



N3L3 - The Next Three Seconds Protects Your Life, Your Loved Ones, Your Livelihood

The Next Three Seconds Protects Your Life, Your Loved Ones, Your Livelihood®

The N3L3 philosophy:
our approach to protecting workers from fatal and life-changing events.

Eastern Alliance is here to help. To learn more about Eastern's N3L3 program and access other safety resources, sign in and visit the Safety Tools on www.easternalliance.com, or contact your Risk Management Consultant for assistance

1.855.533.3444

At Eastern, we've carefully studied circumstances in which serious accidents occur and determined the three seconds before a task is performed can impact the last three seconds. N3L3—Next Three Seconds, protects your life, your loved ones, your livelihood—is focused on reducing the likelihood that a fatal and life-changing event will occur by changing the way we think about and manage risks.

Accident Reviews usually reveal the unsafe conditions or work practices that contributed to the Fatal and Life-Changing (F&LC) event were present before the tragedy occurred. Only luck delayed the inevitable and everyone was comfortable thinking nothing bad would ever happen.

Why would an organization or an employee allow unsafe acts and conditions to persist? Often the quickest or easiest way to complete a task may not be the safest way, even though it may make sense to the employee in the moment. When organizations have successfully performed an activity over a period of time without incident, it's natural to continue this routine; and gradually drift further over time away from the safest procedure, not thinking anything bad will happen. Our brain misleads us to think, "Because it hasn't happened to me (or the organization), it won't ever happen!" But it can. When we are exposed to a hazard and nothing bad happens we are tricked into believing there is little or no risk.

Fatal and Life-Changing injuries result from a group of causes that are different than those for less severe incidents. Research shows that since OSHA's inception, workplace injuries and lost time accident rates have declined, but Fatal and Life-Changing accidents has remained fairly constant. It is extremely important to remember that an absence of injury or low OSHA incident rates does not equate to an absence of hazards. You already have all of the ingredients in your workplace to have a F&LC event, it's the organization's responsibility to make sure that incident doesn't happen.

Studies have identified some 'error-likely situations' that increase the likelihood of a Fatal and Life-Changing event:

- Unusual and non-routine work
- Non-production activities
- Work where sources of high energy (electricity for one) are present
- During construction operations

There are also routine work activities that may have higher likelihood to contribute to Fatal and Life-Changing events:

- Operation of mobile equipment (and interaction with pedestrians)
- Confined space entry
- Jobs that require lock-out tag-out
- Lifting operations with cranes and hoists
- Working at heights
- Manual materials handling



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Error precursors are unfavorable prior conditions in the workplace that increase the probability for error during a specific action. Some common conditions include:

- New employees
- Time Pressure (in a hurry)
- High Workload
- Simultaneous, Multiple Tasks
- Unfamiliarity with Tasks
- Lack of Knowledge
- Distractions/Interruptions
- Confusing Procedure/Vague Guidance
- Stress
- Complacency

The prevention of Fatal and Life-Changing injuries is complex since many such events have multiple causative factors. While we cannot predict "when" a Fatal and Life-Changing event will happen, we can identify the situations and conditions that lead up to them and focus our efforts accordingly to protect workers. Building a climate of safety will help reduce the risk of Fatal and Life-Changing events in your company.

There are no quick fixes that will eliminate fatal and life changing events. Instead:

- Recognize precursors that lead to fatal and life-changing events and react when they present themselves.
- Company
 - Management must be fully committed to worker safety.
 - Focus on the system, the company policies and procedures, when identifying areas for improvement and causes of failure. Incorporate system-based controls rather than people-based controls.
 - Build in layers of protection between the hazard and the employee to ensure there is more than one step away from catastrophic outcomes.
 - Maintain and encourage an open line of communication between all levels of the organization. Regularly seek feedback from the experts – those who complete the work.
 - Employee education must be conducted in a way that employees are provided with the knowledge and analytical skills to understand and manage the potential risks they face.



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- Provide employees with all of the necessary resources (knowledge, time, empowerment, education, personnel, tools, equipment, PPE, etc.) to complete the job safely.
- Monitor work to ensure that controls are adequate and effective. Make system changes as necessary to better workplace safety.
- Pre-planning should be part of every day, start-up, and particularly for all non-routine work. Conduct pre-job planning such as risk assessments and Job Hazard Analysis.
- Don't blame workers for accidents or other failures – most likely the system for managing the risk failed first. Use failures as learning experiences.

- **Employees**

- Take a few seconds to think about what you are going to do. Think the situation through to the potential outcomes!
- What could go wrong (not what has gone wrong)? In addition, what do I need to do to protect myself and my co-workers?

- **Stop Work**

Too often in Fatal and Life-Changing events, someone knew something was wrong but no one spoke up or no one listened properly. We can't afford not to address the Next 3 seconds.

- If a safety concern is raised we need to talk about it when it is raised; work must stop.
- Employees need to work in a system, with a culture defined by management, which empowers them to speak up without feeling shame.
- If when the issue is reviewed and discussed and a change is needed – make it happen.
- If you find the procedure and safety are properly addressed – look at how the system failed to ensure adequate education and training, so everyone clearly understands the risks as well as the controls.