Building and Sustaining a Culture of Safety

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OSHA Area Director

Overview

- Discuss why many safety initiatives often fail to meet expectations

- Creating and sustaining a positive safety culture: Outlining a strategy

- Explore management and supervisory responsibilities

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Safety Initiatives

How safety initiatives often look:

- Top level rhetoric about the importance of safety in site value hierarchy (i.e. versus production)

- Targeted training or "canned courses" presented as a reward or incentive

- System implementation –
  - Without attention to employee engagement!
  - Not integral to job performance criteria

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Safety Initiatives

- An employee-incentive program that provides "prizes" for not getting hurt is based on the premise that the worker is the problem and that he or she can be motivated by awarding a prize.

- In the end, these programs typically yield short-term results despite their high cost.

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Safety Initiatives

Problem - Behavior change is not sustained

- Participants of program change their behavior temporarily
- System implementation often marks a short term improvement on safety metrics followed by a return to previous levels, or
- System utilization ineffective

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The futility of safety enforcement

Practically all "canned" safety programs put the Safety Manager,
And supervisors in the role of safety police!

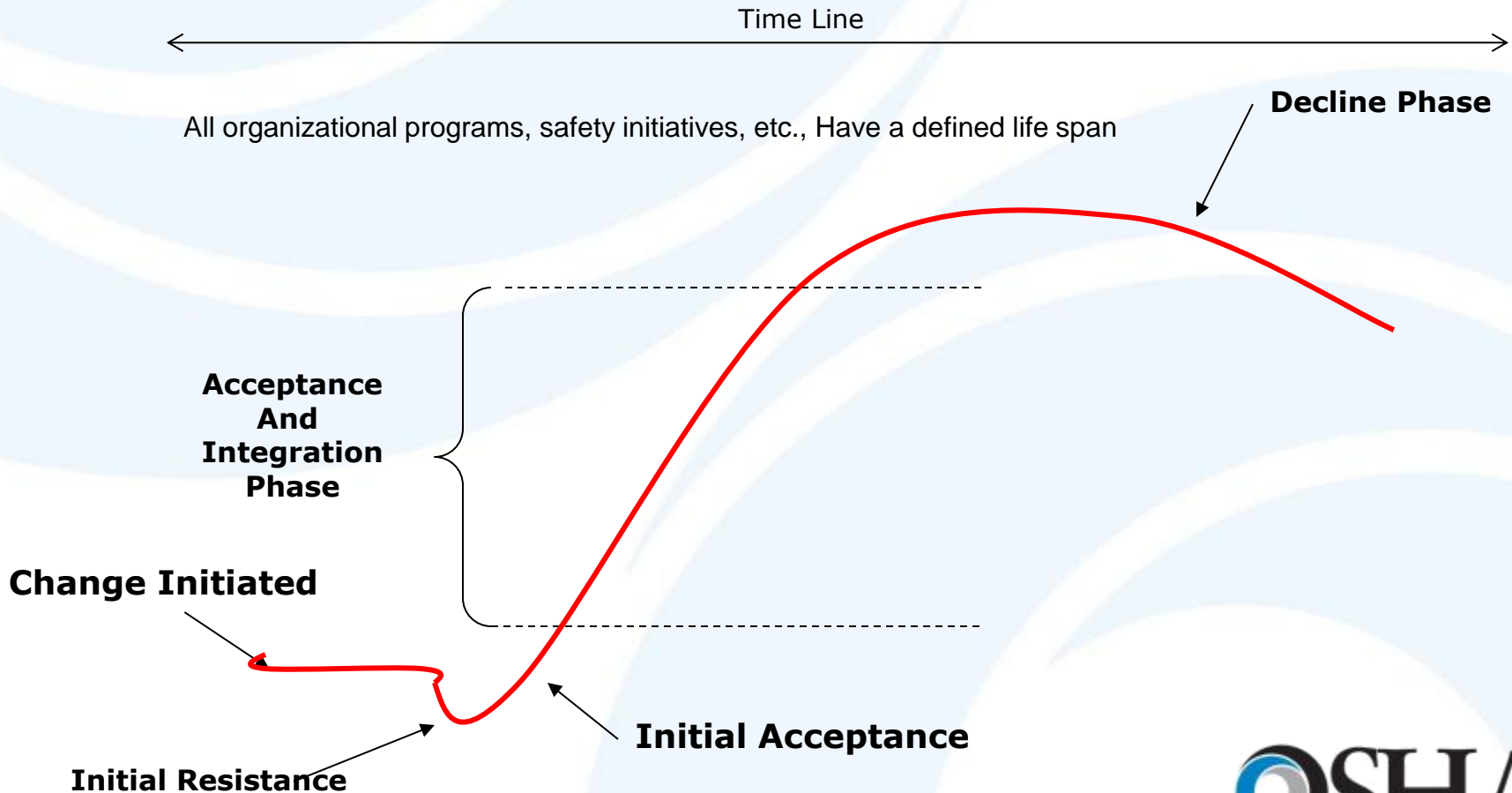What happens when you have a safety enforcement environment rather than a safety culture?

