

COMPLACENCY IN THE WORKPLACE:

Sandy's Story

INTRODUCTION

Complacency—we've all heard the word. We've been warned about it. Butch Evans never thought he was complacent about his safety, but we'll never know what he was thinking during the safety meeting on lockout/tagout. We'll never know because 30 minutes after the meeting, Butch was dead. In this dramatic, heartfelt video, Butch's mother, Sandy, tells the tragic story of the loss of her son. She tells this story to help save others from the heartbreak she came to know the day Butch was killed on the job.

PROGRAM OUTLINE:

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPLACENCY

- There's a hazard in every workplace that is deadly. It doesn't matter where you work or what type of work you do. It rides with you on your way to work. It even follows you home.
- It goes by many different names: distraction, complacency, not focusing, not being present. Maybe you'd call it "not having your head in the game."
- Often, we go about our daily routines with our minds elsewhere, thinking about family, plans for the weekend or maybe just not thinking at all.
- It happens. When we follow the same daily routine, we all have a tendency to become complacent, to not keep our minds present and in the moment.
- To illustrate how not being mentally present can lead to tragedy, lead operator (and Butch's mother) Sandy, Sandy's friend and supervisor Reine and Butch's best friend Chuck discuss Sandy's devotion to safety, the day Butch died at work and the lessons we can all learn about complacency from Butch's death.

SANDY IS A GREAT SAFETY ADVOCATE

- Sandy says she has worked on her job for nearly 50 years and that even more than being a lead operator, her job is keeping people safe. "That is just my main concern. I want everybody that works to be safe," she says. "That's my family. I live with them day in and day out."
- "They love her. Everybody loves Sandy," says Reine. "And she's a great advocate for safety in our facility and always has been."
- "We've all got to look out for each other, but when it comes down to it, ultimately, we're responsible for our own safety," Sandy explains. She says that you can't become complacent because a machine can kill or maim you.
- "You know, we think of like Sandy being such a cheerleader here with safety and I'm sure she took that home. I'm sure Sandy was always watching out for her husband, her children, her grandchildren," notes Reine.
- "My son, born Andrew, Butch was his nickname, most wonderful son, loving, just an amazing, amazing son," Sandy adds.

SANDY'S STORY ABOUT BUTCH

- Butch's best friend Chuck says he has known Sandy for 32 years and that Butch was basically his brother. "We did everything together: hunting, fishing, camping. We played sports together. He was my best man in my wedding."
- Sandy says that on May 25, Butch went to work as normal on second shift, but had to go in for a safety meeting first. He left the meeting to go do his job that he had done for two years. "The same job, nothing, nothing different, but this day was different. This day was entirely different. Thirty minutes after he went to work, he was dead, crushed to death in a machine."
- "Butch went to work on a piece of equipment that was not properly tagged out," notes Reine. "He went up on top of the piece of equipment and it had some type of lever, I believe, and then it just crushed him to his death."

- Sandy adds that what is so ironic is that the safety meeting Butch had just left was on lockout/tagout.
- “Butch was one of the most responsible, caring people that I’ve ever known in my life. He was a very detailed personality,” says Chuck. “He would be the last person that I would ever dream that something like this could ever happen to.”
- Sandy recalls that when her nephew, a policeman, knocked on her door and told her Butch had been killed, she asked him what he was talking about and told him Butch was at work. Her nephew responded that he had been killed at work.
- “I said, ‘People don’t die at work,’ you know. I said, ‘Tim, he’s at work. There’s got to be some kind of mistake.’ But there wasn’t; there wasn’t. He was dead,” concludes Sandy.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM BUTCH’S DEATH

