


 THE IMPORTANCE OF

TOOLBOX TALKS

As part of the AFRA membership audit, you are required to carry out toolbox talks with your employees.

Why are toolbox talks important?

Anything related to workplace health and safety is important to your company and your employees, it is your responsibility to have preventive measures in place and provide sufficient information, instruction and training.

A toolbox talk is an informal and casual team meeting that helps promote health and safety with employees to discuss a specific relevant topic. In addition, toolbox talks create ongoing open communications and an opportunity to talk about safety measures before a potential unsafe incident happens. Toolbox talks can be used to discuss recent incidents and near misses

with a focus on how these can be prevented in future. Also, they are a great way to reinforce safety basics, focus on high-risk scenarios and inform employees of any changes.

How often should you run these sessions and when?

There is no general rule on how often, but it is recommended an informal talk either one per week or one per fortnight depending on your company's size and operation, and more formal monthly talk. The best time to run these sessions is first thing in the morning or prior to a shift. Some companies will organise a breakfast or morning tea to coincided with each session, and others host their monthly session over an 'all team' breakfast.

Who leads the toolbox talk?

Toolbox talks can be delivered by HR, manager, supervisor or team leader depending on your company's culture.

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Should attendance for toolbox talks be recorded?

Yes, an attendance sheet must contain the topic, the date and location. The sign-in sheet that must record each attendee's name and be signed by all attendees. The hard copy must be kept for future reference, this can be filed or scanned and saved electronically. Some companies will have an electronic HR/training system where they will capture this information.

Why should we have toolbox talks if our employees have completed WH&S training?

WH&S compliance training is provided to all employees when they start their employment and all employees who are currently employed should have completed this training. Toolbox talks are an easy way to keep safety on every employee's mind, every day, every week. Safety is the goal, the idea is to provide reminders, refreshers and also to cover any topics that might not be covered in their WH&S training. Plus, it is a way to answer employee's questions and point out specific relevant on the job examples relating to your industry.

Some Toolbox talks topics you can use include: fire safety, evacuations, PPE, how to use equipment, identify hazards and risk, slip trips and falls, road safety, basic first aid, handling



chemicals, anything relating to Chain of Responsibility. You can also include topics such as: policies and procedures, how to complete paperwork, eg: Daily Vehicle checklist, ICR.

Holding regular toolbox talks is an effective way to help prevent workplace injuries and accidents on the job. Toolbox tools help improve workplace safety, boost employees' morale, lower company's insurance premiums, strengthen safety compliance and lower the risk of accidents and injuries. ●

→ Focus on one relevant topic per session

→ Keep the talk short, around 5 to 10 minutes, allowing for questions and answers at the end of the toolbox talk (session lasting 15 to 30 minutes)

→ Get employees involved by asking questions or having them demonstrate safe work practices

→ At the end of the session reinforce important points

→ Make sure to cover any changes to site or working conditions

→ If new equipment, eg: how to use new fire extinguisher, demonstrate how to use and get employees to inspect

→ Give credit to employees who are adhering to safety rules and regulations
