

# What You Should Know About SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

## Guide for Supervisors

### The Supervisor and Safety

No one is in a better position to ensure the safety of your workers than you, the supervisor. If you provide your people with proper guidance, training, and development of good work habits, they will perform safely whether or not you are in the area.

### To attain and sustain safe performance--

- Explain the reasons for the safety rules.
- Develop safe methods of performing each task.
- Be able to demonstrate safe performance of each task.
- Make sure required tools and equipment are available and used.
- Properly assign your people tasks that are within their abilities.
- Promote teamwork among your people.
- Enforce rules and regulations.
- Demonstrate your personal commitment to safety by setting a good example.

### Five things supervisors can do to save lives and equipment

1. **Set high standards.** Set and enforce high operating standards in every activity of your operation. Safety is a by-product of professionalism, of doing the job right the first time and every time. By-the-book, disciplined operations are mandatory.
2. **Know your employees.** Know their training status and their qualifications. Test new people's knowledge, regardless of whether or not they have been previously certified in a certain area. Consider individual abilities when assigning job tasks.
3. **Know your equipment.** Know its capabilities and its condition. Numerous checklists and publications are available to guide you. Consider this information when assigning job tasks.
4. **Apply dispatch discipline.** Many accidents involve equipment that should not be in use. Ensure equipment is operational and meets regulatory standards before requiring your workers to use it.
5. **Maintain awareness.** Do not allow yourself to relax your vigil and become complacent when everything is running smoothly.

Source: Army Safety Center

### Ten Commandments of Safety for Supervisors

1. **In a sense, you have two families.** Care for your workers as you would care for your family. Be sure each understands and accepts his or her personal responsibility for safety.
2. **Know the rules of safety that apply to the work you supervise.** Never let it be said that one of your people was injured because you were not aware of the precautions required by the job.
3. **Anticipate the risks that may arise from changes in equipment or methods.** Seek and use expert safety advice that is available to help you guard against new hazards.
4. **Encourage your people to discuss with you the hazards of their jobs.** Be receptive to the ideas of your workers. They are a valuable source of first-hand knowledge that will help you prevent accidents.
5. **Assign sufficient and qualified people and equipment to get the task done safely.** Allow no shortcuts.
6. **Follow up your instructions consistently.** See to it that your workers use the safeguards provided them. Routinely spot check their work. If necessary, enforce safety rules through disciplinary action.
7. **Set a good example.** Demonstrate safety in your own work habits and personal conduct. Do not appear a hypocrite in the eyes of your people.
8. **Investigate and analyze every accident, however slight.** Develop corrective measures to prevent similar accidents. Where minor accidents go unheeded, crippling accidents may later strike.
9. **Cooperate fully with those in the organization who are involved in employee safety.** Their purpose is to help you keep your people safe.
10. **Remember: accident prevention is good business.** It's also one of your prime obligations to your workers and to the Army.

### Personal and Professional Consequences of Accidents

As a supervisor, you are responsible not only for your own actions, but to some extent for the actions of workers whose activities you have authority to inspect, correct, and direct.

You should know that you can be held accountable not only through administrative but also criminal and civil means.

## Fundamentals of Accident Prevention

Most workplace accidents occur because someone does something wrong in the performance of his job. Most accident-causing errors are made because the worker either doesn't know, doesn't care, or isn't able to perform a task safely.

- Lack of knowledge is usually the results of inadequate training, lack of experience, or inadequate written procedures.
- A don't-care attitude often springs from lack of motivation, overconfidence, or the effects of alcohol or other drugs.
- Inability to perform can be caused by illness, fatigue, or emotional or psychological problems.

## The Three E's

Accidents are preventable. The three E's--engineering, education, and enforcement--have proven over time to be effective in reducing accidents.

- **Engineering** involves people who are familiar enough with a given job, piece of equipment, or activity to make a valid assessment of the safety factors involved.
- **Education** is the means for developing safe behavior. Knowledge of the rules and regulations governing specific jobs, operations, and activities is essential for safe performance.
- **Enforcement** of safety rules and procedures is critical to maintaining a safe workplace. All the safety rules and procedures in the world will not prevent a single accident unless they are followed, so they must be enforced--through disciplinary action if necessary.

## Education and Training

As a supervisor you are responsible for making sure your people receive the training they need to do their jobs effectively and safely.

## Motivation for Safe Performance

The key to preventing accidents is getting people to perform safely. As a supervisor you must motivate your workers, get them to want to be safe.

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## Safety Risk Management for Supervisors

The risk management process begins by clearly defining job requirements and then establishing acceptable risk factors. This is done by identifying risks associated with job operations and weighing them against benefits to be gained. The key is in not accepting preventable risks.

**Risk** is defined as an expression of potential loss stated in terms of :

- **Exposure.** How many people, how much equipment? How many people will be exposed to what hazards for how long? The answers to these questions are critical to assessing risk. For example, 100 people exposed to a hazard with a 1% risk of injury will produce 1 injury; 10,000 people exposed to the same hazard will produce 100 injuries--a significant difference.
- **Severity.** What is the likely result of each event--injury, damage, or death? The accident data base is the key here. It can tell the distribution of hazard events by severity.
- **Probability.** The likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in an accident.

## Safety Risk Management Process

1. Identify Hazards
2. Assess Hazards
3. Develop Controls & Make Risk Decision
4. Implement Controls
5. Supervise & Evaluate

## Safety Inspections

The purpose of safety inspections is to eliminate accident causes. A good safety inspection will--

- Detect specific unsafe conditions that might cause accidents.
- Detect unsafe practices or acts such as operating equipment without authority or at unsafe speeds, unsafe handling of materials, and using improper personal protective equipment.
- Highlight the need to specify safeguards for people and machines.
- Help sell the safety program to your people.
- Encourage employees to inspect their own work areas and practices.
- Detect deficiencies in the management of the safety program.