

Student name: _____ Date: _____

MODULE 8

Identify appropriate occupational safety practices and procedures.

Objectives:

- A. Determine why job safety is important.**
- B. List causes of job accidents.**
- C. Determine safety hazards on your job and tell how to avoid them.**

MODULE 8: INFORMATION SHEET

***TO THE STUDENT:** Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end of this section.*

What is safety on the job?

More than 90 million Americans spend the day on the job. These workers are our most valuable national resource. Yet, every year thousands of employees are injured, disabled, or killed while at work.

In terms of lost production and wages, medical expenses, and disability compensation, the burden on the nation's commerce is staggering. Human costs - the effects both physical and emotional on the workers and their families - are beyond calculation.

The worst part is that in many cases job-related accidents could be avoided by adhering to simple safety procedures. Ignoring these safety procedures or not being aware of them often leads to disaster.

Accidents can happen to anyone at any time, in any place. It is very important to understand why and how accidents occur and how to prevent them. For example:

Jack F., age 22, was changing the brake linings on a large pick-up. It was a fairly routine job; but instead of using the lift (which was already in use), he had jacked up the right rear. The jack slipped and wheel rim slammed to the ground severing Jack's right arm just below the shoulder.

Marsha L., while carrying a stack of bakery trays, slipped on some icing remaining from a previous spill, went down with the trays, and broke her leg in two places.

David M. was eating a candy bar while operating a forklift. The candy bar fell on the floor. When David hopped off to retrieve it, he didn't bother with the extra safety catch. The unthinkable happened - David was crushed, leaving a widow and three small children.

Why is safety important to you?

An accident can cost you money in terms of time lost from the job. This is one of the lighter consequences of work-related injuries. They also could cost you your job, your health, or even your life.

Consider for a moment the effect that a serious accident could have on your life plans and goals.

1. Your choice of career might have to be changed because you might not be able to perform the necessary tasks for your job.
2. You could go for an extended period of time without a paycheck.
3. Your lifestyle outside the workplace would also be greatly influenced, including a definite effect on the people around you—especially your family.

Imagine yourself and what your life would be like without a leg, a hand, or eyesight. Try to think of what it would be like to lie in a hospital for weeks or months while astronomical medical bills accumulate. Safety is important.

What causes accidents?

Accidents at the job site are caused by either human error or an unsafe environment. Human error is generally attributed to one of the following factors (examples follow each point):

1. A poor attitude toward practicing safety. (A worker says, "I don't need safety glasses - they bother my nose and they're worthless anyway.")

2. A lack of knowledge of the equipment used or the task performed. (A finger is lost to a table saw because the employee didn't know there was a safety guard to be put on.)
3. A lack of job skill. (A bulldozer operator decides to blast some rock himself instead of waiting - a job that he has observed but not been trained in. In the process, the worker destroys himself and the job site.)
4. A physical or mental limitation. (A 145-pound man injured his back hauling 70 pound bags of grain at the farm. The fuel oil explosion was caused by a delivery person who couldn't read the various intake pipes diagrammed in the manual.)
5. Fatigue or distraction that prevents an employee from paying close attention to the task at hand. (A chef stays out 24 hours partying then goes to work and is badly burned at the stove because he/she didn't pay attention when removing a pan.)
6. "Horseplay," or fooling around on the job is frequently the cause of accidents.

You, as an employee, have control over human error and can prevent these conditions by taking precautions.

An unsafe environment is another major cause of accidents. You do not have as much control over your environment as you do with the human error. A sudden ice storm is something a truck driver cannot prevent, but disposing of flammable rags in a body shop rather than leaving them lying around is something the worker can control.

Safety - Whose responsibility?

There are some laws that help enforce safety on the job (such as testing and licensing procedures to operate some equipment), but the ultimate responsibility is that of the employee and employer. This is especially true since most accidents are caused by unsafe behavior and are avoidable. The employee should follow all rules and take all necessary safety precautions while working. The role of the employer is to check and enforce the proper behavior.