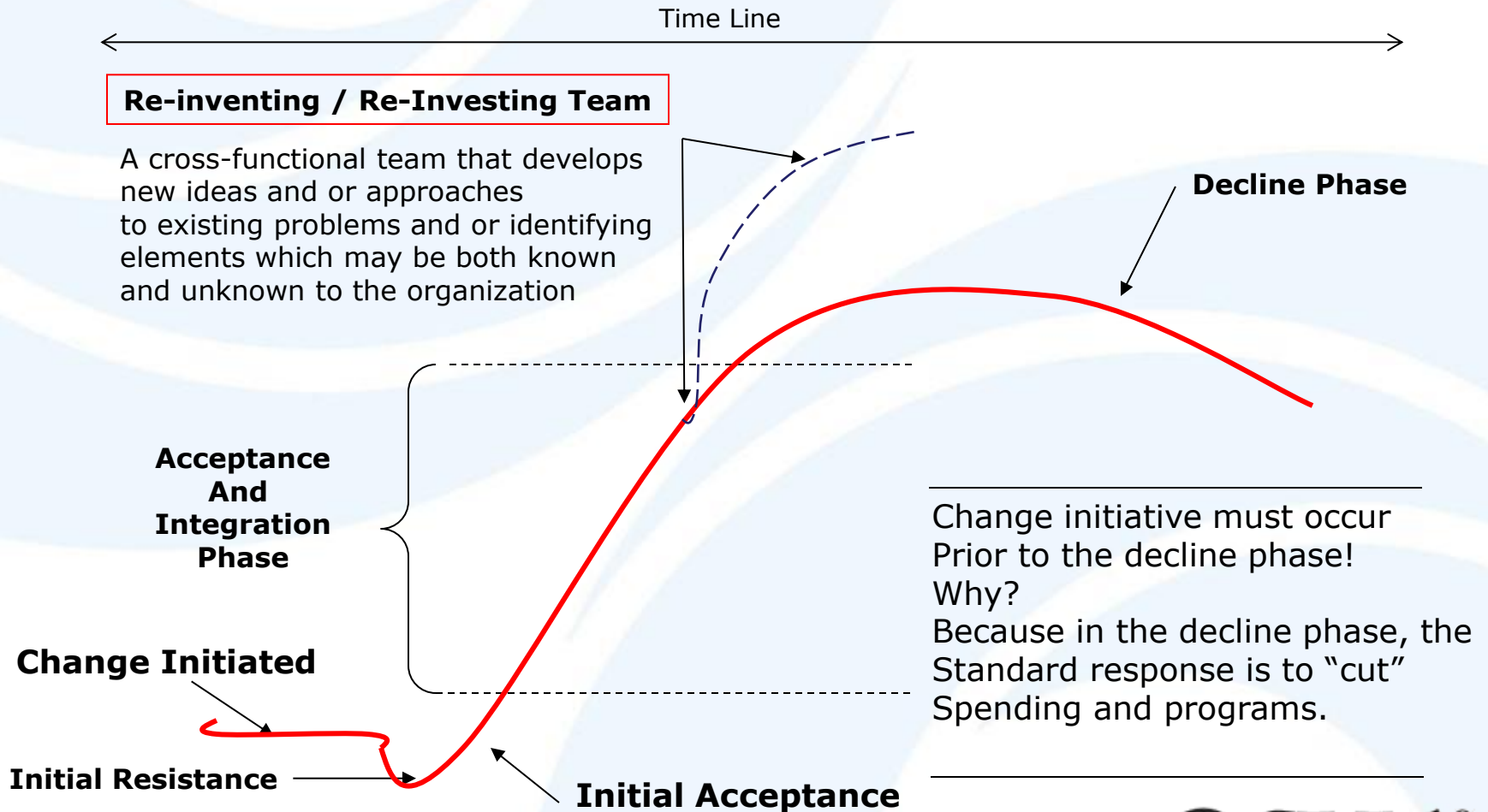OSHA®

So, what am I to do?

Examining how organizations respond to change, initiatives and new programs requires understanding the dynamic curve of change….

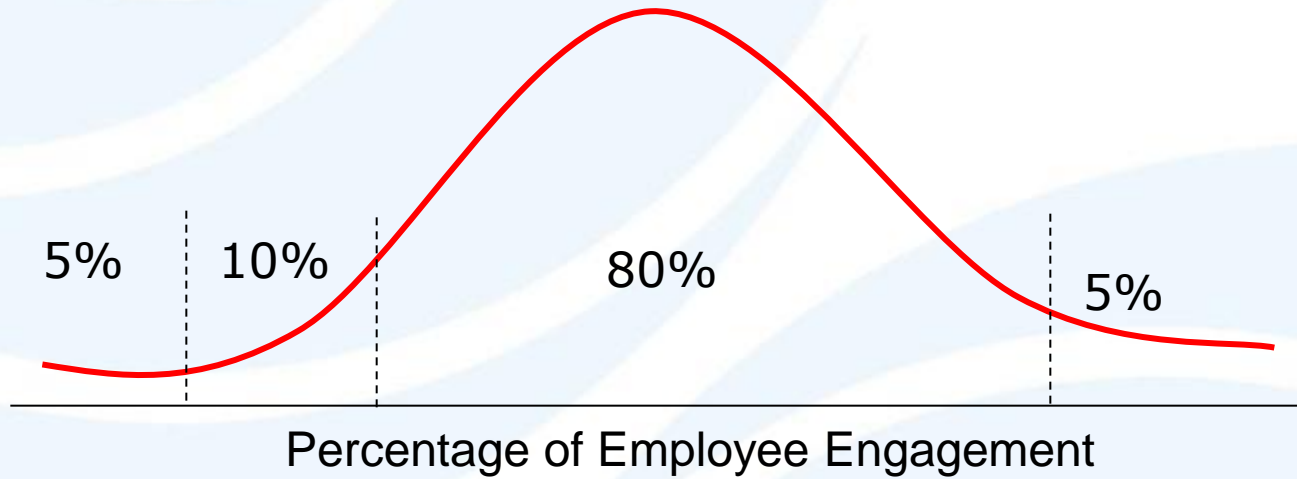# The Dynamic Curve of Change

Time Line

All organizational programs, safety initiatives, etc., Have a defined life span

Decline Phase

Acceptance And Integration Phase

Change Initiated

Initial Acceptance

Initial Resistance

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The Dynamic Curve of Change

Time Line

Re-inventing / Re-Investing Team

A cross-functional team that develops
new ideas and or approaches
to existing problems and or identifying
elements which may be both known
and unknown to the organization

Decline Phase

**Acceptance
And
Integration
Phase**

Change initiative must occur
Prior to the decline phase!
Why?
Because in the decline phase, the
Standard response is to "cut"
Spending and programs.

Change Initiated

Initial Resistance

Initial Acceptance

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The Reality of Change in Organizations

5%   10%   80%   5%

Percentage of Employee Engagement

Explorers   Pioneers   Homesteaders   Resistors & Saboteurs

Lewis & Clark: Explorers of the New Frontier

Ah jeez....

