



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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### Workplace Safety Checklist

Safety is something we talk about more than act on. The attention that is devoted to the cost of industrial disasters in financial terms tends to ignore the fact that disasters involve people - individually and in groups. At every stage of its occurrence, industrial disaster is truly about people and their behavior.

A key element in achieving and maintaining high levels of safety is knowledge of the hazards, their effects and the techniques that help to avoid those effects. With this knowledge comes the confidence to deal with the hazards, but it is important that the knowledge acquired is relevant and is technically correct. Much harm can be done when using incorrect information. The responsibility lies with the employer to ensure that the employees' knowledge about the hazards they may meet is correct and technically sound. The teaching of that knowledge through training, instruction and information constitutes a major contribution towards high safety performance. An ambitious approach to safety training that goes beyond compliance, even if it is more expensive in the short term, can yield a big long-term pay off.

Proper training of supervisors and the employees could prevent the occurrence of everyday job related injuries. Organizations should take care to review potential hazards and involve supervisors and employees in suggesting specific prevention methods. Job safety checklists should be prepared basing on safety measures that can be formulated.

Some questions to be considered to prepare a job safety checklist can be:

- Are there any live electrical hazards at the jobsite?
- Are there any chemical, physical, biological or radiation hazards associated with the job or likely to develop?
- Are job procedures known and are they followed or modified?
- Are all employees properly trained and authorized to operate vehicles and equipment?
- Are employees wearing proper protective gear while on the job?
- Are employees trained to handle a fire, explosion or toxic gas release?

The following issues should be considered in designing and implementing the training program:

- The employer and the employees should be given an overall explanation of the importance of the training program.
- A checklist and document completion of each area of training should be established.
- The safety areas that should be addressed during a new supervisor's orientation and in the subsequent introductory period should be determined.



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- Outsourcing should be considered only after a careful review of budget allotted, expertise, available time, location and other factors.

The areas that should be included in the training program for the supervisors:

- **Company policies.** The supervisor should be briefed about company policies, reporting responsibilities and contact information, including proper methods for documentation.
- **Employee safety.** He or she should know about employee safety relating to physical hazards in the immediate work environment, where First Aid provisions are located, and the Company's Injury Prevention plan.
- **Workplace violence.** He/she should be aware of threats, agitated and hostile employees or visitors and should know the firm's plan for on-site high-risk occurrences.
- **Sexual harassment.** A review of different types of harassment, particularly more subtle forms and "hostile work place" issues, is necessary. Suggest ways to handle incidents, complaints, and follow-up action.
- **Discrimination.** An overview of the protected classes of employees and applicants should be given, including examples of situations to be aware of and how to report and respond.
- **Technology use.** Responsible technology use, including computer, Internet, and other types of communication, should be reviewed.
- **Performance feedback.** Supervisors should be taught how to provide performance feedback on an on-going basis and in an objective and professional manner.

Safety training, when well planned and adopted, will benefit the company not only in fewer injury claims but also in improved attendance, morale and productivity.