



Situational Awareness

No matter where we work or what our job title is, every one of us makes dozens of decisions each day that affect safety, quality, and outcomes. Most incidents do not happen because someone lacked training or knowledge. They happen because attention drifted, assumptions were made, or the moment was rushed.

Situational awareness means being fully present in what you are doing and aware of what is happening around you. It applies equally to driving a vehicle, working around equipment, reviewing drawings, answering emails, approving work, or having conversations that affect others. When awareness drops, risk increases.

Distractions are one of the most common contributors to incidents and errors. Phones, multitasking, fatigue, stress, deadlines, and routine work can all pull focus away from what matters in that moment. Often, nothing goes wrong immediately. That is what makes distraction dangerous. The consequences usually show up later, when there is no time to react.

Taking safety time does not mean slowing everything down. It means taking a moment to pause, think, and refocus before starting a task, making a decision, or moving from one activity to another. That pause might be asking a question, double-checking information, clearing distractions, or simply stopping to assess what could go wrong.

This applies to all of us. In the field, it may prevent an injury. In fabrication, it may prevent damage or rework. In the office or engineering, it may prevent errors that ripple downstream. In leadership and management, it may prevent decisions that create risk for others.

Situational awareness is not about perfection. It is about intention. Paying attention to what you are doing, recognizing when focus is slipping, and taking responsibility to reset when it does.

As you go through your work this week, take safety time. Pause before starting. Pause before deciding. Pause before assuming. Those few seconds of awareness often make the difference between a good outcome and a preventable one.

Safety is not just how we work. It is how we think.

Have a plan to identify and control hazards, and stop when something looks or feels wrong.