**CONFERENCE SPEECH**

**FOR**

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**REVISED**

**WELCOME #1**

Hello everyone and welcome to this year's National Safety Conference here in beautiful, picturesque New Orleans. You may be wondering, especially if this might be your first time attending one of these conferences, "What's in it for me?" This is YOUR conference and you are invited to get as much out of the offerings as you can. As safety leaders in your respective industries and businesses, you are already conscious and aware of best practices when it comes to protecting your employees, contractors, and surrounding communities, so the main objective is to continue to learn and to share.... there are a spectrum of points of view in attendance, and there are definitely opportunities for each one of you to listen, learn, explore, source, and also to share your own knowledge and experiences when it comes to safety. There is never a point where any of us can rest and declare, "we're safe enough." There is no room for complacency and It really does take the participation of all of us to make strides with regard to safety improvements in the workplace and beyond. Events like these are invaluable opportunities to meet, network, and learn about new innovations and regulations that are vital in informing and modernizing our protocols and our actions and reactions to situations within the workplace.... wherever that might be. And whether we're discussing conditions in a factory or in an office or a field, there is no such thing as being too cautious, too conscious or too prepared. Safety compliance must be rigorous and non-negotiable... no matter where... no matter what. Vigilance is a key component in the safety industry and the more informed we are, the more we inspire others to contribute to do the same. John F. Kennedy said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

It's been said, "Safety doesn't happen by accident." Ensuring a safe environment takes education, attention, and cooperation. We are living in an era filled with constant technological advancements that are designed to enhance and ease our workload in some ways but with these innovations come countless new procedures and distractions that may conspire to divert our focus on best practices for safety. This conference is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to pay attention, know procedures, update our knowledge, and work with colleagues to ensure a safer and more effectively functional environment. Confucius said, "By three methods we can learn wisdom: First, by reflection which is the noblest, the second by imitation, which is the easiest; and the third by experience which is the bitterest." There are incidents that occur in life that leave indelible impressions. As Confucius reminded us, experience can be bitter and lasting. I remember when I was in high school, over forty years ago, I worked at a food processing plant. One afternoon, while working with my best friend, a near tragic accident occurred. While he was cleaning a large piece of machinery, it unexpectedly energized and instantly amputated his finger. We rushed him to the hospital but the doctor was unable to reattach his finger. For me, that was a defining moment that has stayed with me to this day..... you see, the injured person was not only my friend and co-worker, he was my identical twin brother. I empathized with his pain, his self consciousness, and his struggle to come to terms with the accident, and we both became alert to make sure something like that would not recur.

We can all think of incidents throughout our lives where, when looking back, we might say.... "If only....". "If only I hadn't looked away..... if only I hadn't flicked that one little wrong switch.... if only...." too many injuries are the result of those "if only" moments. I invite all of us to bring a refreshed and clear vision to our participation at this conference. Ask questions... take notes... **FOCUS**. Recall scenarios in which you noticed that heightened awareness would have supported more successful results. Remember some of those "close calls" you've had? **LEARN** from them. Discover new and innovative ways to motivate your teams to execute their jobs and responsibilities at new levels of commitment to safety, inclusion, and effectiveness.

This is **YOUR** conference..... for the next two days we invite you to explore.... look around... take advantage of the expertise that is being presented by the participants and vendors and share your own relevant experience and expertise. Everyone here is united in a common goal... to improve conditions, learn about safety updates, and find the ways to get the job done effectively and safely. And remember the most important asset you bring to your projects with regard to safety and compliance is logic, common sense, and a heightened commitment to your mission and your team.

Have a great conference! Thank you!

**WELCOME #2**

Hello everyone! I'm so glad to see you all made it through the past two days of the conference! I'm fairly certain that we've earned this dinner and celebration! (**If you want to make a joke you can say**)... I don't know how many of you are aware of this, but this dinner is actually the first test for you as you apply your newly acquired safety skills and knowledge... we're trusting you with **sharp objects**... namely the cutlery.... **baby steps**!! (**And wait for the laugh**)

This year we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Safety Awards Dinner and Celebration, and for those of you that have been part of this industry and participated in this conference before, you know that great strides have occurred as we live, learn, and practice improved procedures for safer work environments. (**I'm giving some loose OSHA statistics but if you have more pertinent stats, use them instead**) OSHA cites that over the past several decades, improvements in safety and compliance have had a significant and positive affect on the workplace. Estimates for the rate of employee fatalities on the job in 1970 hovered around 14,000. That number fell to approximately 4,340 in 2009. That's a significant improvement but the thought that thousands may still die in 2017 and beyond is unacceptable. Further estimates citing progress in overall safety tell us that in the past twenty-five years, injury rates have been reduced by ten fold. This is a great achievement and guess what? It's **no accident.**.. Thanks to the commitment of safety leaders like all of you, we are on the right track... the goal is 100% safe environments.... worker safety and compliance for all.

This long standing tribute that we celebrate each year is a welcome and appreciated barometer on many levels. It is a forum to acknowledge excellence and it is an opportunity to take a look back... to see how far we've progressed while pledging renewed and increased commitment to safety and compliance on every level going into the future.

Senator Bill Bradley said, "Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better." By being here you have identified yourselves as leaders who support the safety and well being of your workers and your communities.. You've taken the initiative to demonstrate a commitment to the safety of your teams and we want to acknowledge your participation. As we continue to recognize outstanding participation throughout our membership, I invite you to ask yourselves... "What **more** can I do to increase the safety performance and goals of my company? How can we distinguish and reinforce best practices in the workplace and in the field? What else can be done to insure the safety of our human resources?

I want to thank each one of you for your commitment to your organizations and to this conference and on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, thank you!