

Employee Involvement Opportunities

Employee involvement is a critical piece of any safety management system (SMS). The level of employee involvement at your worksite provides a good indication of whether your site has implemented a world-class SMS. When employees are involved, they become further educated on safety and health (S&H) hazards and methods to prevent exposure. Additionally, employees are more likely to support decisions made to enhance safety and health at work when they have input into these decisions.



Employee involvement is essential in developing a strong safety culture. Improving a worksite's safety culture may have a significant impact on reducing injuries and illnesses. Some helpful strategies to consider in promoting and increasing employee involvement include:

- Providing multiple opportunities for employees to become involved in safety and health
- Conducting an employee survey about interest in involvement opportunities you offer
- Incorporating employee involvement into workplace policies and procedures
- Gaining "buy-in" from leaders and supervisors to commit necessary resources
- Emphasizing and encouraging employee involvement through top leadership
- Incentivizing employee involvement as a form of motivation
- Marketing involvement opportunities to ensure employee awareness
- Making involvement interesting, fun to do, or even competitive in nature



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It is important to document all involvement opportunities to demonstrate employee involvement occurs at your worksite. Provide employees the time and resources they will need to participate, and do not forget to train employees for some of these activities so they understand what is expected of them. It's also important your employees can communicate the various ways they are involved in safety and health.



DoD Safety Management Center of Excellence

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) expects at least three meaningful ways of employee involvement, and reporting hazards or other employee rights and responsibilities do not count. The list below is not all-inclusive, but provides some common activities you can use to offer meaningful employee involvement opportunities in your workplace:

- Conducting routine self-safety inspections, monthly emergency equipment inspections, and preventative maintenance inventories
- Participating on S&H committees, working groups, or teams
- Assisting in mishap or near-miss investigations
- Performing hazard analyses, such as the creation, review, and update of workplace procedures (e.g., job hazard analyses, standard operating procedures)
- Developing, reviewing, or revising site S&H programs or instructions (e.g., confined space entry procedures, lockout/tagout program)
- Presenting safety and health-related information in meetings
- Providing S&H training to new or current employees
- Mentoring other employees on S&H rules and expectations
- Developing content for an employee safety handbook
- Updating S&H posters, bulletin boards, or other informational displays
- Creating or reviewing S&H goals and objectives
- Participating in the selection of personal protective equipment
- Assisting in emergency drill exercises and debriefings
- Correcting hazards on-the-spot, when possible
- Providing S&H suggestions
- Acting as a safety observer



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