

# Communicating Health and Safety Concerns to Management Meeting Kit



Safety in the workplace is of the utmost importance. It is everyone's job to ensure safety is taken seriously and concerns are made known to the appropriate people, so that corrective action can be taken.

## HOW TO REPORT SAFETY HAZARD CONCERNS – PROPER STEPS FOR WORKERS

### Clearly Identify the Hazard or Concern in Writing

If you feel there is a safety concern in your workplace, you should identify the matter clearly. Put your concern in writing to ensure no details are missed and all information is accurate. This document will help you when addressing the concern with your supervisor.

### Research the Issue to Ensure Its Validity

While a safety issue can be a cause for concern, it may not be a violation of workplace requirements or operating procedures. Thus, before taking a complaint to a supervisor, it is best to do a little research and ensure your safety concern is truly an issue that goes against safety standards.

### Report the Concern to Your Supervisor

Once you have established your concern is a valid issue, it is time to speak with your supervisor. When speaking with your supervisor, you should present the document you wrote about your concern and verbally describe the issue, as well. However, while speaking with your supervisor remember to stay calm and allow them to respond.

### Follow-up with Your Supervisor

Once you and your supervisor have an initial discussion about the safety concern, you should follow up with your supervisor within a reasonable amount of time. Again, you should be cooperative and calm when inquiring about the issue.

### Try to Find a Supportive Advocate Within the Organization

If speaking with your supervisor doesn't yield any results, it is best to look for an advocate. This supporter should be a senior member of the organization who is well versed in safety policies and procedures. Seek out this advocate and voice your concern. Also, let them know you have already spoken with your immediate supervisor. Depending on the nature of the concern, the advocate should be able to address the

matter with management properly.

## **EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HAZARD REPORTING**

Incident and accident reporting is critical, and near-miss incident reporting is important, but hazard reporting is also extremely necessary for the safety of workers. Giving employees an avenue that they can pursue to report hazards and unsafe acts empowers them to feel like they are an integral part of the company, but only if those hazards **are addressed, corrected and resolved.**

### **Safety And Hazard Worker Training**

All employees should be trained in hazard recognition and avoidance. Hazard Reporting is a critical part of this training so that employees know exactly what to do when they encounter a hazard they can't immediately correct. Depending on the types of hazards employees might encounter, training could be a mandatory all-day in-person training session for high-hazard jobs, or on-the-job training led by a competent supervisor, or even a 30-minute safety meeting. For low-hazard jobs, at least consider an annual online training or email reminder so employees understand hazard reporting is not only acceptable but also expected.

### **Hazard Reporting Training Includes The Following**

**What is an unsafe act that should be reported?** This is any behavior that could lead to an incident that might harm people, equipment or property. Unsafe acts might not be intentional. Examples of unsafe acts might include using equipment in a careless manner or not using PPE as required.

**What should be done if an unsafe condition or act is witnessed in the workplace?** This depends on the hazard reporting procedure in your workplace so be specific. Employees need to know exactly what steps they should take which could be filling out a form or verbally telling a supervisor.

**When should a hazard be reported?** Any unsafe condition or act should be reported immediately, or at the next available safe opportunity that the employee has to do so.

**What should employees expect after a hazard is reported?** Let employees know what the expected time frame is for corrective and preventative measures and how employees can follow-up on the corrections progress, if needed.

**Where can employees find a copy of the Hazard Reporting Procedure?** Are hard copies of procedures kept at headquarters, or is the Safety Manual found online on the company's intranet? It's important that employees know how they can access all company policies and procedures on their own.

## **FINAL WORD**

Per usual proper training is the ticket. In order to have a safe and efficient workplace, all workers need to be trained to be proactive and not reactive to hazards.