



Safety Committee Essentials

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Safety Committee Overview

An active and effective safety committee whose membership and functions are reflective of the company's size, complexity, and operating exposures will play a key role in the overall performance of that company. The Safety Committee is established to be of benefit first and foremost to the employees it represents, but it is also established as a safeguard and protector of the Company's assets.

The objectives, functions, roles and responsibilities of the Safety Committee are presented below. The basic objectives of the Safety Committee:

- Reduce the incidence of injury and illness throughout the operations
- Improve the overall safety in the work environment
- Maintain lines of safety communication with all employees
- Protect the Company's assets

General function of the Safety Committee:

- Identify and investigate potential workplace hazards
- Develop processes to eliminate or reduce identified hazards
- Enforce safety rules
- Measure safety performance
- Assist safety coordinator(s) in the implementation of safety and health programs
- Administration and monitoring of established safety and health programs
- Encourage the active participation of all personnel in the safety process
- Establish techniques to reduce accident frequency and severity rates
- Ensure that the facility is compliant with all applicable Cal/OSHA or OSHA standards and Company policy requirements
- Increase employee safety awareness and general morale
- Facilitate communication and cooperation between management and personnel on safety and health related issues
- Development of new safety policies, programs and procedures
- Demonstration of results to management and employees

Specific tasks for the Safety Committee:

- Review accidents reports from supervisors and other incident reports that are pertinent to company operations
- Develop action plan to prevent recurrence of incident
- Communicate information learned from accident investigations to all affected employees, appropriate management personnel and to other facilities with similar operations
- Conduct periodic walk-around inspections and develop list of action items
- Review action items identified in walk-around inspections, assign a responsible person and due date for implementation of all action items. Track all action items to resolution
- Review applicable audit reports and work closely with Safety and Health consultants to resolve outstanding issues
- Review all employee reports of hazards identified and Suggestion Box submissions
- Review all employee reports of "at risk" behavior
- Provide recommendations to management
- Annually review and update, as necessary, all current safety programs and policies that directly affect operations
- Establish specific safety goals and objectives
- Develop safety rules and policies for all operations
- Develop and administer incentive programs to promote safety
- Issue periodic reports, bulletins or tables to highlight safety performance and accomplishments
- Maintain records of safety meetings and walk-around inspections

Roles and responsibilities:

- Committee Chair: Responsible for developing dates and agenda items for safety committee meetings, leads committee meeting. Chair assigns committee member task of taking comprehensive meeting notes of proceedings. Chair assembles minutes for meeting, summarizes minutes and provides copies to team members and management.
- Committee Members: Responsible for assigning action items to appropriate team member and tracking all action items to resolution. Committee members must chair safety program review teams and make up membership in sub-committees/teams
- Management Representative: Serves as liaison between management team and the Safety Committee.
- Safety and Health Consultants: Provides technical support, applicable health and safety statistics and medical liaison between line operations and the safety committee. Safety staff members also responsible for providing committee with overview of recent regulatory or Company policy rulings likely to impact operations.

Safety Committee Responsibilities

Why Safety Committees are Important.

Most business organizations have a wide variety of risk exposures. Any individual safety or risk manager would have a very difficult job of knowing all risk exposures that occur within the organization. A safety committee should be tasked with discussion and resolution of various risk related issues. A forum made up of management individuals who understand risk and are somehow involved in the risk control of the organization are needed to bring risk issues to a central table for discussion and resolution.

Who should chair the safety committee?

The person chairing the committee should be at a level in the organization high enough to manage the group and be able to communicate the issues to a higher level of management for resolution if necessary. Ideally, the committee chair should be at a level in the organization where most decisions can be made immediately.

Who should participate on safety committees?

The individual members chosen for safety committee participation should have some current or past involvement with the overall safety effort. They should be familiar with hazard identification techniques and other safety management principles. A safety process that already identifies basic safety hazards and conducts quick remediation should already be in place.

Members of a safety committee should include management representatives from departments of the organization that face the same general risk issues. If the organization has many departments of unique functions, then multiple committees should be considered to address the issues of the individual work groups.

What should the order of discussion be for a committee?

Always include the general formalities such as which members were present and who was absent. Name visitors and others who may be participating as guests or speakers. Develop an agenda format and keep that method of order for all meetings. List old business discussion and the status of action items that had been assigned.

