

## **Do You Know Someone New On the Job?**

The average person changes jobs eight times in a lifetime. How many different companies or different jobs have you worked? Do you remember how it feels to be the new kid on the block? How many times have you changed from a laborer to a carpenter, or from an ironworker to a welder, then to a leadman?

Every time you have made one of these changes, you've faced a higher probability of being injured on the job. Studies show that in heavy industries up to 25% of injuries, or 1 in every 4 workers, will be injured within the first 30 days of starting work. Think of that—the first 30 days!

The majority of you have years of experience, BUT you still fall into this category time and time again. In fact, every time you change companies or change jobs, you play the odds, and fall into the 1-in-4 statistic. That's because new-hires are not just green, inexperienced workers. They are also people who are new to their occupation, their job, or a specific work environment.

In your profession, you've learned the “tricks-of-the-trade” that allow you to work safely and efficiently. How did you learn your trade and the methods that make you a valuable asset to this company? You probably had some formal training, as well as lots of on-the-job-training.

OJT means you learned your job from practice and from those already experienced in the trade. Now, as you work beside new-hires, it is your experience that must be passed on. Remember, it doesn't matter whether this person is a 25-year veteran in the business who is simply new to this company, or if they are in a green trainee who just bought their first set of tools. All of these people are playing the odds.

So, keep a helpful eye on the new-hires in your crew. Take the time to describe the layout of the project, the best method to access the work, or how to work a tool they have never used. Everyone wants to learn the best way to do a job. Someone probably showed you how to do things, so take the time to help out your partner. When you show your co-workers the safest and smartest way to do a job, it helps keep you safe as well.

Over 90% of all injuries are caused by an unsafe act—someone doing things the wrong way. How many of these injuries do you think happened because the worker just didn't know the safety or smartest way to get it done, or didn't want to ask for fear of being ridiculed?

You will be playing the odds a lot throughout your career. Reduce your chances of becoming an accident statistic by asking questions if you're new to the job. Help someone else avoid being a statistic by teaching them the tricks-of-the-trade you've learned from experience. It's a two-way street.