First Day Back to Work Meeting Kit

FIRST DAY BACK TO WORK SAFETY TALK

Workplace injuries are subject to many different and various risk factors. There is an increased chance of likelihood of injury at work after coming into work after extended breaks. Mondays are in the same category. A worker, as laid bare by statistics, is more likely to be injured on a Monday.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that since 2007, Mondays have had the highest number of workplace injuries out of the days of the week every single year with the exception of 2 years.

THE DANGERS OF THE FIRST DAY BACK AT WORK

The Bureau of Labour Statistics data reports there are more injuries on Monday than any other day. But why is that? Lack of focus is an obvious reason.

Other cogent possibilities include:

- Individuals exhibit lower energy levels and lower morale on Mondays. This leads to caring less about the tasks at hand and not taking the time to take the extra steps to work safely.
- Distraction arises in the workplace due to personal issues that one imports to the workplace. These issues occurred over the weekend can take the worker’s mind off their work and responsibilities.
- The first several hours of work on the Monday can be busier or more frenetic that other times of the week.

PREVENT INJURY ON FIRST DAY BACK

There is no question about it. Being away from work is good for one’s mental health. We recharge and refocus.

However, before you head back to work, you need to prepare yourself. Back to work safety should be one of your first priorities as you return from time off. You might have gotten used to sleeping in or a brand new routine. Whether you were off for the weekend, a vacation or a holiday, it is important to prepare yourself for getting back into the swing of things. Statistics show that it does not take much time away from work for us to lose our good safety habits that we have worked so hard to develop.

TAKE THESE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Get the proper amount of sleep.
- Clear your head of any off-job issues and remember your work routine.
- Play this memory game to get you focused: envision putting on your seatbelt, the drive to work, and then the parking space you normally use.
- It’s helpful to scan your path of travel for hazards. When we are away from work, we tend to forget about even the small things that we are used to seeing or avoiding on a daily basis. Also, when we are away, things can change so make sure your safe areas haven’t changed and walkways are still the same.
- Be sure to review the critical steps of your job and the specific things you have to do in order to stay safe.
- Take the time to settle back in to your work area and make sure everything is where you need it to be.
- Do a self-check to see whether you are fit for work or not before you start your shift. Ensure your head is in the game and you are able to focus on your work.
- Complete inspections of your work area as well as any tools or equipment used.
- Take the time and energy to ensure all the necessary safeguards are in place for your work tasks.

- Look out for your coworkers.
- Stop work if needed to address hazards.

FINAL TAKE AWAYS

When you return to work, it’s important to guard yourself from distractions. No matter what mood you are in, the gears on your machines still turn, gravity is still in force, chemicals are still hazardous, and certain areas are still loud. As you prepare to return to work, no matter the environment, be on the lookout for any changes that may been made and allow yourself the time to settle back in and take in your surroundings.

FINAL WORD

The first day back to work has its own unique hazards. It is important to consider how or why injuries are more likely to occur on the first day back to work. Take the time to ensure you are taking the necessary steps to avoid injury during the first few hours of work after being off for a few days.