

BRIAN'S STORY: *You Can Make A Difference*

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation. Featured are:

INTRODUCTION: A brief description of the program and the subject that it addresses.

PROGRAM OUTLINE: Summarizes the program content. If the program outline is discussed before the video is presented, the entire program will be more meaningful and successful.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION: These sections will help you set up the training environment, help you relate the program to site-specific incidents, and provide program objectives for focusing your presentation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Questions may be copied and given to participants to stimulate discussion about the program, its safety lessons and universal theme.

INTRODUCTION

Jeff Bell received the phone call that every parent fears. His son Brian, a young man full of potential and promise, had been killed on the job. In this powerful presentation, Jeff Bell introduces his son Brian and takes the audience step by step through the events leading to his death. During his presentation, Jeff, an experienced safety facilitator for a large paper mill, takes every opportunity to explain what is required to prevent such tragedies.

In addition to powerfully describing the loss of a loved one, Jeff calls each viewer to action by stressing the following critical safety points:

- Never forget that safety statistics represent real people.
- Think about every job before you do it.
- Look out for your co-workers; have the courage to speak up.
- Ask "what if" to try and foresee unexpected hazards.
- Inspect equipment before use.
- Be aware of pinch points, line of fire and shifting loads.
- Everyone can make a difference; get involved in safety.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SAFETY PROFESSIONAL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

• The type of safety culture we're trying to achieve is where everybody looks out for each other and when somebody steps up and says something to someone, that person says thank you. Make no doubt about it, everyone can make a difference, according to Jeff Bell.

• He says he doesn't like to be introduced as a safety professional, because that implies that in order to make a difference in safety, you have to have a degree or some special training. "I'm here to tell you every person in this room can make a difference," adds Jeff.

• When he asks how many people in the room are involved in safety, only six or eight raise their hands. "That's what I want to ask you today, is to get you involved in safety and tell you why it's so important to get you involved," he says.

JEFF'S INSPIRATION FOR HIS PRESENTATION

• Jeff was at a big safety conference where a CEO of a major company was explaining his company's commitment to safety and said, "The toughest thing you will ever do is pick up a telephone and call someone's loved one and tell them they're not coming home."

- “I was sitting in that audience and told myself, ‘There’s one thing tougher than that; that’s being on the receiving end of that phone call,’” says Jeff.

STATISTICS ARE IMPERSONAL

- Every year in America, over four million are injured on the job; every day, sixteen people die from injuries sustained on the job.
- “We’re often guilty of tracking statistics because that’s the only way we have to measure how we’re doing in safety,” Jeff notes, “but that’s the thing about statistics; they are so impersonal, they don’t mean a whole lot to you unless it was somebody that you knew who got hurt or killed.”
- Every single one of those statistics is somebody’s son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister. Jeff says he is there to put a face on those statistics and it happens to be the face of his son Brian.

BRIAN’S CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT YEARS

- After showing the audience various photographs of Brian, Jeff tells them about Brian’s childhood and life as a young adult.
- He was a talented artist who started drawing as a small child. He continued to get better as he got older, taking art in high school where they entered some of his paintings in local festivals; he won first place.
- Besides hunting and fishing, Brian was a black belt in karate, wrestled and played football in high school. He was offered a football scholarship to three colleges and chose Culver Stockton in Canton, MO.
- Even though he received scholarship money from football and his art, Brian knew it was a hardship on the family to go 850 miles from north Florida to go to school. So every year, he would come home in the summer and work to save spending money for college.
- Brian worked three summers at the mill where Jeff worked, but the mill was going through cut backs the fourth summer and couldn’t hire him. Brian’s friend Mack agreed to hire Brian to help build condominiums up and down the coast of Florida.

JEFF SPEAKS TO BRIAN AND THE AUDIENCE ABOUT SAFETY

- Jeff said he often talked to Brian about safety because he had a background in safety. “I encouraged him that if he ever saw anything that didn’t look right or had any concerns, always stop and get direction and ask someone. And that’s what I’m going to ask y’all to do,” Jeff says.
- If you’re ever doing something and you have a concern, stop and get direction. If you see a co-worker doing the same, you should have the courage to step up and stop them.
- If you see yourself or a co-worker doing something that doesn’t look right, could cause someone to get hurt, ask yourself this question: Would I be comfortable watching my son or daughter do this job about the way I’m about to do it or the way I’m about to watch my co-worker do it? If the answer is no, we’ve got to find another way to do it.
- Jeff says it’s amazing how we think that we’re bulletproof, but we’d never allow our children to do some of the things that we’ve done. “So next time you do a job, ask yourself that question. If the answer is no, let’s do something different,” he adds.

BRIAN GOES TO WORK FOR MACK

- Jeff and Brian went and bought a hammer and hardhat during the summer of 1999 and Brian went to work for Jeff’s friend Mack building condos.

- One day, Brian was wearing Jeff's hardhat and Jeff asked him why. "Dad, when I wear that white hardhat I stand out like a sore thumb, but when I wear that hardhat with all these stickers I fit right in with all those guys," replied Brian.
- Jeff was preparing rods and reels one afternoon for a weekend fishing trip with Brian, Mack and his sons when he decided to go inside and check on the weather. When he did, he received a telephone call from Mack who said that there had been an accident on the jobsite involving Brian and that Jeff needed to go to the hospital in Jacksonville.
- After arriving at the hospital, members of the emergency room went on and on about what they had done to save Brian's life. When Jeff asked them if he was okay, they said, "No, your son is dead."