Each particular type of work has its own unique set of procedures and precautions, but there are general guidelines common to all jobs that you, as an employee, would benefit from following. These procedures include:

1. Knowledge about the job and the equipment you may be using in order to avoid situations where you are unsure of yourself or unaware of dangerous conditions. Don't hesitate to ask questions of the boss or other employees.
2. Try to continually improve and perfect your skill so that your actions become a "sure thing."
3. Have a positive attitude toward safety. Follow set procedures and directions to the letter; don't take unsafe shortcuts. Use safety equipment that is provided.
4. Avoid unsafe habits. Use the right equipment or tool for the job (a wrench is not a hammer and shouldn't be used as one). Keep your work area clean and as clutter-free as possible so that you, or others, don't trip or get hit by falling objects.
5. Be well-rested when you go to work. Not paying full attention to a job often results in a serious accident.
6. Accept the fact that you are not invincible. You may have some limitations that may prevent you from performing some physical tasks properly.
7. Report all potentially unsafe conditions to your supervisor so that you can prevent others (and yourself) from being injured. If you are involved in an accident, report it immediately.
8. Don't engage in "horseplay."

Another responsibility that your employer has is to provide a safe work environment for you. If he or she ignores proper safety standards and consequently employees are injured, he will be a loser, too, through decreased work production as well as increased safety insurance premiums. It is the responsibility of your employer to make sure you are informed of all hazardous plant or business conditions such as poor air quality, malfunctioning equipment, toxic materials, etc. (*Employee Right-to-Know*.)

Where can you turn for help?

If your employer refuses to correct safety problems at work, you can turn to the government for help. The Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA) was created to assure safe working conditions for all employees. The main function of OSHA is to inspect businesses to assure that necessary safety equipment is available and adequate safety procedures are followed. OSHA also provides for research so that safety practices can be constantly upgraded.

In the event that you do find it necessary to report your business to OSHA for something you feel may be a hazard, an inspection and follow-up will be provided by OSHA and your name will be kept confidential.

On the other hand, if you, as an employee, refuse to use provided safety equipment, this could be grounds for your dismissal.

SAFETY ON THE JOB - IT'S THE WISEST AND BEST THING TO DO!!

MODULE 8: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

***TO THE STUDENT:** After you have read and studied the information sheet, complete the following activities.*

1. Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What are the main causes of accidents?

A.

B.

2. Why should safety be important to you?

3. Why is a clean work area a safe work area?

4. Mark has hair down below his shoulders and loves to wear loose baggy clothes. Why would this be a problem when working around machinery?

5. Why do you think many employers have set written procedures for completing a certain task or job?

2. Answer these questions as they relate to YOUR personal job.

List five possible safety hazards that you might encounter at your place of work. For each one, explain how you could avoid or correct the problem.

<u>Possible Hazard</u>	<u>Possible Solution</u>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

3. Consider how accidents affect your place of work. Name at least three safety rules or procedures that you follow on your job and explain their purposes.

1.

2.

3.

4. Answer the following questions.

1. Describe in a complete paragraph how the company or business you work for stresses safety?

2. If safety were lacking at your workstation, describe the steps you could take to fix the situation.

MODULE 8: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work**13.2.11. Career Acquisition (Getting a Job)**

- D. Identify sources of health, safety and regulatory practices and their effect on the work environment.
- Child Labor Laws
 - Employee Right to Know
 - Fair Labor Standards Act
 - Hazardous occupations
 - Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) information
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations
 - Student work permits

Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)**1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- D. Maintain a written record of activities, course work, experience, honors and interests.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
- Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish and maintain a single point of view.

- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)

THINKING SKILLS

Decision Making Skills: Specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternatives.

Problem Solving Skills: Recognizes that a problem exists, identifies possible reasons for the discrepancy and devises and implements a plan of action to resolve it. Evaluates and monitors progress and revises plan as indicated by findings.