- Chuck says it was obvious that Butch didn’t have his mind on what he was doing, whether he was thinking about his daughter or was in a hurry for whatever reason. “It shows just how easy, just how simple it could be to make a life-changing mistake.”
- “In safety meetings that I’ve done at work, and that other people have done at work, people get so complacent,” adds Sandy. “You see them sitting there. They’re looking at their Facebook, they’re texting, they’re seeing what’s going on in the world, everything but what they should be paying attention to.”
- Reine adds that she hopes people realize that they cannot take shortcuts. “You have to think out your job. You have to realize your life is important and this can be you. Tell people about this story,” she continues. “Sandy is a real person. We’re not actors. We’re telling a story of what happened to someone and how it affected their life and how that life could have been saved too.
- “Think about leaving home one morning and telling your wife and daughter that you love them and not ever coming back again,” says Chuck.
- Sandy notes that Butch had a beautiful wife and a six-year-old daughter that he will never see grow up. “Just realize the dangers. People don’t think they can die at work, but they can.”
- “From all bad things that happen, we know there’s good and I think Sandy’s passion to tell this story is how she’s making Butch live on,” Reine adds. She says that hopefully Butch will be living on for many years by letting people know he was wonderful man and father and hopes that they will do the right thing to lead longer lives.
- “I think I’m pretty much a firm believer that there is no such thing as an accident. There was no reason for my son to die that day. There was no reason for my son to die. I never, ever, want another family to have to go through what we went through. If there’s any way, anything I could say to prevent it and help another family, then this has been the best thing that I’ve ever done,” Sandy says at the end of the discussion.

WHY WE MUST GIVE EVERY TASK OUR FULL ATTENTION

- It’s important to recognize that this was not a story about just lockout/tagout. In fact, this story could just as easily be told about someone being distracted while driving a car or wandering into the path of an oncoming forklift.
- This was a story about going through your daily routine without being present and mindful of your work and your surroundings.
- Butch knew how to do his job the right way, the safe way. As Sandy said, he’d done that same job every day for years. In addition to that, he had just left a safety meeting on the very same danger that took his life.
- So what happened? The answer is simple: Butch was at work, but his mind was somewhere else altogether.

- Take a moment and put yourself in Butch's place. Are you so accustomed to your job that you could do it without really having to think about it? How about your drive home? Do you know the route so well that you can just use that time to daydream?
- Now think about your family and friends. Think about them telling the story you just watched—only this time it's about you.

CONCLUSION

- In your daily routine, you may not run the risk of being crushed in a machine, but with as many tasks as we have in life, there are just as many ways to get hurt.
- So no matter what it is that you're doing, give it your full attention. Be present and mindful of the task at hand and make it home safe.

PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING

Review each section of this Leader's Guide as well as the program. 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 program. Play it without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the review questions included in this Leader's Guide and ask each participant to complete them.

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

Here are some suggestions for preparing your video 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 program.

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 discourage employees from allowing complacency and daily routine to keep them from giving their full attention to every task they perform.

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

Lead discussions about hazards at your workplace that could cause severe injury or death if employees allow complacency and daily routine to keep them from devoting their full attention to the job.

After watching the program, the viewer should be able to explain the following:

- What the basic characteristics of complacency are;
- What happened on the day Butch died;
- What lessons can be learned from Butch's death;
- Why we must give every task our full attention.

COMPLACENCY IN THE WORKPLACE:

Sandy's Story *REVIEW QUIZ*

Name _____ Date _____

Please provide answers to the following to show how well you understand the information presented during this program.

1. Which of the following is an example of complacency?
 - a. distraction
 - b. not focusing
 - c. not being present
 - d. all of the above

2. Sandy says she has worked at her job for nearly _____ years.
 - a. 15
 - b. 25
 - c. 50

3. Sandy says that ultimately everyone is responsible for their own safety.
 - a. true
 - b. false

4. Butch died 30 minutes after a safety meeting regarding _____.
 - a. hazardous chemicals
 - b. lockout/tagout
 - c. fall prevention
 - d. personal protective equipment

5. Who went to Sandy's house to inform her that Butch had been killed?
 - a. Reine, Sandy's supervisor
 - b. Tim, Sandy's nephew
 - c. Chuck, Butch's friend

6. Sandy says she believes that there is no such thing as an accident.
 - a. true
 - b. false

7. People who don't work around hazardous machinery are not at risk of becoming complacent about safety.
 - a. true
 - b. false

ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. d

2. c

3. a

4. b

5. b

6. a

7. b