

GREEN

.....up for Grabs

The HOPE, the HYPE, and Health and Safety

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The HOPE

“Green” is a solution for two enormous problems facing the world today:

- **The Economic Crisis**
- **Environmental Devastation/Climate Change**

Millions of new, green jobs:

- weatherization
- Solar panels
- Clean energy
- Green chemical production
- Public transit

The HOPE, continued

- Green Jobs will be good *union* jobs, with good wages and benefits
- Millions of inner-city youth and other disadvantaged peoples will get on the “green pathway out of poverty”
- In the process of all this, we’ll get the CO₂ level in the world’s atmosphere down below 350 ppm and live happily ever after

The Trade Union Movement is Helping Lead the Way

- Creating or re-kindling alliances with the environmental movement (eg. USW helps lead the Blue-Green Alliance and Apollo Alliance in the U.S.)
- Pressing government on new legislation and regulation
- Educating workers and communities
- Providing training programmes for the new green jobs

But GREEN means different things to different folks...

- Blue-Green Alliance's "*Good Jobs, Green Jobs*" conference in the United States: "Teamsters and Turtles, together again!" (from the WTO protests)
- Strategic decision to leave specific definition of "green" open, not hammer out exact specifications
- Build a BIG TENT and get people under it, even if they don't agree about everything...

2009 Good Jobs, Green Jobs
Conference in the U.S.

**Had workshops on
CLEAN COAL...**

Report: Clean Coal Could Create Millions of Jobs



2009 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference in the U.S.

Had workshops presented
by those who oppose
“clean coal”

“Coal is Dirty”

- Burning coal increases the rate of disease
- New machinery in coal mining kills jobs
- Burning coal contributes 40% of the U.S.’s CO₂ emissions
- Coal mining uses million gallons of water every day
- Coal-fired power plants are the largest source of human-generated mercury pollution in the U.S.
- Mountain-top removal kills mountains
- Burying carbon produced from burning coal (“Carbon Capture and Sequestration”) is 20 or more years off...

Windmills are Green....



WHAT HAPPENED AT VESTAS BLADE in the UK?

- The only wind turbine manufacturer in England – 2 plants (Newport, on the Isle of Wight; and Southampton)
- Announced on Workers Memorial Day (April 28), 2009 that all 625 workers in the UK will lose their jobs
- Moving production to China, and to another country across the pond...

From *Risks*, June 27, 2009:
(the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps)

- Thirteen workers at the Newport plant of blademaker Vestas Blades UK Ltd developed severe dermatitis caused by exposure to epoxy resins.
- The firm was fined £10,000 for breaches of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2007...and ordered to pay £25,000 costs.

For information on the Campaign to Save Vestas Wind Turbine Plants, and bring more wind turbine production to the UK, see

www.unitetheunion.com

Lessons Learned:

- We need good jobs
- We need green jobs
- Green jobs need to be safe and healthy jobs



Mirror, Mirror on the Wall
Who is the **GREENEST** one of
all?

Watch out for

“green”

and “lean”

and “mean”.....

Multinational Company with Facilities in the U.S.

- Makes new product with increasing percentage of waste product that can be recycled
- Wants to increase sales using “green” label
- Their research identified 3rd graders as being “most influential” on parental buying behaviors
- Partnered with schools to promote particular types of recycling among the children (with incentives, competitions.....) – so they could bring home ideas to influence their parents’ buying behaviors

This same company is...

- Bringing in “lean manufacturing” – 5S, eliminating “waste” (including workers’ micro-breaks), fewer people doing more work..... which leads to more repetitive strain injuries, stress, and a more hazardous work environment
- Implementing a new “blame-the-worker” behavioural safety (bs) program (“If you get injured, it’s *your* fault”)

**Welcome to your (brief)
indoctrination in BS:**

**Global Trends in Health
and Safety
*Mismanagement***

“88% of all workplace injuries are caused by workers’ unsafe acts or “at-risk” behaviours”



**This statistic (88%) comes from
“research” done by H.W. Heinrich in
the 1930’s in the U.S. –**

- he was an insurance investigator for
the Traveler’s Insurance Company**
- He collected supervisors’ accident
reports**
- 88% said the accident was the worker’s
fault**

Recent ACCIDENT REPORT from a Steel Mill in the U.S.

The Accident: Worker was stung by a bee

Question on Employer's Accident Report Form:

"What did the affected employee do or not do that contributed to the accident? Why do you feel their actions contributed to the accident?"

The Answer:

"The employee should have been aware that a bee had landed on his shirt and taken the appropriate steps to remove the bee without being stung."

In order to have an
“at-risk” behaviour,
what must be
present?

A HAZARD

**All injuries and illnesses
on the job
are the result of
exposure to hazards.**

There are no exceptions!

