

# GETTING UP TO SPEED

## USING THE ACCT STANDARDS TO IMPROVE YOUR OPERATIONS.

As the new season approaches, it is time to review the ACCT Standards and look for areas to improve your operation. Sound like a daunting task? Not with a little planning. This review can be a step by step process of operation improvement.

First, read the standard. I suggest starting with Chapter 2, Operation Standards. When reading, ask a simple question, "Does our program or operation do this?" If the answer is "no" add the item to your list of upgrades or changes you will put in place. If you answer "Yes we do that and do it really well." Ask an additional question, "Is it documented in a way that would allow someone to take over if you or other key staff won the lottery and took off to a tropical island?" These items go on a second list.

Second, take an item from the first list and make a simple plan to start with one task. Let's look at one common place where programs could improve their practices and record keeping. Chapter 2 B.2.13 which states that organizations will use a written checklist and will conduct a pre-use check of activities BEFORE participants use them. Do you have a check list for your course? If not, work with your builder to create one reflecting the key safety items and key set-up procedures.

Creating the checklist is not a one and done activity. Getting Staff feedback and making adjustments is key. Atul Gawande points this out in his outstanding book *Checklist Manifesto*. It will take a little time for staff to make the change a part of their everyday activities but soon, they will be checking activities like it has always been done that way.

The next step also addresses the second list you created. If you already have a pre-use checklist or are just creating it for the first time, what happens to the check list at the end of the day? How is it stored? Can the check sheets be made available to inspectors? How and where do staff completing maintenance find these to know what needs to be fixed. The methods of doing these things are not complex and need not be expensive. Create a simple process and train your staff to follow the process.

Three, write down the process down in your procedures document. The procedures document is the collection point – the institutional knowledge -- of how and why tools and information are used. Carefully documented institutional knowledge allows the organization to make transitions in personnel. It is one of the key tools in your success picking up where you left off and not having to recreate the wheel. Time to take on the next item on the list.

Now, where did I put my copy of the standards?

**REMEMBER AS A MEMBER, YOU DO HAVE A COPY OF THE CURRENT 03-2016 ANSI/ACCT STANDARDS. YOU CAN ACCESS THIS BY GOING TO YOUR MEMBER PROFILE AND ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE PAGE IN THE LIGHT BLUE BOX CLICK ON **PROFILE HOME** AND YOUR COPY IS LOCATED THERE**