



Training and the New Safety Supervisor

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A 5-Minute Safety Training Aid

Safety training offers the opportunity to make a great impact on morale and productivity. If you have been tasked with presenting safety topics to your coworkers, here are a few tips to help make it easier for you and more interesting for your audience.

Walk your talk

If you don't wear the appropriate safety equipment or if you take short cuts, anything you say about safety won't be followed. Your actions communicate more clearly your true attitude towards safety than anything you say.

Sincerity counts

Remember you don't have to be a polished speaker. You do need to be sincerely interested in safety. Even better, if you have a passion for the topic you are addressing, your enthusiasm and sincerity will clearly communicate the importance of the subject. Make sure your audience can see you and speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone.

Plan your talk

Whether you speak for five minutes or five hours, you need to plan how to deliver the topic. Know the key points and repeat them. Practice in front of the mirror. Remind yourself that this information will help to keep your coworkers safe. Focusing on others will also keep you from feeling nervous. Breathe deeply because that will relax you, keep you calm, and make your voice carry.

Keep it simple

If you take five minutes to talk about safety, make sure you only talk about two or three key points and repeat them several times. Your listeners can only absorb a limited amount of information, so small amounts of information is best and repetition helps to reinforce the message. Ask questions at the end to determine if you've been understood. If you have coworkers who do not understand English well, have a competent person interpret the main points for them. Many injuries and fatalities occur because information is not understood correctly.

Use examples

Headlines from newspapers or magazines can emphasize your safety points. If you are talking about the safe use of equipment, have the equipment handy so you can show how accidents may occur. Have one of your audience members demonstrate the correct safety procedure for your topic. Use a personal experience to underline the importance of safety. Take the opportunity to remind your coworkers to practice safety at home as well as on the job.

Praise good habits.

It's easy to find fault and to point out when a job is being performed incorrectly. Your coworkers will respond more positively if you take a positive approach and give them recognition for a job well done. Describe the positive performance or how a group solved a problem in a safe way. Recognition may be verbal praise, or something more concrete like coffee and donuts or a small gift. Look for the positive and use your "good-seeing" eyes on the job. Encourage employees to report good safety habits and recognize their fellow workers.



Involve the group

Ask questions and solicit input for future safety topics. Find out what safety concerns your coworkers have without letting the meeting turn into a gripe session. Ask complainers to share their concerns with you after the meeting. Stick to your topic and make notes of other concerns that come up so you can address them later. Follow up and see that company policies and rules are being followed. Safety is a group effort.

Remember to practice safety. Don't learn it by accident.

The Texas Department of Insurance,
Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI/DWC)
E-mail resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

Safety Violations Hotline
1-800-452-9595
safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us