Health and Safety Process Model



Data Analysis

- **Injury/illness Logs**
- **Medical Visits**

Surveys and Questionnaires

Interviews

Worker Complaints

Government Regulations

Inspections/Audits

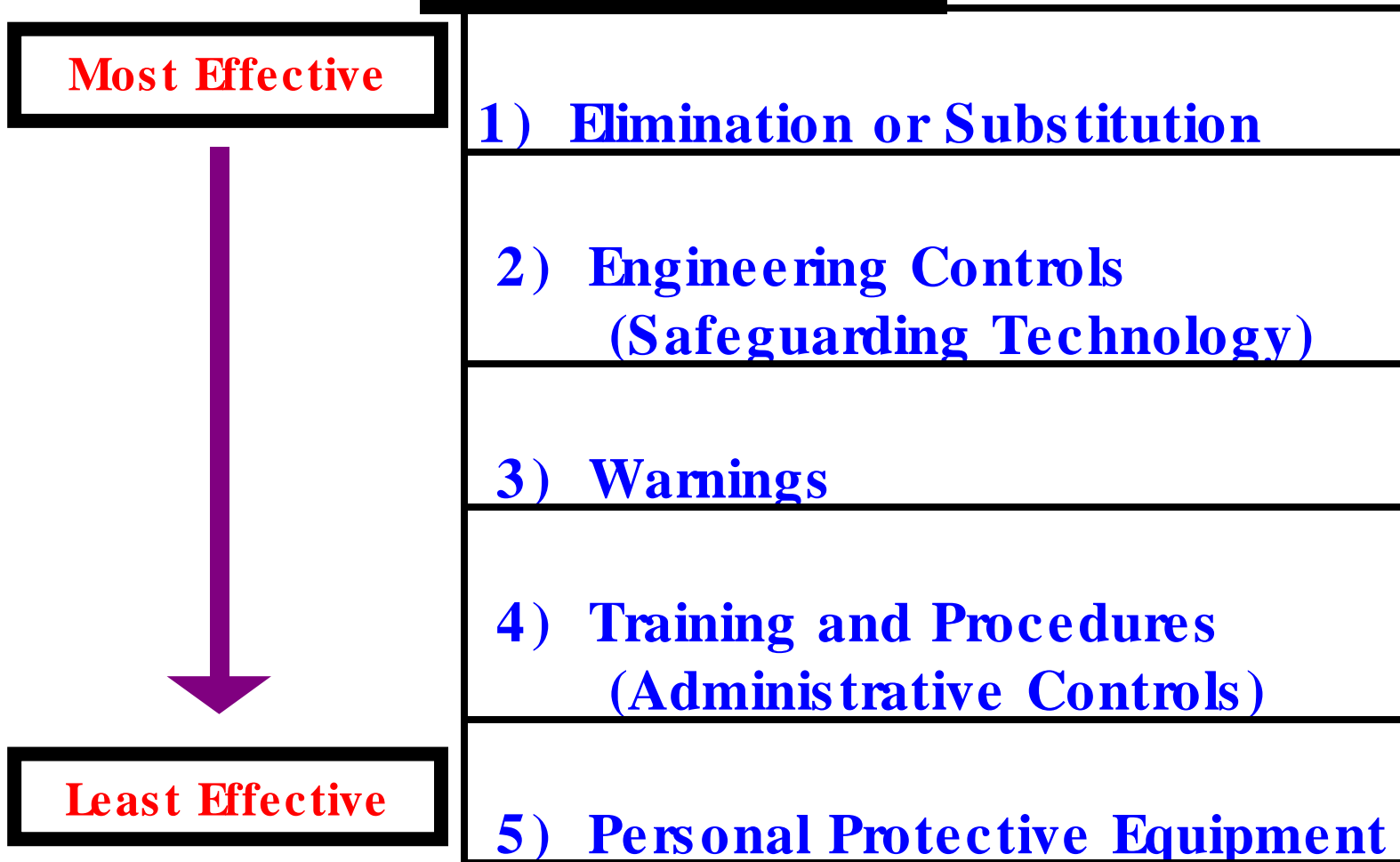
Prioritize Hazards

Risk Analysis

Select Controls

**Based Upon
Hierarchy**

Hierarchy of Controls



Behaviour-Based Process Model



Data Analysis
Worker Observations
Interviews
Inspections/Audits

Risk Analysis

Duck
Dodge
Jump Out of the Way
Lift Safely
Wear PPE
Avoid “Line of Fire”
Eyes on task

“Staying out of the line of fire” replaces effective safeguarding and design.

“Proper body position” has become a replacement for a good ergonomics programme and well designed work stations.

And *“Personal Protective Equipment”* becomes a substitute for noise control, chemical enclosures, ventilation, and toxic use reduction.



