



Success comes from everyone working together for safety

Interview with **Scott Manthey**, recognized by Washington Trucking Associations' Safety Management Council as the "Safety Professional of the Year" for 2010

TIRES: How did you get involved in the safety aspect of trucking?

Scott Manthey: I had the opportunity to work for a carrier that like GTI [Gordon Trucking, Inc.] put safety ahead of every other part of the business. It was easy to develop the passion for safety especially when you work with people that share the same feelings.

TIRES: In what ways is the management at GTI involved in the safety program?

SM: In pretty much every way. We all work together to ensure that as a company it is clear that we will do what it takes to make sure that we are doing our part to make our highways the safest in the world. In addition, the Gordon family supports us in every effort related to the safety of our associates as well as the motoring public. The philosophy is that, "we don't have the right to hurt anyone" and we all live by this.

TIRES: What makes the GTI safety program successful?

SM: Each and every associate at GTI. From the billing staff to payroll to our outstanding drivers - everyone plays a part in the success of the program as well as the success of the company.

TIRES: What changes have you made to the program since coming to GTI?

SM: We regionalized the department, brought Smith System in as the foundation of the program. In addition, we have added JHA [Job Hazard Analysis] training, E-log, wellness programs and sleep health programs. We also added third party observers to observe and report on our trucks throughout the U.S. and Canada. But, the most important change was the building of a staff that is second to none. They interact with all departments openly and with enthusiasm for safety. This is the tip of the iceberg, but hits on a few of the highlights.

TIRES: How are those changes working?

SM: Well, if you look at numbers, you will see that our accident rate per million miles has decreased by approximately 51%. Our Federal ISS-D score has not been over a 24 in more than 27 months. So, by the numbers, I would say the program has added to the success of the company. Again, it is truly all about the people. GTI and the Human Resources Department have done a world class job of hiring the right people, and the Gordon family is why we all stay. It is easy to work at a place where you are appreciated, and it is evident that we all are very much appreciated.

TIRES: Do you spend time looking at your injury data? If yes, what is it telling you?

SM: Yes, we review injury data every week if not more. The data tells me that our injuries have been lessening over the past few years. We've seen reductions in strains and sprains to shoulders and backs. We've really been focusing on slips and falls by reminding drivers to evaluate their surroundings before getting out of the cab. There have been reduced injuries in this area as well. Since incorporating JHA's into the program, we have experienced a 17% or more reduction in workplace injuries. We stay on top of the data because it reminds us that we will not rest until we find a way to create an injury-free workplace.

TIRES: How have you involved the drivers, dispatchers and management in safety?

SM: Through training, suggestions, ride-alongs, accident reviews, driver reviews as well as developing training.

TIRES: What are your challenges related to safety at GTI?

SM: Steve Gordon has done an outstanding job of making safety a priority at GTI. He has developed a team whose professionalism and respect for one another rivals no other. If we have a situation that raises questions, we are able to work through it without issue. However, the ever-changing regulatory environment presents challenges for all trucking companies.

TIRES: What have been your successes related to safety?

SM: GTI has been recognized with many safety awards including: four years in a row Safe Carrier of the Year in Washington, two years in a row Grand Champion in Washington, second place Safe Carrier of the Year in North America (Truckload Carriers Association), third place in California, four years in a row achievement awards for improvement in safety. Great West Casualty (GWC) also honored GTI with the Platinum Award for Safety last year. Additionally, I was awarded Safety Professional of the Year for 2010 by the Washington Trucking Associations and GWC. I will say though, it was my team and the team at GTI that I have to thank for that special honor. Without the awesome folks that I have the fortune to share the work day with, this would have never happened.

TIRES: What elements make up your safety program?

SM: We have a driver wellness program supported by a third party nutritionist and a company sponsored sleep wellness program. Our occupational health team works hand-in-hand with all departments to ensure we are addressing hazards before they happen. On-going training within all departments at all our terminals is also a very important part of our program. We have regularly scheduled training for all employees.

TIRES: How would you describe the safety culture at GTI?

SM: Safety is first and foremost with all associates at Gordon. It's what we talk about, what we act upon, it is what we are.

TIRES: What suggestions or advice would you like to share with other safety directors?

SM: Just remember, success comes from everyone working together. It's never one person. Draw from others because you never know what you might learn. And it really is about people.



Scott Manthey
VP - Safety and Compliance
Gordon Trucking Inc.

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