

safety Nonprofit Toolbox Talks for matters

From your safety partners at BCG Advisors, Inc.

Safe Steps for Accident Prevention

You probably don't consider your job to be a hazardous one, but accidents can happen when you least expect them. 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, a worker can sustain a back injury while lifting a heavy box—an accident caused by the unsafe act of lifting an object that was too heavy. Or, a spill on the floor could cause someone to fall, and that would be the result of an unsafe condition. But, that unsafe condition was caused by the unsafe act of not cleaning the spill. In either instance, the accident could have been prevented by following proper safety precautions.

Hazards You May Encounter

Because safety is probably not a concern in your daily activities, it is important to consider potential sources of 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:

- Injuries caused by spills or debris on the floor
- Damaged equipment or facilities
- Damaged electrical cords or wiring
- Injuries caused by improper lifting techniques or improper use of equipment
- Horseplay

Practice Prevention

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. Always observe safety precautions before and during a task, even if the task seems like a simple one. This includes cleaning up after a task—items left where someone could trip on them or that are improperly stored can cause an accident.

Next, know your job and your workplace. Be aware of any safety precautions for tasks you perform, and be on the lookout for safety hazards throughout the day. If you are in contact with clients or members of the community, be sure to watch for any unsafe conditions that their behavior or presence could cause.

And finally, make a personal contribution. A good way to start this is to follow all safety rules, even if you think they are unnecessary or slow you down. Certain rules in the workplace are made for your protection, so follow them. In an environment that many don't consider dangerous, the most important action is to be alert for any unsafe conditions and to fix or report them immediately.

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 by having fewer workplace accidents.

You may not consider your workplace to be a hazardous one, but accidents can happen when you least expect them.

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