

Turbo Leadership Systems

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

Issue 769

Stand Up For Standards

November 26th, 2019



Larry W. Dennis
President
Turbo Leadership Systems

**Engaging leaders
balance work
and family.**

Tie off when unloading sheet rock

Jeremiah, Plumbing Foreman for a full-service mechanical and plumbing contractor in Wilsonville, OR, told Session 8 of Turbo Leadership Systems' Leadership Development Lab:



"On April first of this year, my crew was assigned the plumbing of the new resident's hall at George Fox University. While working on the third floor bathrooms, just down the hallway from the loading doors, the sheet rock workers were in the process of off-loading sheet rock. In the loading zone there are 2 rails to protect from hazardous falls of almost 25 feet. In their process of unloading, they had removed the top rail of fall protection.

"The general contractor had mentioned many times that if any rails were removed the people within 15' of the door needed to be harnessed and tied off. So I went to the sheet rock workers and said, 'Hey we have to be tied off if the top rail is down.' They proceeded to put the top rail in and off-loaded their last few sheets.

"About 15 minutes later, while working on the wing on the other side of the job, the sheet rock guys were starting to unload their rock for this wing. Once again, they had removed the top rail. This time I was a little irritated and mentioned their safety infraction to them. They ignored me, so I went straight to the general contractor. They got a strict reprimand. This made their foreman mad that I didn't go to him. I realized I should have gone through him first but didn't regret addressing a very serious safety infraction.



"The lesson I learned from this experience is the importance of being respectful when I am standing up, speaking out and being counted; I need to go through the chain of command. Not just go straight to the top.

"The action I call you to take is when you stand up, speak out and use protocols that are in place to address safety concerns.

"The benefit you will gain is a happier and safer work environment that you will feel proud of."

American industry works so much more safely today than a generation ago. OSHA reports that more companies are hiring safety professionals. From safety coordinators who develop and lead safety training, to safety directors who are responsible for overseeing entire occupational health and safety programs, opportunities are trending for those with a "degree in safety." This improvement didn't happen by accident (no pun intended). Safe work that results in an accident-free workplace requires the watchful eye of everyone on your project, in your work environment. When you see a safety infraction, you must be willing to stand up, speak out, and be counted.



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