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The Champions for change

- Develop change and improvement momentum by building around the champions who are most likely to make the effort succeed. They will help to bring the others on board.

- They are also the ones you and everyone else can learn the most from.

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Resistance Strategies

Don't automatically label resistance to change as negative and something to be overcome or beaten back.

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Resistance Strategies

The real enemy of organizational change, is apathy.

"Just tell me what you want done, boss, so I can get out of this place and on with my real life"

is the attitude that kills change.

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Resistance Strategies

- Resistors often have strong passion and high energy. They resist because they care. Understand the roots of their resistance and re-channel it.

- Get them inside the circle of wagons, shooting out.

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Overcoming Internal Resistance

So how do we manage that resistance?

- WIIFM
- Create a rally symbol
- Inclusion not exclusion
- Open door management

People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!

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Overcoming Internal Resistance

Leadership….

Has been defined in many ways.

But the real definition is creating a vision others can see and realize.

Effective leadership is about influence! And getting others to follow you willingly.

"What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees."

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Overcoming Internal Resistance

Developing effective leadership begins with….

Giving people something to believe in!

Giving people someone to believe in!

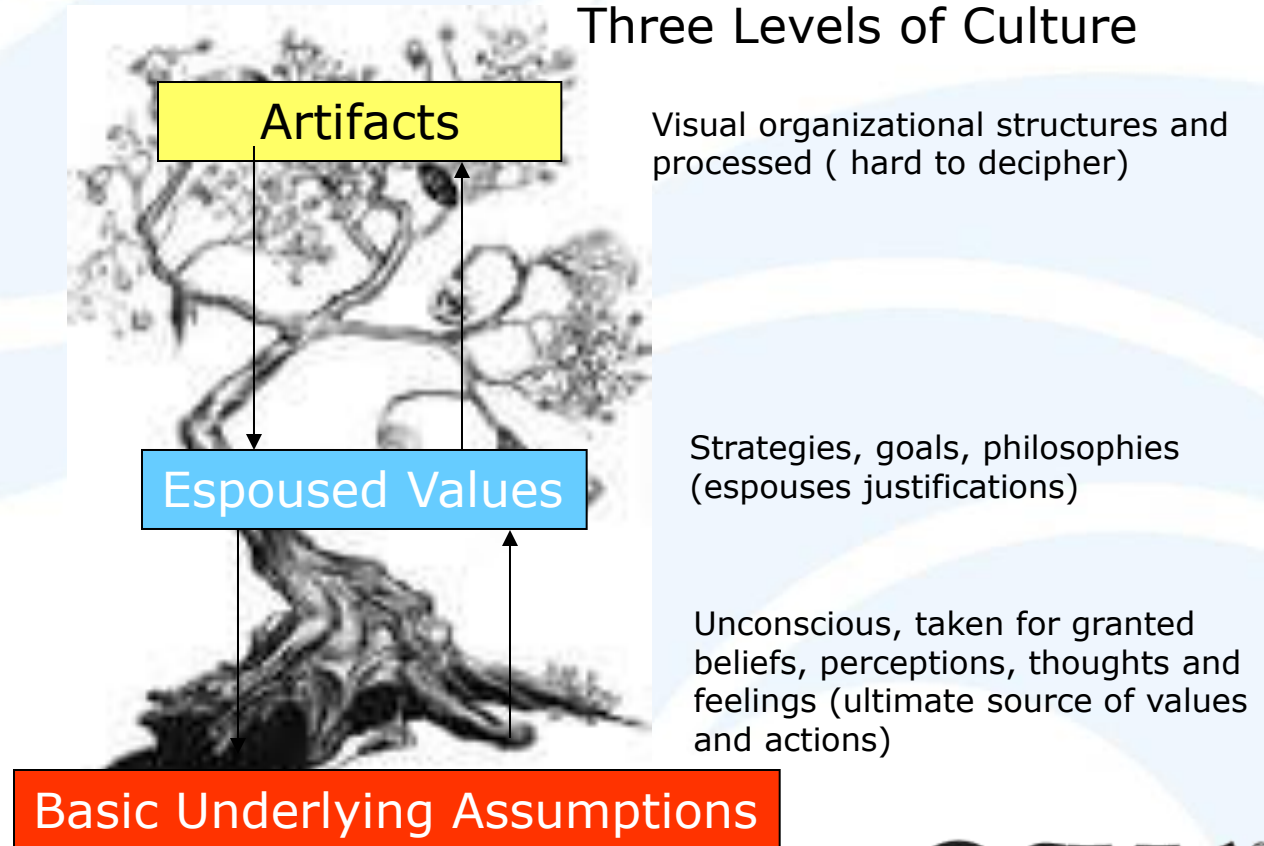Giving people someone who believes in them!

