

## Guide to Health & Safety Committee

- Members of all levels of employment will come together at least once every \_\_\_\_\_ months to discuss Health & Safety Issues.
- The duration of the meeting will be decided prior to each meeting.
- Appointed Positions:
  - Chairperson- The chairperson will be \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to facilitate the meeting. Facilitating includes, but is not limited to, keeping within scheduled meeting time, allowing all opinions to be heard, creating subcommittees, and keeping the meeting focused.
  - Secretary- The secretary will be \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ and shall keep the minutes of the meeting for records and employee communication.
  - Other Positions- Always keep in mind that other positions/subcommittees can be created to make the program work better.
- Three major documents will be significant at each facility.
  - Health & Safety Committee Agenda Log
  - Employee Communication Form
  - Safety Committee Minutes
- The Health & Safety Committee Agenda Log will be used to make a working agenda for the meeting.
- The top priority of this committee will be to reduce workplace injury and illness. Safety Committees must look for the “root cause” of safety hazard to eliminate it.
  - **Root Cause-** Depth in the causal chain where an intervention could reasonably be implemented to change performance and prevent an undesirable outcome.
- A focus on actual progress, over quantity of issues will take precedent.
- Topics will come from actual issues onsite as described by Employee Incidents, Office Concerns, Employee Communications, and/or OSHA/Consultant Reports.
- Employee Communication Forms will allow all employees concerns to be heard and improved.
- All employee incidents, regardless of insurance implications, will be reviewed by the committee. Near-Misses and Small Incidents can be precursors to larger injuries.
- Reviews of past improvements should be done at each meeting until the improvements have positively stuck. Some physical changes only need to be reviewed once, while behavioral issues often have to be reviewed for several months.

# FACT SHEET

**Root Cause**-The usual purpose of attempting to find root causes is to solve a problem that has actually occurred, or to prevent a less serious problem from escalating to an unacceptable level (see Near miss). The basic concept is that solving a problem by addressing root causes is ultimately more effective than merely addressing symptoms or direct causes. Consider the following example, where root cause *a* lead to effect *e*, with a few intervening steps.

$$a \rightarrow b \rightarrow c \rightarrow d \rightarrow e$$

Assume each of these factors is as described below:

- *e*: car will not start
- *d*: battery is dead
- *c*: alternator does not function
- *b*: alternator is well beyond its designed service life
- *a*: car is not being maintained according to recommended service schedule

The effect, *e*, could be prevented by addressing any of the other factors. For example, attaching jumper cables from another car (addressing factor *d*) will probably allow the problem-car to be started. However, this solution is not likely to provide long-lasting relief from the undesired effect, as factor *c* will ensure that the car shuts down again in a very short period of time. Addressing factor *c* by repairing the alternator may solve the problem for a longer period, but factor *b* will eventually result in another age-related breakdown in the alternator. The alternator could be replaced with a new unit, addressing factor *b*, thus allowing the car to be driven for an extended period of time. However, factor *a* will eventually ensure that the car breaks down again for some other reason. Clearly, the best solution to the problem (and many other potential problems) is to maintain the car properly, which addresses factor *a*, the root cause.

**Near Miss**-A **near miss** is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage - but had the potential to do so. Only a fortunate break in the chain of events prevented an injury, fatality or damage. Although human error is commonly an initiating event, a faulty process or system invariably permits or compounds the harm and is the focus of improvement. Other familiar terms for these events is a "close call", or in the case of moving objects, "near collision".

## Health and Safety Committee Agenda Log

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Duration \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Follow Up from Previous Meetings.

Agenda/ Followed Up	Status

### 2. Incidents

Incident #	Root Cause	Action

### 3. Employee/Office Concerns

Employee Concern/Department	Action

# Safety Issue Report Form

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Explain Safety Issue \_\_\_\_\_

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Suggested Action (How would you fix it?) \_\_\_\_\_

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(For Office Use Only)

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Action

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Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

Cc: Safety Committee, Human Resources



## Guide to a Productive Safety Committee

1. Have the right number of meetings. Having too few or too many meetings can be counter productive. If there is nothing to talk about at the meetings members can lose interest. Inversely if there is too much to talk about the committee will be spread too thin.
2. Have representatives of all departments. Each department should be represented so that all issues can be dealt with.
3. Decide how long meetings are going to last and stick with it. If 30 minutes is the time agreed upon make it a point to follow this time limit. It will keep people on track and allow for easy scheduling.
4. Elect or appoint positions, important positions are chairperson and secretary. The chairperson should facilitate the meeting while the secretary keeps the minutes. If you feel there is a need for more positions add them as needed.
5. Allow for members to serve long enough to become fluent in the issues present in the facility, but not so long that the committee is dominated by a small number of employees.
6. Keep the meeting dedicated to employee safety and health. Do not allow the meeting to become a gripe session or a meeting to focus on customer safety. These topics have a time and a place but not at the safety committee meeting.
7. Review all incidents, accidents, or near misses that have occurred since the last safety committee meeting. Discuss the root cause of the injury or incident and then how to prevent this from reoccurring. While the goal is to eliminate injury and illnesses on site completely, it is more realistic to start with the goal of “no repeat injuries”.
8. Follow up, follow up, follow up. A successful safety and health committee follows up to make sure policies are being followed and are still working. If you make decisions to change equipment or work processes it is important to follow up to make sure this change is working. One example would be; a repaired light in a hallway. The meeting after the committee talked about fixing the light it should be followed up on to make sure the light was fixed. This can be done one time and be successful. An example of something that needs continued follow up would be a change in the way rooms are cleaned to reduce slip and trip hazards. If the committee sees a large number of slips and trips with housekeepers cleaning rooms, they might decide that it is time to change the process in which housekeepers’ clean rooms. It would be important to follow this change for a number of months to decide if it is working and if employees are adapting to the new policy.

9. Be visible, it is very important the employees are aware of the safety committee. All employees should know the purpose of the safety committee, who is on the committee, and what was discussed and decided at the most recent safety committee meeting. One way this can be done by posting safety committee meeting minutes near the time clock. Other ways include a safety week, or safety lunch, training, or anything else that the committee would find productive.
10. Find a way to solicit employee concerns; some companies use a suggestion box to promote honesty without the threat of repercussions. Decide on a way that allows employees to comment on the safety and health in the facility.
11. Companies that have successful health and safety programs are not successful by accident. Set goals and work to make these goals reality.
12. Promote an atmosphere where everyone's opinion is heard and respected. Each member has some type of experience that makes them important to the committee.
13. Keep track of your successes and those endeavors that are not as successful. Learn from the times that you are not as successful and take credit for successes. Keep track of these using the attached Health and Safety Activities Log.
14. Remember there are many ways to accomplish a goal, be creative. Take ownership of the safety and health program and make it fit your facility and its personalities.