

Understanding reactions to safety incentives

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Abstract

Problem: Safety incentives, defined broadly as reward techniques used to improve health and safety results, do not always produce the desired results. **Method:** Using structural equation modeling and cross-level analysis procedures, this study investigated the relationships between individual and group-level variables, and reactions to a safety incentive program at a production plant. **Results:** The data obtained from 329 team members support most of the predicted relationships. At the individual level of analysis, locus of control influenced supervisor-subordinate relationships, which, in turn, influenced perceived organizational support and reactions to safety incentives. At the group level, the interaction between group cohesiveness, safety norms, and task interdependence had a significant effect on reactions to safety incentives. **Discussion:** The findings provide some insights into the functioning of safety incentives in a team environment. **Impact on industry:** These findings indicate that safety incentive programs are more likely to be effective components of health and safety strategies when they are implemented in settings with positive supervisor-subordinate relationships and within interdependent teams that share safety norms.

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