New business should be prepared as the result of issues or items brought to the table by any member of the committee. Each committee representative should prepare the items for discussion and the ones discussed at the committee level, should be issues that could not be resolved at the department level. Action items assigned to members must be clear and include a completion date if necessary. The meeting minutes should be prepared within a week and posted in the workplace for all to see and review.

Each committee member should also report on the safety related activities of their respective department. Items such as:

- Achievement toward goals
- Accident investigation results,
- Recent incidents that have occurred
- Safety trainings
- Safety suggestions from staff
- Recognition of safe behavior
- Disciplinary actions taken
- Results of hazard identification survey reports

Effective Safety Communication

Why effective safety communication is important.

The majority of injuries occur within first 6 months of employment and they generally occur with employees between the ages of 18 to 25. Supervisors are key participants in the safety training process and it should be their responsibility to ensure that the applicable training be effectively communicated. Cal/OSHA IIPP states that the training must be effective.

What about the workers not able to fully comprehend English?

Training topics should be available in a language that is understandable to the employees. Providing workers who are non-fluent in speaking English with training sheets translated to their language doesn't necessarily mean they can understand the message and is not effective communication. This might serve as a secondary instruction form. A person must be shown how to do a certain task, a senior worker who speaks the language may have to help with the instruction, you should have the trainee "show you" that they can do the task, and you need to follow-up by conducting casual observations to ensure they are performing the task as you instructed.

Effective communication actively involves the trainee.

Watching a video, reading a safety message or listening to the trainer talk, does not involve the learner other than requiring them to be present. These are passive learning techniques and the effectiveness is low. Active learning involves trainee participation that has proven to build the retention levels of the topic by the trainee. The more a person participates during a training session, they more they can be expected to repeat the performance. The person preparing to deliver any training session will learn a great deal of the topic and likely "practice what they preach".

Frequency of message delivery determines retention.

Frequency of safety messages will depend on the hazard severity of the work being performed. General industry hazards usually require monthly safety communication. Light hazard occupations can have less frequent communications and still be effective. The IIPP should spell out the frequency of the safety communication and it is the responsibility to meet that obligation. Employees expect the safety communication and if it is delivered on a regular and consistent basis, the overall message retention will increase.

Use multiple instruction techniques to help improve safety communication.

Keep the message relevant to the conditions and risk exposures in the workplace. Use real life examples without involving specific individuals. Demonstrate what you mean and have others in the audience actually do what they are learning. If a new process or procedure is introduced, make it the topic of the safety communication. Ask your group what they think may be a hazard in the workplace; and ask what a solution may be. Above all, get them involved in the learning process.

Conducting Effective Safety Meetings

Cal/OSHA requires that employers communicate safety information to their employees. One communication method is by conducting employee safety meetings. But conducting effective safety meetings can be a challenge. It takes preparation and a real desire to involve your employees in health and safety. Use this checklist to rate your skills as a trainer – how effective are your safety meetings?

Are your safety topics relevant to the hazards in your workplace? Do you:

- Inspect the area for hazards related to your topic?
- Review reports of recent accidents that may have involved the hazard you are going to discuss?

Are you prepared to deliver the selected safety topic? Do you:

- Assemble handouts to illustrate the important points?
- Read over the material you plan to cover?
- Look up any terms or concepts you don't understand?
- Make sure you are familiar with any laws, regulation, and company rules related to the day's topic?

Is your staff actively involved in the meeting? Do you:

- Begin with a real-life example, or with information that will capture people's interest?
- Encourage full participation by the staff throughout the meeting (while still keeping it focused on the topic)?
- Invite the staff to ask questions and make suggestions related to the topic?
- Respond to questions that you can answer, and offer to find answers you don't know?
- Allow time at the end of the meeting for questions and suggestions on any safety issue?
- Ask the staff for feedback about the meeting?
- Involve the staff in preparing for and/or leading future safety meetings?

Do you follow up on each meeting? Do you:

- Look into complaints, concerns, and suggestions that the staff brought up?
- Report back to your staff on the actions taken?
- Keep good records of each meeting and other safety matters?
- Review reports of recent accidents on the site, including "near misses"?
- Post a copy of the meeting topic summary on the bulletin board?

