

OFFICE SAFETY 2000

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation. Featured are:

INTRODUCTION: A brief description of the program and the subject that it addresses.

PROGRAM OUTLINE: Summarizes the program content. If the program outline is discussed before the video is presented, the entire program will be more meaningful and successful.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION: These sections will help you set up the training environment, help you relate the program to site-specific incidents, and provide program objectives for focusing your presentation.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Questions may be copied and given to participants to document how well they understood the information that was presented. Answers to the review questions are provided separately.

ATTENDANCE RECORD: Document the date of your presentation as well as identify the program participants. The attendance record may be copied as needed.

INTRODUCTION

In today's workplaces, information has become our most valuable commodity. This has resulted in a radical shift in the way we work. More and more of us now work in offices and with computers. While there are no jackhammers or forklifts in the office environment, health and safety is just as important in the office as it is in a manufacturing plant, on a construction site or on the road.

This video stresses to viewers that hazards in the office environment can cause serious injuries if they are overlooked and that it is each person's responsibility to take a pro-active approach towards office safety. Topics include emergency response, electrical safety, working with photocopiers, safe lifting, office ergonomics and workplace security.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

BACKGROUND

- Many hazards in the office that are overlooked lead to injuries that may be caused by specific incidents or hazards that have accumulated over time.
- Workplace stress contributes to fatigue and complacency. This leads to a reduced emphasis on safety, including housekeeping and dealing with hazards.
- Every office environment has potential hazards and workplace health and safety must be one of your top priorities.
- Start by keeping your work station tidy. Familiarize yourself with your organization's policy for disposing of confidential documents and recycle paper if your organization has the appropriate facilities.
- Never run in the office; it's a dangerous practice. Running around corners or up and down stairs is especially dangerous, not only to you but to your co-workers.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Know your organization's disaster plan for dealing with fire and other emergencies. Familiarize yourself with emergency exits, evacuation procedures, emergency contact phone numbers and the location and use of fire extinguishers.
- Do not use elevators in the event of a fire. Never leave boxes, trash cans, furniture or any other objects where they can block emergency exits or create any kind of hazard.

- If you don't know your organization's emergency procedures, ask your supervisor about them.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of first aid kits in your office. If you are not trained in first aid, including CPR, find out which of your co-workers have first aid training and make sure you know their contact numbers.
- Consider taking a training course in CPR and other first aid techniques. For more information, ask your supervisor or health and safety manager.

COMMON OFFICE HAZARDS

- When using electrical appliances, be careful not to overload outlets. This is a dangerous practice that can cause electrical shorts or a fire.
- Don't place electrical and communications cables across walkways or in other areas where people can trip over them.
- Avoid overloading filing cabinets or having more than one drawer open at a time. They can tip over, causing serious injuries.
- Take special care with scissors, knives, blades, paper cutters, staplers and other potentially dangerous items.
- If a job requires you to use a blade, always cut away from your body, not towards it. Make sure blades are enclosed or rendered harmless when you have finished using them.
- Be careful when using paper shredders. Clothing and jewelry can catch in these machines and cause injuries.

PHOTOCOPIERS

- Photocopiers present potential hazards, including ozone emissions, toner dust, light, heat and noise as well as discomfort and strain to workers using them for long periods of time.
- Locate photocopiers in well-ventilated areas and keep them maintained properly.
- Always follow the manufacturer's directions when using a copier. Do not operate copiers with the lid open; this will help prevent exposure to bright light emissions.
- If you are doing large copying and collating jobs, arrange your work to keep lifting, bending and twisting to a minimum.
- If you need to stand for long periods of time, ease the strain on your hips and knees by placing a foot on a stool or bench.
- Alternate photocopying and collating tasks with other non-repetitive tasks.

CHEMICALS AND SPILLS

- Store detergents and cleansers in clearly marked containers to avoid improper usage. Store hazardous chemicals and poisons separately and securely; allow access only to authorized persons; and, make sure they are properly labeled.
- When non-hazardous spills occur, post a sign at the area and clean up as soon as possible to prevent slips and falls.
- Hazardous spills, whether they involve chemicals or bodily fluids such as blood, must be approached with caution. If you see a hazardous spill, immediately inform your supervisor.
- Don't attempt to clean up these kinds of spills unless you are trained to do so and are wearing appropriate protective equipment.
- Never pick up broken glass with your bare hands. Use a dust pan and broom or tongs.

