

# Let's Talk Leadership #1

## Safety Leadership and the New Employee

Working safely is a team effort. A SAFETY LEADER looks out other workers and through your leadership, they will look out for you. Taking responsibility for others is especially important when it comes to new and young workers. They need you to keep an eye on them and show them how to work safely. Think about your workplace from the new worker's point of view for a moment.

Remember your first day on the job? You probably saw a busy place full of strange equipment, unfamiliar chemicals and complicated tasks. Everyone else seems to know what they are doing. More than anything, you just wanted to fit in with the rest of the crew and look like you know what you are doing.

The following points should be covered in the new worker's orientation sessions. Sometimes a supervisor or the Human Resources Department performs this orientation, but anyone can be a safety leader to help a new worker settle in safely:

- Show them where to obtain safety materials and instructions. Written safety rules and others with experience are a good place to start.
- Help the new worker get equipped, fitted and trained with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment.
- Show the new worker where to find the first aid kits, fire extinguishers, eye wash and other emergency equipment.
- Show the new worker where to find the Safety Data Sheets regarding the chemicals they may encounter. If you know of a hazardous substance they will be working with, take a moment to review the hazards and safe handling of that substance.
- Make sure the new worker knows how to announce an emergency; who to inform, who do they call, where do they assemble?
- Tell them how to report an injury and where the nearest first aid kit is.
- Advise them of the importance of replacing guards, put away tools and cleaning up after their work is done.
- If you see someone wearing loose clothing which might become trapped in machinery, speak up.
- Make sure the worker knows who to talk to regarding safety concerns and/or questions.
- If applicable, show them the traffic patterns of mobile equipment, forklifts and explain the importance of driving safely.

Your advice to the new worker is not a replacement for good safety orientation, training and supervision. However, you can help make sure he or she picks up the information necessary to work safely. If you see your co-worker doing something unsafe, talk to them. Tell them in a manner which is not disrespectful, but in a manner which is helpful. It's not interfering; it's looking out for them.

If you are the worker that is approached with safety advice, make sure you view it as being helpful and not the other workers making fun of you - they are trying to help. They are trying to keep you from injuring yourself and possibly others. A safe workplace takes team effort, with everyone responsible for everyone else's safety. Watch out for one another and everyone will benefit!



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