Do you show that you take safety seriously? Do you:

- Set an excellent safety example yourself?
- Observe the workers following the training to observe that safety practices are followed?
- Invite staff members to come to you anytime with safety problems and suggestions?
- Encourage and recognize employees for following safe work practices?

Safety Goals & Objectives

Performance measures can be broadly classified as safety goals and safety objectives.

Goals are more long range than objectives and they or may not be quantitatively measurable, while objectives cover a shorter term and are always measurable. Most often, objectives are goals that have been broken into small, progressive pieces. Six guidelines for setting goals and objectives are listed below:

1. Set goals and objectives as part of the planning process
2. Word the goals and objectives clearly
3. Goal and objectives must be realistic
4. Accomplishing goals and objectives must be under the responsible person's influences or control
5. Objectives must be assigned to someone
6. Completion dates must be established for each objective and goal

Establishing Effective Goals.

Establishing goals for the safety metric program provides a vital blueprint for implementing and directing the organization's resources in order to achieve desired outcomes.

The most common goals found in any safety and health program include lost-time injury rate, lost workdays, recordable injury rate and total injury rates. Remember objectives need to be measurable. Here are some samples of poorly constructed and well-constructed safety goals and objectives:

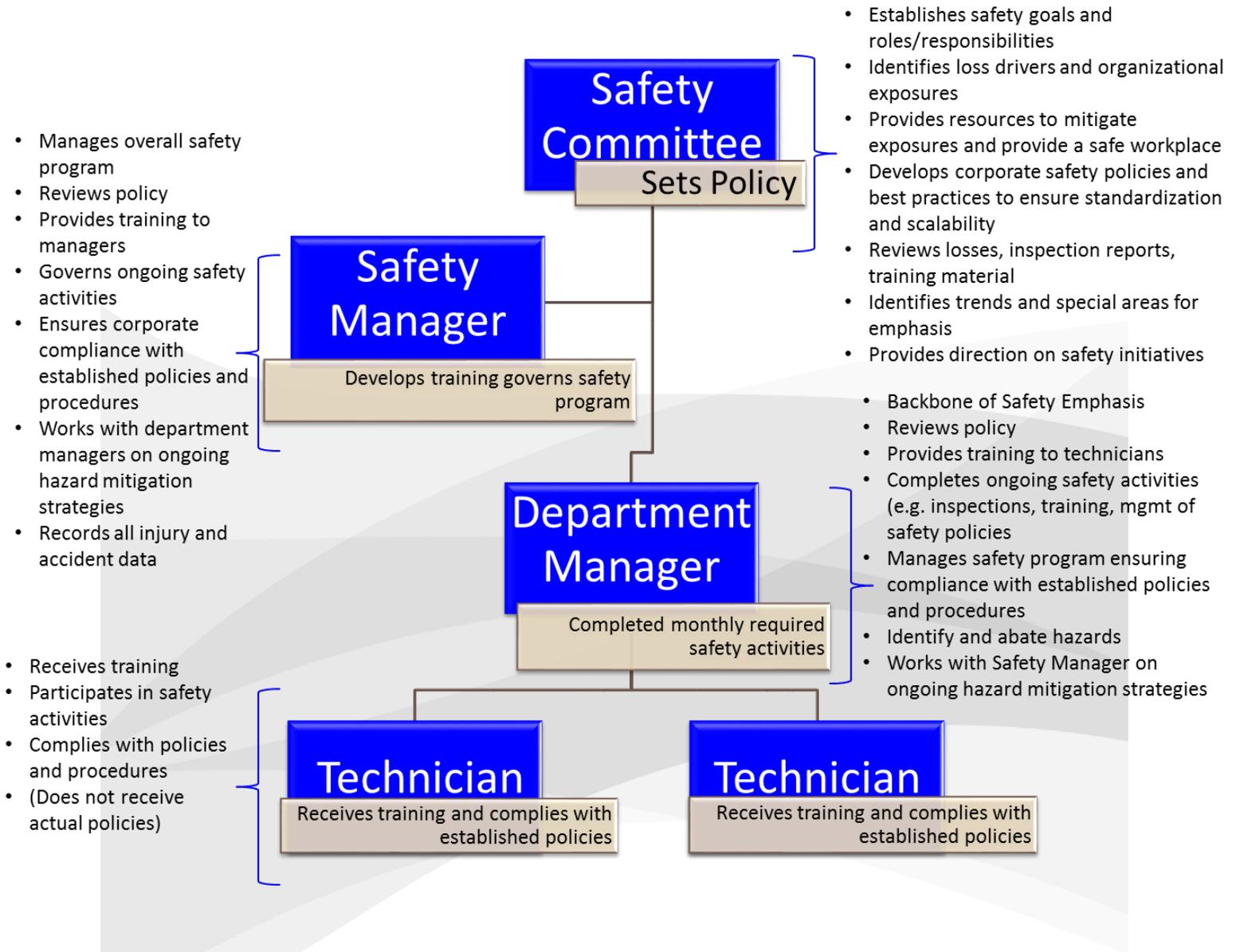
Poorly constructed safety goal: *"Improve the safety record of the organization."*