POSTURE & ERGONOMICS

- Many injuries and medical problems that occur in the office environment are the result of repetitive strain injury (or occupational overuse syndrome).
- Working at a keyboard day after day can cause pain in the neck, shoulders, forearms, wrists and hands. This pain is largely caused by lack of exercise, incorrect posture and poor ergonomics.
- If you work at a computer, you can easily improve your own work station ergonomics.
- Choose a firm back chair that supports the lumbar area of the back. Place a properly designed support cushion between the chair and your lower back if this helps to maintain correct posture.
- Sit straight, without slouching, and make sure you do not have to stretch forward to reach the keys or read the screen. Your chair and keyboard should be positioned that so that your thighs and forearms are level or sloping slightly down away from the body.
- Your wrists should be straight and level, not bent far down or way back. Don't strike the keys too hard; use a light touch.
- Don't tuck the telephone between your shoulder and ear so that you can type and talk on the phone at the same time. This is very common, but is also quite aggravating for your neck, shoulders and arms.

SAFE LIFTING

- Lifting and handling loads is not just limited to manual workers. Many times we need to lift items such as computers, boxes of copy paper and other quite heavy items.
- If your job involves lifting, wear clothing and footwear that's right for the job. If you wear high heels, change into more suitable footwear, such as non-slip training or walking shoes.
- Try to avoid lifting loads located below your knee height or above your shoulder height.
- Don't use a chair, particularly a swivel chair, to get items that are out of reach. If you have to reach up to grasp the load, use a step or bench.
- Make sure your vision won't be blocked by the load and there are no obstructions between your pickup and set down points.
- Make sure the load is balanced and even. Bring the load close to you, lift slowly, bend your knees and use your legs to lift and set down the load.
- If the load is beyond your capacity, get help.

SECURITY

- Security is a higher priority than ever before in all workplaces.
- If you leave your desk for any reason, be sure to protect confidential papers and computer files. Lock up valuable items such as lap top computers.
- At the end of the day, clear off your desk and make sure you have logged off from your computer.
- If you see anyone on your floor that shouldn't be there, ask politely if you can help. If you are concerned for any reason, call security or dial 911.

PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING OR TRAINING SESSION

Review each section of this Leader' s Guide as well as the videotape. Here are a few suggestions for using the program:

Make everyone aware of the importance the company places on health and safety and how each person must be an active member of the safety team.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the review questions included in this Leader' s Guide and ask each participant to complete them.

Make an attendance record and have each participant sign the form. Maintain the attendance record and each participant' s test paper as written documentation of the training performed.

Here are some suggestions for preparing your videotape equipment and the room or area you use:

Check the room or area for quietness, adequate ventilation and temperature, lighting and unobstructed access.

Check the seating arrangement and the audiovisual equipment to ensure that all participants will be able to see and hear the videotape program.

Place or secure extension cords to prevent them from becoming a tripping hazard.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person the opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

Explain that the primary purpose of the program is to make office workers aware of the hazards that exist in office environments and the importance of following safe work practices to prevent accidents and injuries.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

After watching the videotape program, the viewer will be able to explain the following:

- Why office safety is just as important as safety in other work environments;
- The dangers associated with electrical appliances and cords, equipment with blades, photocopiers and chemicals;
- The importance of office ergonomics and safe lifting in maintaining personal health;
- How to respond to situations that involve security of the office.

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Review Questions

Name _____ Date _____

The following questions are provided to check how well you understand the information presented during this program.

1. Since there is no heavy equipment such as forklifts in an office environment, office safety is not as important as safety in manufacturing or construction environments.
 - a. true
 - b. false

2. You should not use an elevator in the event of a fire.
 - a. true
 - b. false

3. If you see a spill of a hazardous chemical, you should attempt to clean it up immediately.
 - a. true
 - b. false

4. Which of the following is a leading cause of pain in the neck, shoulders, forearms, wrists and hands for office workers?
 - a. lack of exercise
 - b. incorrect posture
 - c. poor ergonomics
 - d. all of the above

5. What should you do if a load you are preparing to lift seems to be beyond your lifting capacity?
 - a. lift it to midsection and put it down if it is too heavy
 - b. put a piece of cardboard beneath it and slide it
 - c. get help

6. What should you do if you see someone on your floor that should not be there?
 - a. ask them to leave immediately
 - b. tell them you are going to call security
 - c. ask them politely if you can help
 - d. none of the above

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ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. d
5. c
6. c