

5 Keys to Improving Worker Safety Attitude

Today we look at some talking points to get your workers to recognize the need to take safety seriously, and to demonstrate the right attitude toward safety.

1. Take Safety Seriously

Every employee must take safety seriously in order to:

- Avoid accidents that can cause fires, explosions, or other dangers
- Avoid accidents that can cause job-related injuries
- Avoid exposure to hazardous substances that can lead to serious illness
- Comply with OSHA safety and health regulations
- Comply with company work rules, policies, and procedures

2. A Positive Safety Attitude Makes the Most of Company Safety Tools and Training

When you take safety seriously, you take advantage of the protections available on the job. The safety procedures, equipment, and information employers provide include:

- Engineering controls such as ventilation
- Work procedures such as lockout/tagout
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, hard hats, and protective eyewear
- Emergency planning and response programs such as alarms, evacuation plans, and eyewashes
- Safety information such as chemical labels and material safety data sheets
- Training on how to do your job safely

3. Carelessness Is the Most Common Cause of Workplace Accidents

Unsafe acts are often a factor in accidents. They result when people take attitudes like these toward safety:

- Complacency. After performing a job many times without an accident, you may believe you're experienced enough to skip safety procedures or steps. That's exactly when an accident happens.

- Being upset or angry. You can't let emotions get in the way of doing your job correctly. Distraction can be dangerous.
- Fatigue. Being tired can slow down your physical and mental reactions, causing your mind to wander.
- Recklessness. Taking chances with tools, machinery, chemicals, or work procedures is foolish and dangerous.
- Being afraid to ask questions. Training and work procedures cover a lot of ground-sometimes too much to remember. Always ask when you're not sure what to do or how to do it. It shows you're smart enough to know what you don't know.

4. Take a Positive Attitude Toward Safety

- Take personal responsibility for your own safety and that of your co-workers.
- Pay attention to training.
- Follow every step in every job every time.
- Know and follow safety rules.
- Use required personal protective equipment.
- Give work your full attention.
- Keep an eye out for hazards. Always ask, "What could go wrong here?"
- Put your personal feelings and problems aside while you're working.
- Urge your co-workers to follow safety procedures.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Ask questions about any procedure or precaution that's not clear.
- Report any safety hazards you can't fix.
- Save fooling around for your personal time.

5. Look for Opportunities to Improve Workplace Safety

Demonstrate that you have the right attitude toward safety by:

- Volunteering for safety committees
- Taking an active role in safety meetings and training sessions
- Proposing safety improvements through the suggestion system
- Cooperating with safety inspections and monitoring
- Setting an example of a good safety attitude for others, especially new employees