

Safety Meeting Basics

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For many individuals, attending a safety meeting can be right up there with having a root canal. The individual presenting the safety lesson can simply read the material, but the meeting will be much more effective if some time is spent in preparing for the lesson. Add your own ideas, use examples from your operations, and emphasize areas which are important in your setting.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), one of the most effective ways to promote a safe working environment is to get involved in company safety meetings. Since safety is our top priority, we've gathered some tips to help you make the most out of your organization's safety meetings.

Why Safety Meetings?

These meetings allow you the opportunity to stay up to date on potential workplace hazards and safe workplace practices, such as equipment use and safety-minded attitudes—basically anything that may contribute to accidents or illnesses in your workplace.

Meeting Basics

- Safety meetings should be held at regular intervals during the year. Safety is a state of mind and regular reminders can make workers more conscious of dangers.
- Meetings should be held at a time which is convenient for all workers.
- Select a place where people can be comfortable and free of distractions.
- If you are talking about portable equipment such as a lift or some other item, have them with you so you may refer to them as you are discussing them.
- Don't let anything interrupt the meeting. Before you start, make arrangements for someone to answer your phone and take messages.

Editor's Note:

The KING Safety Matters newsletter is published monthly to provide general safety information. It is not a substitute for adequate safety training, or intended to provide complete safety information or training, on any specific subject. The information contained herein is intended to assist safety efforts and increase safety awareness.

In order to ensure the contents of the newsletter are helpful and important to you, please feel free to send comments, suggestions and feedback to:

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- Let your employees know in the beginning that you are limiting the time of the meeting. If discussion gets hot and heavy, continue it at the next meeting.
- Read the lesson or present it in your own words; or state the subject of the discussion and ask questions to develop the discussion.
- After your presentation, encourage discussion among employees about the subject. Encourage employees to recall “near misses” – situations when they came close to having an accident. Try to get the group to learn from these experiences.
- If you have an idea for a safety topic, chances are others will find it of interest too. We encourage you to share the details with your supervisor or the safety committee.
- Have a question, like how to lift safely or read a Safety Data Sheet (SDS)? Don’t keep it to yourself - there are no dumb questions when it comes to safety.

Retention of the Topic

As adults, we only retain:

- 20% of what we read
- 30% of what we hear
- 40% of what we see
- 50% of what we say
- 60% of what we do

But we retain 90% of what we see, hear, say, and do! We can significantly improve what our employees retain from safety meetings and training. Personally, I know when I’ve given a good presentation and when I’ve given a bad one. The best presentations I’ve given were when I took the extra time to prepare and used elements of the 90% rule; even before I knew what the 90% rule was.

Regardless of your job title, working safely is everyone’s responsibility. Remember, accidents are costly. Talk is cheap. Invest a little talk and time in safety programs.

