



Nine Keys to a Successful Accident Prevention Program

1. Top management support and active leadership in safety must exist and a written safety policy must be communicated to all employees.

2. Supervisors should be held accountable for the incidence of job-related injuries just as they are held accountable for production and quality objectives, their performance evaluations should consider their units' safety performance.

3. Supervisors should be trained, have a solid understanding of and be responsible for the following activities:

- Regular workplace inspections
- Accident investigation
- Employee relations and motivational techniques
- Costs of accidents on production and company profits
- Safety rules and procedures



Supervisors and reliable employees should be included in the rule and procedure-making process to ensure that correct data is used from the “factory floor” and to ensure buy-in from all workers.

4. Effective training, particularly of new employees, is critical. It is estimated that in some industries, new employees (*less than 6 months on the job*) account for 30 percent of all injuries. Poor work habits or safety behavior should be corrected immediately. A formal system of disciplining employees for unsafe behavior is recommended; however, only after determining why an employee was acting in the way they were.

- Train employees when new procedures are introduced
- Train employees when safety performance is not meeting objectives and lack of understanding is identified
- Train employees on the hazards of chemicals and proper controls using Material Safety Data Sheets available from the supplier or manufacturer

5. Establish a safety committee that includes top management, line supervisors and production personnel. Safety committees must discuss accidents, solutions, hazards and their correction. They must be focused on priorities and management should make every effort to implement the solutions they offer. Meetings should have set agendas to avoid them becoming “gripe sessions.”

6. Accidents can still occur, so therefore it is necessary to have post-accident procedures in place:

- Proper first aid training, supplies and emergency medical response communication numbers/procedures posted and easily accessed
- Prompt and thorough accident investigation
- Prompt claims reporting to your insurance company
- A return-to-work program

7. Proper employee selection is important. A careful analysis of the physical, mental and other stressors of each position should be made, documented in writing, and presented to each job candidate who is asked if s/he would be capable of handling these stressors. Check references insofar as possible, as well as criminal histories (if legal in your state), and if the position warrants it, credit checks. A good source of new hires is often your existing employees. Typically, if they are satisfactory employees, they will be reluctant to recommend someone who doesn't share their work ethic, honesty standards and other qualities.

Safety Zone



8. Actively solicit, encourage and act on employees' concerns, safety suggestions and ideas.

9. An incentive program might be adopted to motivate improved performance in safety. However, only after the other elements of your program are in place and working. Any program should be meaningful and fair, and it should be evaluated periodically to ensure that it is effective and producing the desired effect. A common complaint about incentive programs is that they tend to suppress reporting of incidents and injuries—something you certainly don't want!

For additional resources and other safety and risk management subjects, visit the AmTrust Loss Control website:

<https://amtrustfinancial.com/loss-control>

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