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Defining Organizational Culture

- Organizational learning, development and planned change cannot be understood without considering culture as the primary source of resistance to change.

- **If leaders do not understand the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them.**

Amplified by the behaviours of leaders

Embedded in a network of organizational practices

Evident in the behaviours of individuals and groups

Organizational Culture

Visible in the 'way that work gets done' on a day-to-day basis

Shared beliefs, values and assumptions held by members of an organization

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Defining an Organizations' Culture

Three Levels of Culture

Artifacts

Visual organizational structures and processed (hard to decipher)

Espoused Values

Strategies, goals, philosophies (espouses justifications)

Basic Underlying Assumptions

Unconscious, taken for granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings (ultimate source of values and actions)

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Defining Organizational Culture

Culture is: Norms of behavior – reflecting the organization's practiced values

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The origins of culture

Organizational culture is comprised of all the stories told intentionally or incidentally by a collection of corporate storytellers.

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The origins of culture

- The storytellers tell us what we "should" do; how we "should" do it as well as the "should not's" or taboos.

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The origins of culture

When the messages of cultural stories are ambiguous or conflict with one another, members are left to infer what values should guide behavior.

As the members normalize on those values their own words and actions become corporate storytellers, communicating the values to others and further entrenching the corporate culture.

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Defining Organizational Culture

Simply stated, culture is:

"The way we do things around here"

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Safety Culture

- People should be aware that cultural change is a transformation process

- behavior must be unlearned first before new behavior can be learned in its place

- When a difference arises between the desired and the prevailing culture, cultural interventions should take place

- The responsibility lies with senior management

- A new logo, corporate style or a 'customer-orientation' training will not suffice

- It is important that results are measured and that good performance is rewarded

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Safety Culture

How then to create an enduring, positive safety culture?

- Requires a "whole of system" approach

- Requires changes to individual behavior and also those factors that influence and sustain individual behavior

- Requires total engagement of every manager and front-line supervisor!

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BASIC SAFETY CULTURE

- Begins with hiring procedures
- Established through an engaging employee orientation program
- Style and effectiveness of safety meetings
- Style and effectiveness of safety training
- Quality and focus of inspections
- Rules and policies that are consistent and fair
- Quality of safety equipment
- Safety techniques and procedures

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BASIC SAFETY CULTURE

People don't respect what you don't inspect!

Leadership Strategies

- Define safety expectations in every job description
- Conduct Job Safety Analysis (JSA) and integrate them in the job
- Use safety as a measurable criteria in performance reviews
- Organize workplace safety audits and involve workers in the audit process
- **Train first-line supervisors!**

Leadership Strategies

- Actively engage a safety committee

- Investigate all accidents and near misses – and conduct root cause analysis.

- Discuss findings with workers and supervisors.

- Use Visual Management techniques to re-enforce safe work practices and facilitate consistency.

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The Leadership Role

- Successful leaders are prepared to set out in new directions - to find new opportunities and different ways to take things forward.

- Successful leaders begin with their people. They build a shared vision, then together determine what destination "success" should mean.

- Successful leaders find the new and look to the future. They don't rest in the past.

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"When people are highly motivated, it's easy to accomplish the impossible. And when they are not, it's impossible to accomplish the easy" - Bob Collings

**Strategic Partnership Agreement
Between
U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
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And the
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Questions

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