

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Abby Greer February 9, 2026

The "Safety Spotlight" feature of The Green Light shines the spotlight on safety professionals to gain insight into their background, and their thoughts and ideas on safety in our industry.

Meet Cody McClain, Chief Safety & Human Resources Officer for Tucker Freight in Dubuque, Iowa. Cody started his career at Tucker in 2018 in Operations, but realized quickly that driver safety and education was his passion...

How did you get started in Safety?

I worked as an Elementary Special Education teacher for 5 years before joining Tucker Freight Lines in July of 2018. I grew up with family in and around trucking, so I felt more of a pull to the industry once my sister and brother-in-law started Tucker in 2018. I joined the Operations department dispatching Open Deck and planning. After about a year of seeing steady organizational growth, we needed more focus on safety.



I learned so much in Operations, but Safety and educating drivers fit my background, skillset, and my personality. So, I approached the owners of the company, Sauny and AJ Tucker and told them I thought I could help the company by taking on the Safety department and focusing there. They trusted me and my ideas that were different than other Safety departments I had researched at that time.

What advice do you wish you had received early in your career that you would pass on to someone just getting started in Safety?

Ask as many questions for clarification and understanding as you can from the drivers. I grew up with my grandfather, father, and brother-in-law as truck drivers, so I knew enough, but I needed to learn so much on how to best coach all our drivers. Along with that, I would tell a new safety professional not to try to fix every problem on day one. Develop a plan and process that works for you and your organization!

What would be your "safety quote or message" you would like to share?

Control the control-ables. We cannot control the weather, other people's actions, shippers/customers, etc... But we can always control our own actions, behaviors, and (especially) our attitudes.

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What do you view as the main duties of a Safety Director?

Creating and upholding a culture of safety across all parts of the organization and in the community. Everything from writing new policies to educating the most recently-hired person. To accomplish a culture of safety, you must be able to see the big picture and how it relates to the entire organization. You need to try to understand the problem from others' perspectives. This helps you to get buy in from everyone when you listen to their pain points and work with them towards the safest solution.

What has been the most challenging task in your career as a Safety Director?

Since I started, we have grown as an organization. We have grown from around 35 total people to around 500 people today. We have added different positions and safety sensitive roles, so the complexity of how we operate has changed across the country. During that growth we have stayed true to our core values and pushed it to every corner of the organization. This can be challenging, without continuous and repeated focus on being proactive and preventive. It has been challenging but also something we have been very successful with.

Why is safety important to you and how do you (or would you) improve your company's safety culture?

Safety is important to me because of my father. I saw him work so hard to provide for my family in a dangerous job. He hauled HazMat for many years and had some close calls. It can be scary for drivers and their families because they live and operate in such a dangerous profession every day. I want to make sure to provide the resources and strategies for every one of our drivers to complete each trip the way they started it.

We improve our Safety culture by having a Growth Mindset. Every day, everyone can get better and improve. This starts in orientation and exists through our most tenured employees. Reflect, learn, and grow everyday through wins and losses.

If you could give any message to the general public about the trucking industry, what would it be?

Put your phones down while you drive. Our drivers give this feedback constantly. Also, if possible, go for a ride along with a truck driver. See the road from their perspective and it will surely help you drive in a different way!