THE IMPORTANCE OF STEPPING UP & MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- "My son died doing something that had been done over and over and over again that same way," Jeff says. He asks the audience if they have ever seen someone do something and somebody stopped them and said, "You know that might not be the safest way to do it;" and, they respond "I've done it 1,000 times this way."
- "The thousandth time may be the time that kills you," says Jeff. "If you look over and see one of your co-workers doing something and that little question mark goes off and you say 'You know they might get hurt if they keep doing that.' That's not the right way to think."
- "The way you've got to look at is this: they will get hurt doing that; it's just a matter of time. That's why it's so important that every one of you step up and intervene, make a difference," Jeff concludes.
- When building condominiums, workers pour the floors, take a form table that weighs 16,000 pounds, put it together, raise it with a series of jacks and stabilize it, according to Jeff. "Then they put stress cable in it, pour concrete. It sits there two or three days and cures and then they lower it down. Everybody is on a jack staggered around it and they lower it down, take it apart and move it," he says.
- On August 3, 1999, Brian was operating one of those jacks. He was standing in front of a two-foot wide support column with the form table right in front of him. "Now I'd like to think every person in this room would have recognized that Brian was in the line of fire and in a pinch point if that form table had shifted," says Jeff.
- Neither Brian nor anyone else on the job recognized the pinch point. "Obviously, no one on his job ever thought something could have happened. But you know, if you look around at one of your co-workers and they're doing something and you don't step up and have the courage to say something, you haven't helped out at all," adds Jeff.
- "The worst thing you could possibly ever do is see somebody and say, 'You know they might get hurt' and then later on somebody comes in the break room and says, 'Hey, did you hear about Joe? He got hurt doing so and so'," says Jeff. "And you thought 'I could have stopped him'."

HOW BRIAN DIED

- Jeff says when they lowered the form table that day no one ever asked the question "what if something happens?" or did a pre-job inspection.
- One of the jacks slipped and fell. A brass nut on the jack hadn't been inspected and the inside of it was worn out. When it fell, it let the jack opposite of Brian fall.
- When that side fell, it caused the 16,000-pound form table to shift forward and Brian was pinned between it and the column behind him, killing him.

- “Sixteen people a day die every day from injuries sustained on the job; I want you to think about that,” says Jeff. “I’m going to be here at your plant for one day. While I’m here, there are going to be 16 families that are going to get a phone call that tells them their love one isn’t coming home.”

THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE LIVES IS TO GET INVOLVED

- Jeff went to the jobsite the day after Brian died to see what happened and how it could have possibly happened. A security guard told him he couldn’t enter the area because he wasn’t wearing a hardhat.
- When he got to the seventh floor where the incident occurred, the first thing he saw on the ground was the hardhat he had given Brian. “I’m going to tell you, this was the most important piece of safety equipment on that job, but it didn’t save his life,” Jeff says.
- “The only way we’re ever going to change those 16 people a day dying is for everybody in this room to get involved; everybody in this room to have the courage to step up and stop somebody if they see anything that they can get hurt from,” he says.
- If somebody had seen Brian and told him to move two feet to the left or two to the right, Jeff tells the audience he wouldn’t be there telling his story.

HAVE THE COURAGE TO STEP UP

- Jeff thanks the six or eight people who raised their hands when asked them who was involved in safety at the beginning of his presentation. “But all you people that didn’t raise your hands, find a way to get involved; have the courage to step up. It’s not easy to do, but you can do it,” he says.
- Jeff says he does this presentation for two reasons: to keep his son’s memory alive and to influence others to step up and make a difference. “We’ll never get to an accident-free environment until I come do this talk and every person in this room is involved.”
- There are a lot of reasons not to be involved; it’s easier not to be involved, to sit around and let somebody else do it, according to Jeff. He says he had even gotten in that mode and used it as an excuse to step back from the safety process.
- It took Brian’s death to get him back involved. “Don’t wait for something like that to happen, until you’re hurt or your family is hurt or something happens before you decide that you’re going to step up and make a difference. Make a difference now, before something like this happens,” Jeff concludes.

PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING OR TRAINING SESSION

Review each section of this Leader's Guide as well as the videotape. Here are a few suggestions for using the program:

Make everyone aware of the importance the company places on health and safety and how each person must be an active member of the safety team.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the discussion questions included in this Leader's Guide and hand them out to the program participants.

Make an attendance record and have each participant sign the form. Maintain the attendance record as written documentation of the training performed.

Here are some suggestions for preparing your videotape equipment and the room or area you use:

Check the room or area for quietness, adequate ventilation and temperature, lighting and unobstructed access.

Check the seating arrangement and the audiovisual equipment to ensure that all participants will be able to see and hear the videotape program.

Place or secure extension cords to prevent them from becoming a tripping hazard.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person the opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

Explain that the primary purpose of the program is to discuss the circumstances surrounding Brian Bell's death that illustrate why it is so important for employees to step and make a difference when they see themselves or their co-workers involved in an unsafe situation.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Lead discussions about specific injuries and incidents that could happen at your facility should employees choose not to get involved in the safety process.

Copy the discussion questions included in this Leader's Guide and allow the participants to review them before discussing the program.

BRIAN'S STORY:
You Can Make A Difference
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Brian preferred to wear Jeff's well-worn hardhat with stickers because it made him feel more comfortable and helped him "fit in" with his co-workers. Do you feel comfortable talking to your co-workers about safety? Why or why not?
2. What were some of the contributing factors to Brian's accident?
3. PPE is considered the last line of defense against workplace hazards. The construction site required all employees to wear a hardhat. Why wasn't that enough to save Brian's life?
4. Have you ever done something at work that you wouldn't allow your child or other family member to do? If so, why did you feel it was worth the risk?
5. If you saw a co-worker performing a task that didn't seem safe, would you step up and intervene? How would you approach the situation?
6. How would you respond if a co-worker approached you about a job you were performing that he or she felt wasn't safe?