Five Common Contributing Factors Meeting Kit

COMMON CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO WORKPLACE HAZARDS

Hazard identification and the need to be aware of the four most likely contributing factors to hazards in the workplace.

An occupational safety and health program must include **Risk Assessments** that aim to prevent injuries and illnesses. A **Risk Assessment** process is composed of the following steps:

1) Hazard Identification

2) Risk Analysis and Evaluation

3) Risk Control

Cover All Categories of Hazards

The crucial first step is a risk assessment **(Hazard Identification).**

Safety Hazards:

- Slips, trips, falls
- Working at heights
- Electrical hazards
- Equipment and machinery operation
- Fire protection

Health Hazards:

- Chemical hazards (exposure to, and inhalation of, chemicals)
- Physical hazards (noise, extreme temperatures)
- Biological hazards (infectious diseases, bacteria)
- Ergonomic hazards (heavy lifting, repetitive movements)
- Psychological Hazards (stress, workplace violence)

BE AWARE OF THE MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Being aware of the main categories and types of hazards allows you to go one **Step** further and become aware of contributing factors to hazards. There are the four main contributing factors to consider:

People:

- Are they well trained and competent in performing the work?
- Are they overtired?
- What motivates them (e.g. speed or quality)?
- Is there poor communication?

Equipment:

- Are equipment and tools appropriate for the task?
- Is the equipment properly installed and maintained?
- Are the manufacturer's specifications being followed?

Materials:

- What materials are being used?
- Are they being handled, stored and disposed of properly?

Environment:

- Where is the work site (e.g. an office, vehicle, field, etc.)?
- Does the work environment introduce any hazards? Factors include facility layout, ventilation, lighting, walking surfaces, etc.

7 COMMON CAUSES OF WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS:

Workplace safety incidents occur for many reasons. In most industries, people tend to look for **"things"** to blame when an accident happens, because it's easier than looking for **"root causes,"** such as those listed below. Consider these descriptions

of underlying causes of workplace accidents.

Taking Shortcuts: Every day we make decisions we hope will make the job faster and more efficient But do time savers ever risk your own safety, or that of other crew members? Shortcuts that reduce your safety on the job are not shortcuts, but an increased chance for injury.

Being Overconfident: Confidence is a good thing. Overconfidence is too much of a good thing. “It’ll never happen to me” is an attitude that can lead to improper procedures, tools, or methods in your work.

Starting a Task with Incomplete Instructions: To do the job safely and right the first time, you need complete information. Have you ever seen a worker sent to do a job having been given only a part of the job’s instructions? It isn’t dumb to ask questions; it’s dumb not to.

Poor Housekeeping: When clients, managers or safety professionals walk through your work site, housekeeping is an accurate indicator of everyone’s attitude about quality, production and safety. Poor housekeeping creates hazards of all types. A well-maintained area sets a standard for others to follow.

Ignoring Safety Procedures: Purposely failing to observe safety procedures can endanger you and your co-workers. You are being paid to follow the company safety policies, not to make your own rules. Being “casual” about safety can lead to a casualty!

Mental Distractions from Work: Dropping your ‘mental’ guard can pull your focus away from safe work procedures. You can also be distracted when you are busy working and a friend comes by to talk while you are trying to work. Don’t become a statistic because someone distracted you “just for a minute.”

Failure to Pre-plan the Work: There is a JSA’s are an effective way to figure out the smartest ways to work safely and effectively. Being hasty in starting a task or not thinking through the process can put you in harms way. Instead, Plan your Work, and then Work your Plan.

FINAL WORD

On analysis the hazard identification step of a risk assessment will be greatly improved by being aware of the contributing factors of workplace hazards. These are the more common factors that cause or contribute to workplace injuries. Evaluate your work today and see if any of these items mentioned are at play. Work to eliminate these factors to ensure you are able to work safely.