



Analyzing Prequalification Surveys Used in Construction

The Gap Between Tools and Best Practice: An Analysis of Safety Prequalification Surveys in the Construction Industry

Kang-Hung Liu, Jamie Tessler, Lauren A. Murphy, Chien-Chi Chang, and Jack T. Dennerlein. New Solutions, 2019.

Overview

The construction industry uses prequalification surveys to select quality subcontractors and reduce risk of injuries on projects. Historically, prequalification surveys look at indicators such as injury rates and insurance measures, but organizational policies, programs and practices—often referred to collectively as leading indicators—are becoming of interest. This study reviewed 52 prequalification surveys currently in use to identify best practices and gaps between survey metrics and leading indicators. To evaluate the surveys, a document hierarchy was created: the top level of the hierarchy included safety management system policies and procedures, with subsequent levels looking at specific safety programs or work instructions and then safety outcomes or records.

Key Findings

- There is little consistency between prequalification survey questions.
- Most prequalification surveys included lagging safety indicators and many included some measure of leading indicators.
- Surveys rarely asked about safety management system practices related to important leading indicators such as program evaluation and improvement, employee involvement, or safety communication.
- Only a small number of the surveys incorporate all the best practices associated with safety management systems.
- Prequalification surveys using leading and lagging indicators together are a better overall assessment of a company's safety performance than only one type of indicator.

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See abstract:

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