

## **Accident Prevention**

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings. Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it. Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

### **BEGINNING THE MEETING**

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide. The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting. At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Why are you working? The most obvious answer is that you need to earn money. Your employer is in business for the very same reason--to make money. If the people you work for don't operate at a profit, they may not be able to keep you on the job. It may be surprising to hear that most companies do not make money hand over fist. Expenses take a big chunk of the income, and competition limits how much your firm can charge for the goods or services it provides. What's more, competition is no longer just local it is often worldwide.

Most large US companies operate at a small profit margin, some as small as 1/2%. This means they earn only 1/2 cent for every dollar taken in. Profit margins of 1% to 5% are more common but this is still not a lot of 'extra' money. Each time an accident occurs, the cost of the injury must be subtracted from profits. So, how much do these incidents really impact your company in

terms of direct and indirect costs? Take a look at how many additional sales are required to pay for industrial injuries:

ACCIDENT COSTS	1% profit margin	5% profit margin	10% profit margin
	Additional Sales	Additional Sales	Additional Sales
\$1,000	\$100,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
\$5,000	\$500,000	\$100,000	\$50,000
\$25,000	\$2,500,000	\$500,000	\$250,000
\$50,000	\$5,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
\$100,000	\$10,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000
\$250,000	\$25,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000

What does this chart tell us? If the company is operating at a profit margin of 5%, then \$20,000 in new sales will be needed to compensate for a \$1,000 injury. If the profit margin is nearer 1%, an additional \$100,000 worth of goods or services are necessary to keep that profit level. A lot of 'widgets' must be manufactured to compensate for those losses! Since industrial back injuries average about \$5,000 in expenses. Every time a worker strains his back, other employees must work longer and harder to achieve necessary production levels.

Whatever you do in production, sales or service, think about the extra hours you must work to help pay for the average job site injury. Why should you care about this? Simple. Safe work behavior can contribute directly to the bottom line as well as to your own job security. The more profitable your company, the more likely there will be funds available for better equipment, improvements in the work environment and, hopefully, wage increases.

Though money is an important factor to you and your employer, personal well-being is also important. It is always wiser to spend a bit more time doing the job safely than to recover from an injury. This is why you are asked to avoid taking dangerous shortcuts, to wear your personal protective gear, to do the job as instructed, and to support your company's safety efforts.

**Think of safety as both pain free and profitable. Accident prevention is a win-win proposition!**

## **GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW**

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

- Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.
- Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.
- Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

## **ENDING THE MEETING**

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

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Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

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Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

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Comments:

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