



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

Give Your New Co-Workers Support

Once the initial orientation to the work unit is over and the basic requirements of the job and the safety program have been covered, it's time to move the new employee into the work force and introduce the people he or she will be working with. Co-workers play an important role in getting the new person off to a good start.

What is a veteran employee's role when it comes to orienting a new employee? Remember that new people are nervous to begin with-just starting a new job. They probably don't remember all the instructions they are given and aren't familiar with the new surroundings. This is often a time for information overload. So how can an experienced hand help out?

- Introduce yourself to this person, explain your job and offer assistance.
- Encourage the new hire to ask questions if he or she is not quite sure. Remember how hard it was to admit you didn't know everything when you started a new job?
- Remember too, that the new person may be highly skilled and experienced in his or her trade, but not necessarily used to your company's ways of doing things.
- Point out locations of first aid kits, fire extinguishers, restrooms & break rooms.
- Be sure your new co-worker is wearing the right PPE, and is using it properly.
- Volunteer to serve as a mentor to the new employee, to assure that safe work procedures are understood and followed.
- If you spot this person doing something wrong, *tactfully* explain the proper procedures. It's easier to do this if a "coaching" role has been assigned or agreed-upon.
- During lunch and breaks include him/her in the group so everyone can get better acquainted.
- Resist any temptation to complain about aspects of your job that you don't like-get the new person started out on a positive note by passing on what's good about the work.
- Perhaps most importantly, *lead by example* with correct work habits.

Getting a new employee started off on the right foot is very important. Statistics indicate that up to 60% of all job injuries occur to new employees with less than six months experience on the job. Repeated, friendly reminders of safety procedures and work rules by a mentor can greatly reduce the chance of an accident with the new employee.

Many times new employees will not think of questions until after they have worked a few days and begin to understand the job requirements more thoroughly. As a co-worker, if you make yourself available to answer questions, it shows your willingness to provide a safe workplace for everyone involved.

Remember, getting new people started on the right path can help prevent an accident or injury to everyone on the crew. Don't think that helping to develop a productive co-worker is a burden. Think of it as an investment in the future of your work group and your company. Besides-it's the way you'd like to be treated yourself!

Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.