Maintain a Sense of Vulnerability

Did You Know?

A sense of vulnerability means that everyone in your plant:
- understands the hazards associated with the materials and process conditions (e.g., pressure, temperature, etc.) in the area
- is constantly vigilant for symptoms of weaknesses that might indicate more serious events ahead, such as a small leak that could become a major line failure
- stays vigilant even if the plant has good safety performance.

- In our personal lives, a sense of vulnerability is what causes us to slow our driving speed in bad weather or to be more cautious when working on a ladder.
- We can lose our sense of vulnerability when we are in a hurry. That can cause us to skip steps or forget to wear the correct PPE.
- New employees may bring their sense of vulnerability from an earlier job or company, which means they may need help understanding the hazards in their new job.
- Maintaining a sense of vulnerability is an essential characteristic of a good process safety culture.

What Can You Do?

- If you see an at-risk behavior, stop and ask the person if they are following the correct procedure. You could prevent someone from being seriously hurt — or worse.
- If someone stops you to ask about how you are performing a task, do not be defensive. They are trying to keep you safe. Answer their questions calmly, be open to their suggestions on how to perform the task, and thank them for their concern about your safety.
- If your area has newer employees, coach them on the unit hazards and procedures. Help keep them safe.
- Never think, “It can’t happen here.” It can!

A sense of vulnerability is your process safety “Spider Sense.”

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