SAFETY AWARENESS

Brief Topic Safety Refresher Training For Associates

Avoid Accidents on the Plant Floor

While manufacturing is a much safer industry now than it was in the past, there are still hazards within the workplace. However, many on-the-job accidents can be avoided by focusing on safe practices and taking necessary precautions.

Most accidents are caused by an unsafe act, an unsafe working condition or a combination of the two. For example, removing a protective guard from a machine is an unsafe act that can easily cause an accident. On the other hand, a spill on the floor could cause someone to fall and get injured, and that accident would be due to an unsafe condition. In either instance, the accident could have been prevented by either following proper safety procedure or being alert to unsafe working conditions.

Hazards You May Encounter

Your job always has some potential for danger, so it's important to understand what causes accidents so that you can avoid them whenever possible. While it is impossible to list all of the hazards you may encounter while working, common ones include the following:

- Not wearing proper personal protective equipment
- Removing guards from machinery
- Using machines or tools improperly
- Unsafe handling of materials or chemicals
- Horseplay
- Debris or spills that are not cleaned up.
- Wearing hanging jewelry or belts that could be caught in equipment.

Focus on Good Habits

It's human nature to work yourself into habits, and when you break a safety rule, you've taken the first and most influential step in forming a bad habit—a habit that can lead to an injury. Good habits, such as noticing unsafe conditions, correcting them immediately or calling them to the attention of a supervisor, are just as easy to form.

Develop a safe attitude! This is probably one of the most difficult things to face because most of us have the mistaken notion that it's always someone else who gets hurt, never us. If we all do our share in observing safety rules and staying alert for unsafe conditions, everyone will benefit.

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Safe Steps to Avoid Accidents

The first step to keeping yourself and co-workers safe is to stay alert on the job and don't let routine or familiarity lure you into carelessness. This can be challenging, especially if you do a repetitive task throughout the day. Always observe safety precautions before and during a task, even if those precautions make the task more inconvenient or take longer to complete. Cutting corners may not seem like a big deal, but doing so is a primary cause of accidents. Next, know your job. The more you know about your job, the safer you'll be. Know the proper procedures and safety precautions for any task you do, and if any questions arise during your work day, be sure to talk to your supervisor. Be on the lookout for unsafe conditions near your workstation.

And finally, make a personal contribution. A good way to start this is to follow all safety rules and always wear required uniform and protective equipment, even if you think they are unnecessary or slow you down. Certain rules in the workplace are made for your protection, so follow them. Also, just because an unsafe act is not specifically prohibited, it doesn't mean you should do it. Use your common sense when evaluating if an act is safe or not—there may be a very easy way to make it safer if you stop to think it through.

Help Make Safety a Success

Safety on the job site is something all employees should take seriously—nothing less than the future of your family is at stake. They are counting on you to provide food and shelter, and an on-the-job accident could very easily disable you, leaving security and future plans up in the air.

Together, you and your co-workers can get your own safety program off the ground by giving your supervisors or safety leaders ideas on how things can be made safer. In a manufacturing environment, any idea—no matter how small it may seem to you—may prevent a serious accident.

If you are a seasoned employee, you can use your years of valuable experience to spot potential safety hazards. Or, if you are a new employee, you may be able to spot something right away that an old pro may have overlooked.

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