Continually Learning Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Continually Learning Safety Talk

Continual learning and improvement is critical for success in any area of our lives; whether that is as a parent, spouse, worker, leader, community member, etc. Having a growth mindset when it comes to work separates those who stay stagnant in their position at work and those who eventually land better opportunities for themselves.

WHAT' S THE DANGER

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE

Change is inevitable. Many workers have been in the same field for over 20, 30, or even 40 years, but think how different the same workplace was even just a decade ago. Workers who want to hold on to the old days and fight change at every single turn will eventually get left behind. Not only will your career suffer from not embracing change, but you can also be more at risk for injury.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

WHAT IS CONTINUOUS LEARNING?

Continuous learning is a method of enabling learners to have learning become a part of working; a way to adapt to changes by putting time aside to keep up with them with new skills and knowledge.

One of the most important aspects of continuous learning is time. Learners need time on a regular basis to seek out new knowledge that will benefit their work. Unfortunately, the average worker

has very little time to dedicate to learning, so allowing learning to be a priority in your workplace culture will help them take advantage of it.

The other important aspect is application. As part of continuous learning, learners will reinforce the training through their work. For example, if a learner spends four hours training on a new technology, as they use it on the job they will continue to watch videos and ask questions to further their learning.

CREATE A WORKPLACE THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

Keep employees up-to-date by assigning continuous learning on new technology relevant to their field, as well as major software updates, and more.

Understanding the latest technologies in the industry is important to keeping your company future-proof. You don’t want to be left behind as new software and equipment become important tools to learn. Your employees need the time and resources to continue being the top, knowledgeable professionals in their field. Continuous learning can help provide that.

TIPS ON INTEGRATING CONTINUOUS LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE

Since continuous learning is broad, it can be difficult to know where to start in making your learning culture more receptive to it. Here are some concrete steps to take to begin approaching it.

- Clearly define the skill sets of positions and development paths.
- Provide resources.
- Reward employees.
- Provide time.

Ask employees what they want to learn. More than anyone else, the employee will be most aware of how the technology or standards that affect their role is changing. Ask them what they need to learn, to be sure you are providing the right resources.

BUILD A CONTINUOUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Creating a supportive environment that encourages employees to engage in continuous learning takes **commitment, resources, and coaching.** Some employees will be self-motivated and will take up continuous learning on their own time, but the majority will not have the time or resources to do so.

It is unrealistic to expect all employees to engage in continuous learning either during the work day or in their free time. **Here is a path on how to navigate this situation:**

1. Continuous learning begins with leaders
2. Create a learning plan
3. Provide the resources and time for continuous learning

Ideas include:

- Establish a personal development plan with each employee to identify what they may want to learn in order to foster encouragement and initiative
- Hold Lunch & Learns during the lunch break to encourage employees to present and apply what they've learned
- Devote dedicated time to employees to engage in training or learning
- Attend team workshops or events
- Provide access to professional resources via subscriptions or memberships
- Provide access to online learning for self-paced courses
- Organize mentorship or coaching opportunities
- Create a learning "task-force" that enables employees to investigate and collaborate on a topic

FINAL WORD

Embrace change as it comes into the workplace. Most change is made for the greater good of everyone involved. There are times when new changes can lead to unnecessary risk, but the majority of change does not unless workers do not take the proper actions to embrace it. Be a worker who is open to continually learning and avoid having a fixed mindset. Not only will this approach allow you to reach new opportunities, it can also make the difference in

avoiding an injury on the job.