HOW TO CONDUCT A TAILGATE SAFETY TALK

Use Tailgate Safety Talks as a guide to help you conduct 10-15 minute tailgate training sessions for your crew.

Key Points:

• Choose one safety topic per session.
• Be concise. Keep it short.
• Keep the sessions small.
• Meet in a place that's comfortable for workers.
• Allow time for questions and answers.
• Document the training.

The Concept
Tailgate Safety Talks are a gathering of a small group of workers around the tailgate of a truck, or other spot, for a brief training session on a single safety topic.

Plan Logistics
• Limit sessions to a small number of workers. Six to 10 is a good number.
• Choose a quiet spot that is comfortable for your workers.
• Hold sessions early in the week, but not on Monday mornings.
• Conduct tailgate training sessions an average of once a week. Dedicate a specific time for the training.

Choose Safety Topics
• Review your accident records. Pick topics related to accidents that have occurred.
• Walk around your operation. Look for situations that could result in injuries.
• Ask employees for their ideas.
• Read newsletters and other articles for more information. Use them for additional ideas.
Prepare Your Presentation

• Use a fact sheet or bulletin from a trusted safety resource, or outline your own ideas.
  Examples include:
  • Fact Sheets and Quick Cards available from OSHA:  
    https://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.html
  • Safety Briefs and Tailgate Talks available from the Connecticut LTAP Center (CTI): 
    https://www.t2center.uconn.edu/safetybriefs.php#tailgate
  • Look for visual aids. Examples: warning signs, a flipchart, an illustration on poster board.
  • Photocopy handouts ahead of time.
  • Read through the materials the night before.

Conduct the Session

• Keep your presentation informal.
• Don’t use words your employees won’t understand.
• Use visual aids.
• Involve your workers in discussion of the topic.
• Allow time for questions at the end.
• Have workers sign a sheet showing they were trained and keep it on file.

Tailgate Training Do’s and Don’ts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO:</th>
<th>DON’T:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Limit sessions to no more than 15 minutes.</td>
<td>• Conduct training sessions on Monday mornings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Choose topics that relate to your operation.</td>
<td>• Speak in a manner workers won’t understand.</td>
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<td>• Hold sessions an average of once a week.</td>
<td>• Discourage employees from asking questions.</td>
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Informal

• Sessions held on employees’ turf.
• No “lecturing.”
• Trainer speaks employees’ language.
• Employees are comfortable and more willing to participate.

Brief Sessions

• Sessions run no more than 15 minutes.
• Doesn’t lose employees’ attention.
• Employees more likely to look forward to shorter sessions.

Very Focused

• One safety topic presented at a time.
• Easier for most workers to digest one topic at a time.
• Puts safety information on the “front line” where it’s most effective.

Repetition

• Consistently held sessions reinforce the importance of safety.
• Employees are more likely to remember what they heard.
• Employees are more likely to put concepts into action.
• Constant reinforcement keeps ideas fresh.
**Employee Involvement**
- Workers raise issues management was unaware of.
- Employees see their ideas put into action.
- Enhances two-way communication between workers and supervisors.
- Improves worker morale. Employees become part of the safety team.

**Line Supervisor Involvement**
- Gets line supervisors involved in the safety program.
- Supervisors who train are more likely to “buy into” safety.
- Increases line supervisors’ self-confidence.

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**Basic Training Tips:**
- Be enthusiastic about the topic.
- Don’t speak in a monotone voice.
- Don’t “spoon-feed” information to trainees. Get them involved.
- Choose topics employees can relate to.
- Set a good example.
- Reward good ideas and safe practices.
- Show you really care.

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