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After working for Union Pacific Railroad for 11 years. I have had many personal experiences with the pros of having a conductor and Engineer on a train. I can't emphasize enough how invaluable having a conductor on board is for both safety and efficiency. The partnership between a conductor and engineer isn't just a regulatory requirement—it's a crucial aspect of managing the complexities of modern railroading.

fatigue management is an extremely important part of the job. Unexpected calls happen all the time. Rest mitigation is very difficult when you're not sure when you're going to work. Talking helps. Keeping both Conductor and Engineer awake and alert. The job of a train engineer can be physically and mentally demanding, especially during long shifts. Having a conductor on board allows us to share responsibilities, ensuring that both of us stay sharp throughout the journey. The conductor is not only a vital set of eyes, but also helps manage communication, paperwork, and troubleshooting, allowing the engineer to remain focused on safely operating the train.

In terms of safety, a conductor provides a critical extra layer of vigilance. Trains move quickly, and while the engineer is focused on operating the locomotive, the conductor can actively monitor the train's surroundings. Whether it's spotting signals, checking for hazards, or ensuring that every switch is properly aligned, their eyes on the ground help prevent accidents and enhance our overall safety.

Having a crew member working on the ground, especially in hard-to-access areas, is also a game-changer. Often, it's the conductor's role to inspect trains or perform necessary safety checks that the engineer cannot complete. Since the engineer cannot leave the train, This ensures that everything is in working order—keeping us on track, both literally and figuratively. The Conductors job to inspect, fix, report and complete switching moves. This would be impossible to accomplish in a timely manner without an onboard conductor. Especially in remote areas. In an Emergency situation having a conductor to secure cars on grade can prevent an even worse scenario of runaway equipment. Not having someone nearby ready to respond will cause congestion and increase the difficulty for the engineer to do their job.

Additionally, the conductor plays a key role in keeping the engineer engaged. There's no doubt that being alone in the cab for extended periods can be mentally taxing. The conductor not only provides a much-needed second opinion, but they also help keep communication flowing, from tracking progress to relaying information from dispatch. Having a conversation partner makes the job more manageable and helps mitigate the risks that come with a mentally exhausting 12 hour shifts that often runs at night. Simply put, two people are better than one. In a high-risk environment like railroad operations, it's essential that we have a second set of skilled hands and eyes on

deck. A Certified Conductor brings more experience and skill to safe transportation. When we're both working together as a team, we're able to address issues faster, react to unforeseen circumstances more effectively, and ultimately deliver a higher level of safety and service to the public.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, our partnership directly contributes to public safety. A conductor helps manage everything from signal verification to communication. Dealing with external personnel or consulting thousands of pages of rules and regulations. In the event of an emergency, having both an engineer and conductor on board allows us to act quickly and decisively, reducing the risk of accidents and ensuring the safety of everyone on and around the tracks.

In short, the teamwork between a conductor and engineer isn't just a benefit—it's a necessity. Our combined efforts keep the train running safely, efficiently, and in the best interests of the passengers and communities we serve.