs were shown to the medical building department director and that the feeding of cats had cost his department $13,000 in grounds maintenance and fumigation costs.

The feeding of cats stopped immediately after that.

Without tracking OIEs and assigning a dollar value to the cost of feeding stray cats, this behavior would have been unmanageable by the maintenance department.

OIE Tracking Benefits

Tracking OIEs allows an organization to identify the specific individuals who are causing damage to the facilities and assets AND allows targeted training to make the behavior go away AND provides an exact Return on Investment (ROI) for the training.

Identifying and managing the 8% can make a very significant improvement in the operational readiness of an organization and reduce the maintenance costs.

The author:

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