



Safety & Risk Office 5-Minute Safety Talk No. 14 – Seven Common Causes of Accidents

Note to Supervisor: This 5-Minute Safety Talk (in some places, it might be called a Toolbox Talk or a Tailgate Talk) is designed not only to communicate important safety information to your employees, but also to be given to them by you, which will hopefully reinforce the message and let them know your expectations for safety. You can use the text below as a script to be rendered verbatim or just as talking points to be stated in your own words. Please also complete the attendance listing on the last page and send it to Safety & Risk, Mail Stop 66.

Consider this statistic: 8 out of every 10 accidents are the fault of the person involved in the incident. Unsafe acts cause four times as many accidents and injuries as unsafe conditions.

Accidents occur for many reasons. In most instances, people tend to look for "things" to blame when an accident happens, because it's easier than looking for "root causes," such as those listed below. Consider the underlying accident causes that are described. Have you been guilty of any of these attitudes or behaviors? If so, you may have not been injured—but you may not be so lucky next time.

Seven Common Causes of Accidents

1. **Taking Shortcuts:** Every day we make decisions we hope will make the job faster and more efficient. But do time-savers ever risk your own safety, or that of your co-workers? Short cuts that reduce your safety on the job are not shortcuts, but an increased chance for injury.
2. **Being Over-Confident:** Confidence is a good thing. Overconfidence is too much of a good thing. "It'll never happen to me" is an attitude that can lead to improper procedures, tools or methods in your work. Any of these can lead to an injury.
3. **Starting a Task with Incomplete Instructions:** To do the job safely and right the first time, you need complete information. Have you ever seen a worker sent to do a job, having been given only a part of the job's instructions? Don't be shy about asking for explanations about work procedures and safety precautions. It isn't dumb to ask questions; it's dumb not to.
4. **Poor Housekeeping:** When co-workers, managers or safety professionals walk through your work site, housekeeping is an accurate indicator of everyone's attitude about quality, production and safety. Poor housekeeping suggests that nobody cares, and it creates hazards of all types. A well maintained area sets a standard for others to follow. Good housekeeping involves both pride and safety.

5. **Ignoring Safety Procedures**: Purposely failing to observe safety procedures can endanger you and your co-workers. You are being paid not only to do your job, but also to follow the College's safety policies and procedures, not to make your own rules. Being "casual" about safety can lead to being a casualty!
6. **Mental Distractions from Work**: Having a bad day at home and worrying about it at work is a hazardous combination. Dropping your "mental" guard can pull your focus away from safe work practices. You can also be distracted when you're busy working and a friend comes by to talk while you are trying to work. Don't become a statistic because you took your eyes off the ball "just for a minute." Remain alert and aware.
7. **Failure to Pre-Plan the Work**: Before beginning a task, take a few seconds to refocus from what you were doing previously to the job at hand. Look around and make sure you know "the lay of the land" before beginning. Being hasty in starting a task, or not thinking through the process can put you in harm's way. Instead, Plan Your Work and then Work Your Plan.

"It is better to be careful 100 times than to get killed once." – Mark Twain

**5-Minute Safety Talk
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Attendance List**

Presenter: _____ Date/Time: _____/_____/_____

Printed Name	Campus	Signature
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Send to the Safety & Risk Office, Mail Stop # 66, when completed.