



## Emphasize Safety with Regular Meetings

Workplace safety has no end point — only a goal: to reduce the frequency of unsafe practices that threaten employees' wellbeing and a business's ability to complete its work. Businesses should emphasize safety as a priority and educate workers on how to avoid workplace accidents. One of the most common and effective methods of accomplishing this objective is the safety meeting, a short, regular gathering of managers and employees that addresses potential hazards on the job.

**Timing is important.** Hold safety meetings as often as it makes sense, but not so often that you lose your employees' engagement. Schedule the meetings for a time and place that's convenient for everyone. Unless an issue needs immediate attention, the first thing in the morning or directly after lunch work well. Employees will likely be gathered in one place and the work day will be least interrupted.

**Keep the meetings short.** Take enough time to make sure your message is understood. If you give too much information, your employees will lose concentration, and everyone's time will be wasted. Up to a half-hour is a good length for the main presentation.

**Focus your agenda.** Don't try to cover too much in each meeting. Choose a topic that is timely and relevant, and addresses hazardous operating practices. Using real examples helps workers connect the lessons with their own work. Speak as specifically as possible while making sure you don't call out specific employees. The aim is to raise awareness of hazards, not embarrass your workers. Consider including the following in your meeting:

- Recent injuries — What happened? Why did it happen? What should have been done differently?
- Recent safety violations — What was the violation? What hazard did it create? What are the possible injuries that could have resulted?
- Upcoming work schedule — What hazards are you concerned about? What safety equipment should be used? What procedures should be followed?

**Make it interesting.** Know your material — don't just read from a clipboard. You'll be more conversational and engaging. Use visual aids, too. If you're talking about ladder safety, for example, bring a ladder for demonstration. Whatever you do, make your talk memorable.

**Wrap it up.** After you've delivered your main message, summarize the main points to reinforce the importance of what they just heard. Plan some time for discussion or questions.

**Keep an attendance record.** This is not for discipline. Knowing who was at the meeting will help you ensure that everyone receives your message. If an employee missed the meeting, follow up later.

When you hold effective safety meetings, you're sending a message: safety is a priority. Your employees will ultimately appreciate your concern, and you can focus on running a successful business.

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