



Why Do We Have Accidents?

That is simple question that requires a complex answer. I will attempt to answer the question in parts, from the most relevant to the least, and remember....this is just my opinion.

- 1. Lack of Training:** Historically Roughnecks got very little training and that is pretty much true today. Drilling companies today may have annual, semi-annual or even monthly training and they think that is enough because it is a lot more than they used to have, but it is not - obviously. Here is a rule of thumb; "train, train, train and then do some more training. That is your way out of an accident problem.
- 2. Fatigue:** Roughnecking is one of the most physically demanding jobs in the oilfield. It is akin to Football or back to back games of basketball. We have increased the demands on the employees by shortening drilling times with technology and higher expectations on rig maintenance. Yet we have no "sports therapy" department and little concern to that end anyway. When these guys get fatigued they start to make poor decisions. The only way to head that off is to be talking to them constantly (see #1).
- 3. Lack of Hands-On Management:** The company expects today's employees to "Cowboy Up" just like they had to do. You are missing the point – this is a different generation you are dealing with. They are smarter and less eager and don't "Cowboy up as well as us "Baby Boomers" did. You need people there, on the rig, talking to and advising them to; a) Be tough b) Watch what you are doing c) make better personal decisions. You must mentor them!
- 4. Un-Qualified Management:** Many rigs have Drillers and Toolpushers who have little experience. They can run the rig well and keep everything going but have no management training about how to deal with employees. You should constantly train the managers. This is what makes Wal-Mart a success. They are constantly re-training their employees. They expect it as the price of doing business and you should too.
- 5. Drugs & Alcohol:** You probably see Drugs and Alcohol as your #1 or #2 problem but I don't. If you had well-trained people they would be able to recognize problems like that and would naturally hemorrhage out the employees who have Drug and Alcohol problems (see #1).
- 6. Prosperity:** We are in a boom and we do not have 6 hands waiting to take their place like we did during the last boom. The whole country is prosperous. They don't need the oilfield like we did. They want a more exciting and relevant work experience. Give it to them. Constantly tell them about the importance of developing domestic oil and gas. Give them a purpose, more than just making money. They can do that other places. Men work primarily for self-esteem and secondly for money. This is true – ask a psychologist.
- 7. Boredom:** After years of doing this job the employees may get bored. Recognize this and head it off with training. Also get creative and make new opportunities for people to advance.

The Bottom Line is training. If you want my advice, find and buy every training program that you can make fit your operation. Get your employees heading in the right direction. When they get bored re-train them and remind them of their purpose.

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