

Please Cough – The One Thing to Do This Week

Executive summary. Caring about your employees is human and it's good for business. Combine the two to create solid and long-lasting relationships plus a healthy business. Send your employees to the doctor. Regularly.

I'm in construction, why do I care? You care about your employees and co-workers because you're human. You care because your employees and co-workers contribute to your own financial, physical, and emotional wellbeing. And all of these things lead to a higher quality life. And finally, as my superintendent once told me about life: "this ain't no practice run".



Men die earlier. This industry we're in, construction and engineering, is full of men. Why is that important? Well, because we men typically don't care for ourselves as much as we should, and when we do get ill we wait for it to go away instead of seeing a doctor. This recent article out of Harvard Medical School states that women outlive men worldwide between 5 years and 7 years in the United States and worldwide, respectively. [QR] Seems women live longer than that.



Fine, I read your article, now what? Thank you for making it to the end of the article purposefully kept short because you thought it was a waste of time. What you do now is you encourage your employees to get a physical each year and to visit a doctor. When eating habits change, or headaches start, you force your employees to see a doctor. All joking aside if you can impart this importance upon someone who respects you, you may even save a life.

My story. As you get older you realize that people die or have life-altering personal events unexpectedly. The advice that younger people usually have a hard time taking is the "make sure you write it down in a letter or email because this guy could switch jobs or die."

Some close deaths, or near deaths, to me include:

- Chest hurting – one of my superintendents in his mid-50s went to bed one night with some heartburn and never woke up.
- Abnormal headaches – my previous boss from years past in his mid-50s, who had an ego the size of Dallas, had headaches and when visiting his doctor they sent him immediately out the door to the brain surgeon to remove an aneurism
- Stomach discomfort – my 27-year old co-worker had stomach issues and ended up getting his cancerous stomach removed
- Heart attack – my client in his 60s, a State employee project manager, just went home one day and died of a heart attack
- Heart attack – my 35-year old wastewater treatment plant equipment salesman came home from a jog, sat on the couch and died
- Cancers – a woman I was dating once upon a time went in too late for a breast exam and died a year later of breast cancer at 43; another woman I had dinner with once had blood in her stool at 23 and died in her 20s from colon cancer



Even today I have two employees with stomach issues and one with a testicular issue. They're all men and all sometimes need to be pushed, especially if they're not being pushed by a wife, mother, or sister.

I mention all these things because some of them may have been preventable with regular check-ups with your doctor. As an employer, you

have the *unwritten* authority to send your employees to the doctor. Do it. Save a life.

Go tell an employee or co-worker today to see their primary physician for a physical

Work safe!