

A publication brought to you by Ihry Insurance Agency, Inc.

IHRY NEWS

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Signals You Don't Know You're Sending Your Workforce

Article provided by MetLife.

Smart companies put a lot of effort into creating a workplace culture that supports wellbeing, innovation and creativity — a culture that enables each team member to bring their A-game. Unfortunately, all of that effort can be undermined if company leaders fail to walk the walk. Mixed messages can cause confusion, mistrust and a lack of motivation.

These actions in the workplace can speak louder than words:

Taking Time Off Isn't Really Encouraged

Taking a break from work is important for employee physical and mental wellbeing. It can enhance productivity and reduce stress, which allows everyone to do their best work, including managers.

Even if your business has a robust time off policy in place, bosses who rarely take personal time or postpone vacations can send their employees the message that current work projects and obligations always take precedence over time off.

How can this be fixed? Work together as a team to build coverage and back-up support so colleagues can be accountable for each other. That way, one person's absence won't cause a delay on projects and deliverables. Regularly encourage workers to use the days that they are entitled to, and lead by example.

You don't necessarily have to plan an extended vacation to take time off — here are five creative and cost-effective ways to [use your PTO](#).

You're Not Creating a Work/Life Blend

Occasional overtime work or meetings outside of normal work hours can be unavoidable, especially if you work with people in different time zones. If you know a certain project or deliverable may need more attention or work outside of normal business hours, than [be more flexible during office hours](#). For example, reassure your employees that it's okay to take personal time during the work day to attend a child's school event.

A Collaborative Environment Isn't Really Thriving

Are you quick to shut team members down when they introduce new ideas, or reprimand them when their plans fail?

If you value creative collaboration, encourage your employees to take risks by being less judgmental and more receptive to new ideas. How you respond sends a strong message. Being overly critical without offering constructive feedback is likely to discourage others from speaking up.

Set aside time for employees to express their creativity by scheduling brainstorming sessions or creating a suggestion box. If an idea is implemented, consider a reward for your employee's contribution to the team, either through verbal recognition or something more tangible, like a financial incentive.

You're Not Really Available to Your Employees

Is your office door closed all day? If you're too busy for regular meetings, and you fail to keep employees in the loop on major business decisions, you're likely discouraging an open dialogue with your team.

A true open door policy speaks volumes. It not only tells people that they're welcome to stop by and chat, it shows them that you mean it.

It's also important to make time to talk to each and every employee, either at regular staff meetings or by scheduling one-on-ones as often as you can. Remind employees to ask questions, and answer them as promptly and openly as you can.

When it comes to [employee retention](#), your company culture can set you apart. Make your company values known to your team, and ensure each action you take as a leader supports the culture you want to create.



Ihry Insights

Article provided by Curtis Kaufman, Agency Manager
Ihry Insurance

PRICE Select for 2017

- For 2017 Price Select is again available for corn & soybeans
- The months available for purchase are December, January, March, April, May, June & July
- Corn & soybeans favor summer months for highs
- We're entering 2017 with large US & world stocks
- The cost of adding Price Select for summer months is cheap!
- Price Select gives producers another opportunity to increase their insurance base price & revenue guarantee
- We're entering 2017 with large US & world stocks of most crops, and therefore large carries in the futures markets for those crops.
- Commodity prices are currently trading in the bottom ¼ of their ranges for the last 10 years, & are likely to still be doing so in February when crop insurance base prices are set
- Price Select would give producers another opportunity to increase their insurance base price & revenue guarantee, and possibly cover their costs of production – similar to 2016.
- It should be noted that DCIS has both state & national limits, and last year we reached both in early February! I anticipate we'll reach some state &/or the national limits again this year.
- Years in which we've increased ending stocks tend to see futures make highs later, not earlier, in the marketing year.

Contact an Ihry Agent today!

Upcoming Dates

Ihry Farm Update Meetings:

- January 31 – Devils Lake KC Hall @ 9:00 am
Hope American Legion @ 3:00 pm
- February 1 – McVille Café @ 9:00 am
- February 2 – Mahnommen American Legion @ 3:00 pm
- February 4 – West Fargo Cambria Inn @ 9:00 am



Managing and Mitigating Medical Claim Costs: 5 Key Applications of Big Data

Article provided by Zurich.

Healthcare costs account for more than three trillion dollars in spending, and medical costs continue to

outpace inflation. When we dig into workers' compensation claims data, we see that medical also outpaces indemnity costs. According to the National Council on Compensation Insurance, in 1981, 57% of workers' compensation claim costs were driven by indemnity, with 43% of costs coming from medical. By 2015, the dynamic had shifted, with medical accounting for 58% of claim costs.