Well-constructed safety goals: ***"Over the next five years, the organization will reduce their OSHA recordable injuries by 10 percent."***

Poorly constructed safety objectives: *"The organization will increase employee safety training offerings."*

Well-constructed safety objectives: ***"During this fiscal year, the organization will provide 12 monthly safety-training programs at which 90 percent of the employees shall attend."***

Safety Committee Communication Channel





Safety Meeting Agenda Form

Department / Location:	Meeting Date:
Meeting Presenter:	<i>Provide copy of completed form to safety administrator</i>

Safety Topic:
Resources for meeting:
Read minutes from previous meeting:

Persons Present: (Sign next to name)	
Attendee	Signature

Old Business – Status of previous recommendations. Discuss pending old business if any.

Accidents – Discuss accidents and near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Brief summary of accidents to date by number and type. Note any trends. Discuss corrective action taken, or needed. Concentrate on accident causes to make everyone aware.

Inspection Reports – Report on findings and recommendations from most recent inspection report.

New Business – Employee suggestions, new procedures, changes to company safety policy, etc.

Strategic Safety Goals: 201#

201# Strategic Overview:

Define: The following are some examples:

	201#	201# Goal
No. of Injuries	12	8
Cost of injuries in 201#:	\$225,000	\$150,000
No. of lost days in 201#:	100	50
Total Temporary Disability paid in 201#	\$10,000	\$5,000
Status of safety Program:	e.g. reactive, proactive, infancy, etc.	Proactive quarterly activities
Participation in program:	e.g. Company wide, sporadic, lack of commitment, not formalized, etc.	Corporate quarterly safety committee meetings Quarterly department safety meetings
Enforcement of program:	Activities have not been scheduled, training has not been consistent therefore enforcement has lagged, not been effective	Quarterly audit of department safety requirements (e.g. inspections, training records, etc.)
Training schedule:	e.g. Bi-monthly trainings scheduled,	Outline bi-monthly trainings and topics
Cal-OSHA compliance requirements:	e.g. ergonomics program, material handling, electrical, etc.	Develop written programs

201# Tactical Initiatives:

Define: The following are some examples:

Activity	Task	Owner	Due By	Status
Increase global participation in safety program Resources needed:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly safety committee meetings, including participants from across the corporate spectrum. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month 9 – 11am Reviews: inspections, trainings, injuries/accidents, loss trends, department feedback, monthly safety topic Require quarterly departmental safety meetings, topics to be established by corporate committee. Attendance forms are required 			
Control X-mod (reduce claims costs) Resources needed:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance our Return To Work program, focused on compliance with FEHA, ADA, Work Comp and reducing TTD payments by 50% <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate effectiveness of Medical Provider Identify Temporary Alternative Duties available in the organization Review job descriptions for physical demands Establish RTW coordinator Enhance policies and procedures 			

<p>Increase inspections</p> <p>Resources needed:</p>	<p>1. Conduct monthly inspections of the sites/facility. Review inspection findings and corrective actions at corporate safety committee</p>			
<p>Enhance training program</p> <p>Resources needed:</p>	<p>1. Develop quarterly safety trainings for organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. March: Ergonomics b. July: Material handling / back safety c. October: Housekeeping d. December: Slip, Trip, Fall 			
<p>Increase communication effectiveness</p> <p>Resources needed:</p>	<p>1. Monthly safety topics to be distributed to the organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Topics to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Claims Trending ii. Incident Rate score iii. Organization's audit score 			