



A Union of Professionals

Health and Safety Program

Effective Health and Safety Committees – Part Two

This material was produced under the grant SH-20839-SHO from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. It does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

WORK
shouldn't
HURT



Objectives

- At the end of the training, health and safety committee members will:
 - Establish a committee structure and process
 - Develop an action plan for the year that identifies one – two priority health and safety issues to work on



What's Your Vision?

In the best of all worlds.....



WORK
shouldn't
HURT



Elements of a Successful Committee

- Having a committee that reflects the membership
- Setting priorities that are reasonable and attainable
- Having regular meeting times and clear roles of committee members
- Keeping minutes and following through on member issues
- Gathering information
- Training and education
- Conducting investigations
- Investigating incidents
- Keeping in touch with the leadership and membership

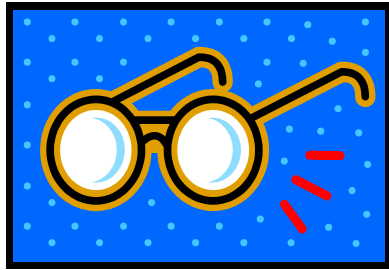


Review Function and Process for Joint Committees

- Management and unions should each appoint their own members to the committee
- Equal number of management and union representatives is ideal
- Representatives from several sites or schools is important
- Rotation of representatives is important
- Management representative with the latitude to act upon the committee's recommendation is essential (budgetary authority as well as expertise)



How are we to function?



So, we all have a vision!

Now, how are we going to organize our selves to fulfill the vision?

Where to Start?

Defining the purpose of the committee and your overall goals through a mission statement.



Mission Statements

Why are mission statements important?

- Provides direction.
- Defines purpose – i.e. why do we exist?
- A safety net or beacon when the committee loses its sense of direction.





Tips for Mission Statements

- What is the role of health and safety committee?
 - Complaint investigations?
 - Training?
- What are the powers of the health and safety committee?
 - Access to records?
 - Recommendations to employer?



Drafting Your Mission Statement



Image: Broken Chord's photostream

- What's the committee's "vision" (short and sweet)
- What's the purpose of the Health and Safety Committee (five or six bullets)



Establishing a Committee

Step #1:

- What roles and associated responsibilities need to be established ?
 - Chair person
 - Vice chair
 - Committee members
 - Subcommittees

- How will these roles be determined?
- How long will people serve in these roles?
- Will there be alternates?
- Will there be subcommittees for specific tasks?



Establishing a Committee

Step #2:

- How often should the committee meet?
- How will the agenda be established?
- Who should take minutes and how will they be approved and distributed?



Establishing a Committee

Step #3:

- How will decisions be made within the committee?
- How will conflicts be resolved?



Key Concepts for Conflict Resolution

- Simple communication is at the heart of conflict resolution
- Important skills include:
 - Listening to each other and seeking to understand the problem
 - Flexibility and willingness to change
 - Respecting the opinion of others and agreeing to sometimes disagree
 - Democracy – majority rules



Establishing a Committee

Step #4:

- How will you communicate with members/stakeholders?
- How will you keep the membership involved in the process?





Keeping our Members Engaged

What are their issues?

- How do you find out?
- How often do you ask?
- What needs to be put into place to obtain H&S related suggestions, reports of hazards or other information directly?





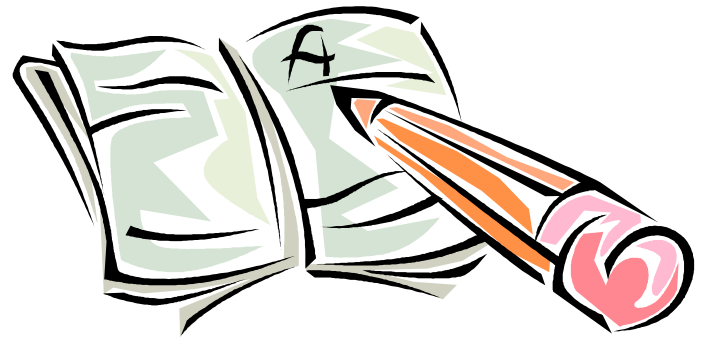
Preventive Approach

- Will the committee take a preventative approach, such as:
 - Getting involved in long-range planning on equipment
 - Renovations
 - Employee trainings, etc.?
- Who will you be dealing with in management?





Homework Review



WORK
shouldn't
HURT



Making Recommendations



- How will recommendations on ways to eliminate or correct hazards and unsafe work practices be made to leadership and administrators?
- What will be the plan if recommendations aren't addressed?



Next Steps – Your Homework Assignment!

- What is the most important health and safety issue within your facility that the committee should address first?
- What do you think you need to be effective and how will you go about accomplishing that?
- How does your solution benefit:
 - The union?
 - The employer?
 - The community?