

Did You Know...

Instant Gratification and Workplace Safety

There are many aspects of our work that lead to instant gratification by the end of a work day or even within a few hours of our shift beginning. Examples can include organizing a work area or building something. It can be argued that safety is an aspect of the job where there is little or no instant gratification at the end of a work shift because you cannot technically “see” your efforts at the end of the day like the physical work that gets done and remains for all to see. At most workplaces, everyone fully expects to go home healthy at the end of the day so when everyone does day after day, it can be taken for granted.

When most people think about instant gratification at work it usually means getting a task done or completing a project. In the [construction](#) trades, employees literally see their creations grow hour by hour until it is a finished product.

Safety on the other hand can be more of an abstract concept that can be seen, for example a worker following safe work practices, but not as literally or as long lasting as the final touches of a construction project. A person can see someone else working safe and see everyone go home safe, but unlike the physical work that you do, you cannot “see” safety as an end product. Safety is not a foundation, a building, or the complete wiring of a skyscraper, but it should be appreciated like the physical work that gets completed.

We can only often appreciate our efforts towards safety after completing a hazardous task with no issue or going a long period with no injuries like at the end of the year. Safety unlike many work tasks does not give way to instant gratification at the end of every shift, except maybe for the safety supervisors or higher management whose main goal is no injuries and productive days. Because of this, it is important to know that the steps you are taking are helping to avoid injuries and incidents from occurring.

You may not always be able to see an incident being prevented because of a safeguard that has already been put into place, but if everyone goes home safe at the end of the day then the team is successful. Take time to recognize and appreciate the effort you and your coworkers put forth to work safe and go home to your families healthy.