From a general healthcare perspective, the accessibility of rich data in electronic medical records (EMR) can help medical providers make more informed treatment decisions and improve the quality of care delivered to patients. Healthcare systems have started to recognize the value of patient data, as well as the risks associated with it, within their organizations.

While medical providers continue to move toward having key patient information available at their fingertips, employers and workers' compensation insurers have a more limited view. General healthcare providers may focus on underlying conditions, while occupational medicine doctors will focus on work-related injuries. As a result, disjointed care may be provided to injured workers with unintended consequences (e.g., drug interactions and overdoses).

Even with this constraint, insurers can help injured workers and employers by leveraging the power of the robust data available. The ability to capture and aggregate key claim information, along with other integrated medical management solutions, can help promote quality care while also managing and mitigating medical costs.

Five key benefits of big data to help manage medical costs:

- 1. Appropriate and accurate treatment and billing** – Systematically bringing multiple data sources together (e.g., claims data, medical documents and bills and standards of care) can help verify compensability and medical necessity of all charges. Streamlining the ability to cross-reference this type of information can also help claims professionals more quickly identify when an injured worker's recovery has plateaued so that they can proactively assist in the medical management of the claim.
- 2. Timely and targeted intervention** – Claim outcomes can be affected by a series of factors at different points in time. Predictive models, drawing on a variety of structured (e.g., date) and unstructured (e.g., claim notes) data points can help identify potential high-severity claims and notify claim professionals that a certain action or focused expertise (i.e., nurse case management) may be beneficial to the claim.

3. Fraud, waste and abuse identification – The ability to analyze data across claims helps enable the identification of fraud, waste and abuse (e.g., providers who consistently use the costliest and highest levels of treatment). Thwarting these behaviors can positively impact customers' loss costs and create opportunities for recovery.

4. High-quality medical providers – Aggregated provider and claim data creates the opportunity to develop an outcome-based medical provider network designed to deliver quality care to injured workers and promotes early return to work.

5. Distinctive risk insights – Benchmarking key drivers of medical claim costs can help customers identify challenges and opportunities to leverage claims best practices, appropriate medical management services and preventative Risk Engineering solutions.

Harnessing the power of big data can be an increasingly vital driver in improving healthcare outcomes for injured workers. With that said, it's important to remember that the greatest benefit comes from an integrated medical management approach that draws on each of these applications.

Preventing Theft From Your Car

Article provided by Allied Insurance.

It's easy to leave stuff in your car when you make a quick stop at the gym or grocery store. And it's just as easy for thieves to take advantage of the situation and swipe your valuables.

Protecting your valuables

If your car is broken into, you may be surprised to learn that many basic auto insurance policies cover only permanent, factory-installed items. Check with your Allied Auto Insurance or Allied Homeowners Insurance agent to be sure your homeowner's policy covers other personal property in case of a car burglary.

You can prevent many thefts from your car with these common sense guidelines:

- Lock your doors and close your windows—even for quick stops. Many thefts are simple “crimes of opportunity”, such as an unlocked door.
- Don't leave cell phones, sunglasses, bags or other personal property sitting on the seat or floor of your car. If spotted by a thief, a smash and grab can occur in less than 15 seconds.
- Covering items with a blanket or jacket isn't a great idea because it might make a thief think you are hiding something expensive.
- Make use of closed compartments in your car, such as the trunk and glove box. In SUVs and hatchbacks, there may be hidden compartments in the floor in the back, or covers you can attach to the cargo area so thieves can't see what you're storing.
- Consider installing a car alarm.

Plan ahead

If you drive to a nature trail or amusement park, you won't want to carry much with you. Protect your

valuables by leaving everything at home or the office, and take just your driver's license and keys. Thieves often target cars at parks and trails, because they know people tend to leave bulky purses and briefcases behind — and for long periods of time.

Try to think of other situations when you won't be able to take your valuables inside with you. Stores often frown on people bringing in large bags. Courthouses and other government buildings sometimes prohibit cell phones or computers. Keep this in mind when planning your day, and leave your important personal possessions somewhere safe.

Think like a thief

Protecting your valuables is easier if you think like a bad guy. Thieves know a round suction cup mark on the windshield means you probably have a detachable GPS somewhere in your car. A dangling charger means there is a good chance your cell phone is within reach.

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