

Safety Matters

Provided by:
Brady, Chapman, Holland & Associates



“Toolbox” Safety Meetings— Tips for Trainers

As a safety manager, one of your key roles is to promote a safety-minded culture while maintaining costs. By alerting employees to workplace hazards, “toolbox” safety meetings are worth your time.

To get the most out of your safety meetings, it’s best if the whole crew actively participates. How? Try these tips for trainers:

- Select relevant meeting topics. If you have drill presses, talk about drill press safety. If you are entering confined spaces, talk about respirators and confined space entry. If you notice that spills aren't being cleaned up promptly, discuss that. If there has been an accident or a near-accident on the job, talk about it. What happened? Where did it happen? How can it be prevented from occurring again? Lifting incorrectly can result in a variety of injuries. Back strain is a very common injury, resulting from the over-stretching of certain muscles. It can be avoided if employees are reminded to practice safe lifting techniques.
 - Employees are a good source for meeting ideas. Encourage your employees to suggest topics—they often know best what and where the dangers are.
 - Once you select a topic, research it. If you want to focus on the safe use of a specific piece of machinery, consult the manufacturer’s operations manual. For handling toxic substances, get a copy of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS). To source ready-to-use documents on a variety of safety-related topics, conduct a keyword search: “Safety Matters” from the Documents on Command section of your client portal from Brady, Chapman, Holland & Associates.
 - Ask questions instead of lecturing. Introduce each new point you want to make by asking the crew a question. Wait a short time to let people think, and then call on volunteers to answer. Use the answers as a springboard for discussion.
- Ask about personal experience. If you ask a question and no one has an answer, ask if someone has had any personal experience to help the group figure out the answer.
 - Limit the amount of time any one person can talk. If a crewmember is talking too much, invite someone else to speak.
 - Stick to the topic. If the crew’s questions and comments move too far from the topic, tell them that their concerns can be addressed later, either in private conversation or in an upcoming safety meeting. This will also give you ideas for future meeting topics.
 - Assign a crewmember to assist you. Involve a crewmember (or members) in choosing the next topic, and take him or her with you when you do your next “walk-around” safety inspection. You might also ask the person to help lead the next meeting.