Cognitive Overload – the condensed version

…the hazard of too much information and its impact on safety
Cognitive overload

BACK CLINIC

A STRAW... HOW ABOUT YOU?

MY SON STEPPED ON A CRACK.
Cognitive overload is...

- Systemic, overwhelming, distracting material
- Information without adequate time to process
- Wasteful – in time and money
Orienting the workforce

• Repeating the same thing over and over, time after time

• The message gets lost in the mundane – it’s ordinary, dull or monotonous

• We don’t (we can’t) evaluate performance
Simply stated in Social Media Messaging We ALL (most of us) Understand...
Construction Overload

• Day by day

• Hour by Hour

• Minute by Minute

• Projects change (size, shape, vertically, horizontally)
Is this too much?

nine things
- Book
- Key
- Shed
- Flag
- Pencil
- Table
- Lamp
- Sunshine
- Lemon

...another nine things
- Bird
- Seventy Two (72)
- Telephone
- Stilts
- Funnel
- Microwave
- Paper
- Train
- Thermometer
Three (3) things

• Bird

• Table

• Lemon
So...the orientation

• Is it 15 minutes or 8 hours?
• Videos or PowerPoint?
• Lecture or Discussion?
• Hands on?
• Pre and/or Post-tests?
• Turnover to Field Leaders?
Three things

Remember the three items?
Patterns of learning

• 1, 2, 3 - ABC
• Win - Place – Show
• JSA
• See – Do – Get (Covey)
• XYZ
• S-S-S
• Task – Hazard – Correction
• Tell – Show – Do
• Stop – Look - Listen
Even the most complex task can be taken in steps.
HazCom in its simplest form

What is the chemical?
How can it hurt me?
What do I need to protect myself from harm?
Wrapping up Cognitive Overload
(the condensed version)

Beware of TMI

• We have difficulty remembering too many things

• Orientation tends to overload workers

• Rules like “17 Steps to the Gate” are impossible to recall in their entirety the first time they are shared with the workers.

• Don’t treat workers like they don’t have a clue

K-I-S

• Break down rules, procedures to 3 or 4 items

• Re-think the way you conduct orientations

• Keep to the essentials – what rules do people need to know because violations could get someone seriously injured or killed and focus on addressing those items first

• Remember that we work in an adult environment
Let’s get away from doing things the way we’ve always done them
Questions, Comments and Implementation?

Thanks for your time and participation... 😊

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