Consequences Of A Behaviour-Based Program Is To Turn The Hierarchy Upside Down

**They Say,
“Most Effective”**



**Not even up
for discussion...**

Personal Protective Equipment

Training and Procedures

Warnings

Engineering Controls

**Elimination &/or
Substitution**

Why eliminate the hazard when you can buy personal protective equipment?



Disincentives to Reporting Injuries and Illnesses

- Awards (prizes and money) for not have a recordable or lost time case (or having a low rate)
- Discipline and/or counseling issued after workers are injured
- Drug testing after every injury
- Peer pressure



DANGER!!!

Some employers who say they are
“green” or “going green”

...can be full of **BS** (like behaviour-
based safety programmes)

For more information on fighting **BS**
programmes, see

www.hazards.org/bs

An Inconvenient Truth

about Al Gore

When Al Gore was Vice President

- Promoted government that was “more efficient and less expensive” – eliminating 272,900 government jobs
- Presented the “Golden Hammer” Award to agencies and projects that saved money and “avoided costs”
- Al Gore awarded the “Golden Hammer” Award to OSHA’s “Voluntary Protection Program” (VPP)

OSHA's Voluntary Protection Programme (VPP)

- Began in 1982 under the U.S.'s Margaret Thatcher (Ronald Reagan)
- “Cooperative” program based on voluntary compliance
- Employers who show low injury/illness rates and undergo a planned inspection can fly the VPP flag and avoid OSHA inspections

“The VPP creates an ongoing safety culture that makes our safety programs a way of life...not an extra duty.”

Darwin Irish

Safety and Environment Manager

Flexcon Company, Inc.

Spencer, Massachusetts

On December 14, 2004, at Flexcon Company, Inc. in Spencer, Massachusetts, Laura Paquette, a 34-year old mother of three, was working on an adhesive coating machine and suffered fatal crushing injuries when she was pinned in the machine.

OSHA fined Flexcon Company \$5,800 and allowed it to remain in the VPP programme

VPP – THE REALITY

- Many VPP companies have programmes and policies that discourage workers from reporting job injuries and illnesses
- A report issued in June, 2009 by the Government Accountability Office of the U.S. Congress found the VPP programme:
 - **Lacked proper oversight**
 - **Did not improve worker health and safety**
 - **Diverted scarce resources from enforcement duties**

True “Green” Needs the Public Sector!

The “public sector” – government jobs –
are **NEEDED** in a true *green* economy,
for example:

Once public transportation vehicles are
manufactured, there must be a dedicated
workforce to run and maintain a massive
public transportation infrastructure!

- Stop privatizing rail!

Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Problems with Health and Safety in Green Jobs

- Installation of solar panels – recent worker deaths from falls
- LEED Certification and heat in Las Vegas buildings – “skin” on the building first means high levels of heat during construction
- Energy efficient light bulb manufacturing in China – 100’s of workers with mercury poisoning
- Recycling and waste industry – one of the most hazardous industries in the UK and the US

**In the GREEN economy, some
jobs will disappear, so**

We need

JUST TRANSITION

One model of what “Just Transition” could look like:

1997: Proposed “Universal Tobacco Settlement Act” in the U.S.

- Workers and farmers would receive transition assistance if jobs were lost
- Provided education benefits to members of tobacco farm families
- **\$28 billion industry-funded Tobacco Community Revitalization Trust fund** to provide economic development grants over a 25-year period to create jobs and business opportunities for former tobacco workers

A Final Concern

**“GREEN” jobs will be seen as
“CLEAN” and “SAFE” jobs**

**....like jobs in “Clean Rooms” in the
microelectronics/semiconductor
industry were thought of as “clean”
and “safe”**

CLEAN ROOM



k1481565 www.fotosearch.com

The “Clean Room” in Reality:

- Worker exposure to glycol ethers, chlorinated solvents, xylene, epoxies, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, nickel compounds....
- Semiconductor workers suffer three times more occupational disease than other manufacturing workers

GREEN JOBS are

JOBS - with health hazards, and safety hazards, where management can push production, promote “lean”, and implement “blame-the-worker safety programmes

The Role of Health and Safety Reps regarding Green Jobs:

- **It's the same role we play now and have always played**
- **We need to use the tools we have always used:**
 - **Research and Information-gathering**
 - **Communicating with/involving our members**
 - **Developing proposals and demands**
 - **Identifying and exercising leverage**

“Leverage” can include:

- Using laws**
- Developing Campaigns**
- Using the media**
- Finding allies, developing alliances**
- Building solidarity and power**

**EMBRACE THE HOPE OF
*GREEN***

**BUT ALWAYS BE ON GUARD
FOR THE HYPE...**

**And be a “kick-ass-and-take-
names” Health and Safety
Rep when needed!**

“If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightening. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters....Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

Frederick Douglass, 1857
(abolitionist and orator from the U.S.)