



Safety & Risk Office 5-Minute Safety Talk No. 13 – Unsafe Acts

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.

Most of us know that accidents are caused by only two things—unsafe acts or practices and unsafe conditions. Unsafe acts or practices means not following proper safety procedures, not doing what we were supposed to do, like not wearing our safety glasses when there is a risk of flying objects entering our eyes from the lawn mower we are operating. Unsafe conditions means something like water on the floor that can cause a slip-and-fall, or electrical wiring with frayed insulation that presents a shock hazard. Some of us even know that **8 out of 10** accidents are the result of unsafe acts, or things we do when we know better. This is kind of strange if you think about it. *We have more to fear from our own actions than from any other job hazards around us.* Why do we deliberately expose ourselves to injury every day?

It Won't Happen To Me

Basically, most of us are just thinking about getting the job done, and we tend to rationalize the risk of getting injured. We think to ourselves that we have done this job this way many, many times, and nothing bad has happened. Therefore, nothing bad will happen to us today. On an intellectual level, we realize there is a potential danger, but decide that the risk of being injured is low. Because we have not been injured so far, we may actually think of ourselves as being very safety conscious. We know the right way to do it, we realize that it is hazardous to do it this way, but what we are really thinking to ourselves is, "it won't happen to me."

We Take Short Cuts

Some of us are fairly meticulous about following safe work practices, but because a job "will only take a minute", we use an unsafe method or tool. For example, not putting on our safety glasses because the job will only take a minute, or not locking out a machine because an adjustment will only take a second.

Usually we think about it just before we do something a little unsafe, or maybe quite a bit unsafe. We know better, we know the safe way to do it, but we take that little chance. In effect we are saying, "I know that this could result in an injury, but it can't happen to me." Maybe it's human nature to think that accidents always happen to someone else, but they can happen to you too. What makes you different?

Why take a chance in the first place? Only you can decide not to be lazy about practicing safety. Only you can decide to take the time to do your job safely and correctly the first time. And always remember that there is no job that is so important or so time-critical that you cannot take the time to do it safely.

5-Minute Safety Talk No. 13 – Unsafe Acts Attendance List

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

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