



## Driver Engagement & Battling Complacency

We all know how hard it is to HIRE new drivers, but what about keeping the ones we have? How do we engage drivers and make them feel valued? How do we leverage driver managers/dispatchers to communicate to the fleet and reduce complacency?

### *Solutions*

- **TELL A STORY.** Give relatable, real-life examples of incidents or accidents and the aftermath of the experience. The ATA Comp Fund will develop case study examples of catastrophic claims and work with the company and/or injured party to obtain approval. Financial impact will be outlined, but the focus will be on the personal element and, if applicable, the life-altering effects. The Fund will also develop a study of *The Real Cost of an Accident* using typical claim scenarios (MVA, rollovers, 3-point contact, landing gear shoulder/back claims, etc.). This will include indirect and direct financial impacts.
- **OBSERVE AND REWARD.** Some companies are using this technique to engage drivers by providing coaching when good (or bad) behavior is witnessed by management. If a driver/worker is observed utilizing proper safety, the manager immediately recognizes him/her for his/her efforts. Incentives make this program even more appealing. If improper safety is observed, use the opportunity as a constructive training moment. Implementation can be customized, but the point is to look for safe behavior, recognize it, talk about and possibly reward it. Safety always matters.
- **#THANKATRUCKER.** To build a culture of safety, drivers and company personnel must establish a sense of accomplishment with their contributions to the safety of the company. To do this, conversations centered around safety need to be sparked, getting everyone talking about and thinking of safety daily. This helps develop a sense of pride in their work. Some ideas presented include:

- *A simple THANK YOU goes a long way.* Thank your drivers/company personnel and remind them of the importance of their work and their contributions to the company. Make sure everyone within the company knows the importance of their role; everyone plays a part in the safety culture.
- *Establish a DRIVER OF THE YEAR.* Organize an annual award, voted upon by drivers and company personnel. Selection requirements should include an emphasis on safety.
- *Bring it home.* Engaging family is a key component to motivating drivers. Involve spouses and children in recognition events, incentives, and safety goals. Examples include welcome letters mailed to the home upon hire, art contests for children, open house/events with family welcome. Create a family atmosphere that recognizes and rewards safe behaviors.
- *Driver recognition stickers.* Much like achievement stickers on the side of a football helmet for a good hit, have stickers for the side of the truck cab that are awarded when proper safety is observed. Another idea is awarding a monthly safe driver large star sticker for the cab instead of smaller ones. The idea is to recognize and emphasize safe behavior.
- *Recognize milestones.* Provide recognition (phone call, gift card, plaques, personalized gift) for reaching milestones such as work anniversaries and/or safe mileage achievements.