



A Summit Training Source, Inc. White Paper

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Distracted Driving: Affecting Change within Your Organization with Summit's Forever And Ever Training Presentation



Introduction

Training professionals make decisions daily on how to best deliver information, whether it's with videos, handouts, hands on activities, demonstrations, and displays. More often than not, people use books and handouts to train their students on various topics, giving factual information and "how to" to educate and promote awareness. In some cases, students must feel a situation or see a life-like experience to help them to retain the severity of the topic being discussed. A serious topic like distracted driving is a good example of how books and handouts might not be enough to fully illustrate the life and death consequences of distracted driving.

Distracted Driving Background

Distracted driving is any non-driving activities a person engages in that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of operating the vehicle and increase the risk of crashing. Driver distraction presents a serious and potentially deadly danger. In 2009, 5,474 people were killed in U.S. roadways and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving. It is estimated that 25% of all crashes in 2008 involved talking on cell phones. This accounted for 1.4 million crashes and 645,000 injuries that year. (National Safety Council, 2010).

Other distracting activities include:

- Using a cell phone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a PDA or navigation system
- Watching a video
- Changing the radio station, CD, or Mp3 player

Police-reported data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and the National Automotive Sampling show that:

- In 2009, there were 30,797 fatal crashes in the United States, which involved 45,230 drivers. In those crashes 33,808 people died.
- In 2009, 5,474 people were killed in crashes involving driver distraction (16% of total fatalities).
- The proportion of fatalities reportedly associated with driver distraction increased from 10 percent in 2005 to 16 percent in 2009. During that time, fatal crashes with reported driver distraction also increased from 10 percent to 16 percent.
- The portion of drivers reportedly distracted at the time of the fatal crashes increased from 7 percent in 2005 to 11 percent in 2009.
- Of those drivers reportedly distracted during a fatal crash, the 30-to-39-year-old drivers were the group with the greatest proportion distracted by cell phones. Cell phone distraction was reported for 24 percent of the 30-to-39-year-old distracted drivers in fatal crashes.
- An estimated 20 percent of 1,517,000 injury crashes were reported to have involved distracted driving in 2009.



The Impact on Business

Work-place incidents highest fatality rate lies in motor vehicle accidents. Of approximately 5,700 occupational fatalities reported annually by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 35% are associated with motor vehicles.

A company's bottom line can be significantly impacted due to automobile accidents. When determining the cost of car crashes in the United States you have to look at two main concepts; the comprehensive costs and the economic costs. The comprehensive costs include:

- ⤴ Measuring the value of lost life
- ⤴ What the society is willing to pay to prevent injuries/deaths
- ⤴ Using a cost/benefit analysis

Because this does not represent real dollars lost, it is essential to understand the economic cost as well. This is used by the state and community to calculate the impact in dollars from motor vehicle crashes. During this process they look at five different components:

- ⤴ Wage and productivity losses
- ⤴ Medical expenses, including emergency service costs
- ⤴ Administrative expenses
- ⤴ Motor vehicle damage, including the damage to property
- ⤴ Uninsured employer costs for crashes involving workers

Taking all these factors into account, according to the National Safety Council, 2010 Injury Facts data, the economic costs per death per person is \$1,300,000. For all nonfatal injuries it costs \$63,500. But you must remember that this is only one part of the costs. Comprehensive costs per death per person are costing \$4,200,000. This number includes the economic cost plus the value of the life that has been lost. Looking at the numbers presented above results in over billions of dollars each year spent on automobile accidents.

- ⤴ 31,079 people are injured in work zones and 720 are killed (National Safety Council, 2010).
- ⤴ 1,354 workers died each year from crashes on public highways
- ⤴ 324 workers died each year in crashes that occurred off the highway or on industrial premises
- ⤴ 358 pedestrian workers died each year as a result of being struck by a motor vehicle (Center for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Labor)



U.S. Youth And Distracted Driving

Today, 75% of all American teenagers 12-17 own a cell phone, and half of them report using their phone while they are driving (Pew Internet & American Life Project). Texting, a feature on almost everyone's phones today, has played a major role in distracted driving. Of the 75% of teens with cell phones, 66% of them use their phone to text, and a third of them do it while they are driving a car (Pew Internet & American Life Project).

- ⤴ The National Center for Health Statistics data indicates that almost 1 in every 3 deaths to a 16 to 20 year old is caused by a motor-vehicle crash.
- ⤴ This is equivalent to 17 deaths a day

The Importance of Story Telling

How do you make an employee, a spouse, a child understand to put their phones away while they are driving?

How does an employer explain to an employee the consequences of distracted driving?

Why would any driver think that they are susceptible to the dangers of distracted driving?

How does one explain to another the severity of texting and driving?

Certain subjects, such as distracted driving, should be beyond the "how to" approach in order to appropriately affect the learner. Watching a life-like experience promotes learning on a deeper level. Through a story you reach past the mind and focus on the heart. You find the emotion in a person and engage them. Logic and yes/no answers are no longer a part of learning. Learning takes place through seeing and feeling, and in turn, moves the student to apply the scenarios to their own life.

- ⤴ "What if that was me?"
- ⤴ "What if I caused an accident?"
- ⤴ "What if I killed someone?"
- ⤴ "How would I cope with this?"
- ⤴ "What would happen next?"



How can a Safety or Training Professional Implement Summit's Forever And Ever?

Summit's Forever And Ever tells an emotional, impactful story of the consequences of distracted driving. Based on real life scenarios, Forever And Ever shows how distracted driving can make lifelong changes to an individual, a family and a community.

A program such as Forever And Ever can be shown to a wide range of individuals. Showing a program such as Forever And Ever opens up an opportunity for discussion, which can follow the watching of the program. Discussion can help viewers take in the lessons they learned by watching the program and formulate the aforementioned "what if" scenarios. You can also begin to teach the "how tos" that go along with safe driving. It is important to allow everyone to comment freely and allow students to share stories of their own. Some viewers may have personal experiences with distracted driving therefore, be open to them and their emotions. Discussion points include:

- ⤴ How did watching the program make you feel?
- ⤴ What could the characters have done differently?
- ⤴ Have you ever been distracted while driving?
- ⤴ What other distractions could cause an accident on the road?
- ⤴ What will you do if you find yourself distracted on the road?

Conclusion

With emotionally charged topics, storytelling can make an impact on students beyond the standard 'how to' and 'what not to do' training method. Distracted driving is a serious issue in the United States and costs billions of dollars to industry each year, not to mention the lasting impact it has on the individuals who have lost a loved one to distracted driving.

With the right delivery, emotional training can help shine light on a serious issue and can bring people in a family or a business closer together for a good cause. Having the right type of training with the right type of material can make all the difference in creating an accurate safety culture and the benefits of creating safe behavior will be there to follow.

Work Cited

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