

“Successful Safety Meetings”
(Provided by Safety Consultation and Training Section-Nevada Division of Industrial Relations)



Have you ever attended a safety meeting that didn't seem to have any direction or purpose, and you wondered why the meeting had even been scheduled? Unfortunately, the lack of planning can lead to safety meetings that are boring, convoluted and seen as a waste of time. But safety meetings don't have to be viewed as unproductive and unimportant. With a little planning and following a few simple guidelines, safety meetings can be interesting, informative and productive.

First, decide on the purpose of the meeting and write it down. In most cases there may be more than one purpose for the meeting. By identifying the purposes of the meeting, you have also identified why the meeting is necessary. As you develop meeting components, you will want to refer back to the purposes.

Next, select the content and the format for the meeting. Give yourself adequate time to plan your topic and how it is to be presented. In planning your content, allow for sufficient time to research the topic and gather information and suggestions from those who are subject matter experts or who have specialized credentials on the subject. Depending upon the complexity of the material, it may be prudent to have someone who has in-depth knowledge on the topic attend the meeting as a guest speaker.

The next step is to determine how the material will be presented. In order to create and maintain interest, consideration should be given to using one or more elements of a multimedia approach for content delivery. Materials that are used in your safety meeting should relate to the topic, and be readable, attractive, accurate, and current. Always prioritize your topic elements as to their importance for the company and its employees. The safety meeting should focus on the most important aspects of the topic and time should be allowed for discussion. Group interaction through discussion, and question and answer sessions, stimulates interest and provides feedback as to what participants understand about the meeting topic. The old format of "you talk - they listen," rarely produces a successful safety meeting.

Safety meetings should be scheduled to accommodate the largest number of participants and agendas should be sent out well in advance of the meeting to allow participants to review the content. When planning your agenda, keep in mind that attempting to cover a lot of material creates a sense of a compressed time frame and leaves the impression that it is more important to cover the agenda than it is to understand the topic. Keep the agenda brief and focused on priority issues.

At the conclusion of the safety meeting, discuss with participants the steps in your action plan for follow-up to the suggestions and information that were presented in the meeting. You should also let participants know what their role will be in the action plan and what will be expected of them.

Following these simple guidelines can create participant enthusiasm and a more positive atmosphere for your next safety meeting.