

Safety Committee Guidelines
from Emma Collins Doyle of EasySafe.

1. Educate Senior Management

Before getting into the nuts and bolts of real safety management, it's critical that you as an SU/SD are aware of the roles of the board and directors in relation to health and safety legislation. An easy way of relaying this important information is to arrange a training session for senior management. A few hours is usually enough to get the point across and you will be amazed at the difference in attitude when people find out they could be the ones who end up in jail!

Without senior management on board, you will be swimming against the tide when it comes to trying to implement a robust safety management system. Make sure they are committed and educated and then you can move on with your plans.

2. Employee Involvement

If you want your safety program to succeed, then you have to involve employees. After all, they have every reason to be interested and involved, their safety is at stake! Health and safety is everyone's responsibility, we hear this all the time don't we? Maybe we are all becoming a bit numb to it. Refresh this in people's mind and really try to bring it home to them, by sharing true life stories or bringing in a guest speaker to tell their own story.

Actively encourage employee involvement and hold people accountable and ensure everyone does their part.

- Set up a health and safety committee (one person from each department)
- Carry out daily inspections on employee's jobs
- Communicate safety statistics and information to employees



- Distribute safety tasks to everyone
- Listen and take action on employee feedback and ideas. They know their job better than you.
- Get employees involved with reviewing and improving safety management
- Include health and safety responsibilities as part of job descriptions
- Discipline employees who behave in unsafe ways
- Ensure there is a clear process for reporting hazards, injuries, illnesses and near misses
- Reward and recognize employees who contribute to promoting a safe and healthy work environment.

3. Identify and control hazards

Every workplace has them, whether you are an office or a manufacturing site, you must identify the hazards, assess them and control them. Here are some ways to identify safety and health hazards:

- Review your accidents, injury, illness and near miss records
- Look for trends in types of injuries/illnesses/near misses/parts of the body/time of day or shift/location/equipment/PPE/department
- Review any inspection reports from the H.S.A. or insurance audits or consultants
- Review current legislation related to your workplace
- Inspect your workplace for health and safety and carry out site specific risk assessments
- Watch employees work to spot unsafe work practices

4. Perform Job Hazard Analysis

If there are noise/air/vibration hazards, get the area assessed by a specialist.

Now that you have listed all the hazards, you can decide how to control them. This can seem like a daunting task at first, so prioritize them first and work your way through them. Make sure you evaluate any changes you do make and make sure you review them annually or when a change has happened in the process or the equipment.

5. Employee Training - Zywave

Even the best and most safety conscious employees will be in the dark if they have not had the correct health and safety training. Health and safety training should begin at the beginning, at induction. Make sure your school has a simple and interesting health and safety induction program. It should include general safety, school safety regulations and emergency procedures. Ensure that all new employees sign off on this and keep on file.

After the induction training, assess the role of each employee and train them in the hazards that they may be exposed to at work and how to protect themselves.

Some training courses to consider:

- Manual handling
- Kitchen safety
- Parking lot/playground safety
- First Aid
- Chemical handling
- Abrasive wheels
- Safe driving
- Fire safety
- Confined Space Awareness
- Laboratory Safety Awareness
- Health and safety for front line managers
- Machinery safety
- Office safety
- Working at heights

6. Encourage a Positive Safety Culture

If employees hold safety as a value, then they will actively care about themselves and others. From this, mutual respect is born. Two way effective communication is a must, learn to listen and hear what an employee has to say. They are the ones who are working the job every day and more than often, they will have the solution to the problem that they are coming to you with. Make time for one on one meetings. It's important that you respond to the needs and concerns of each employee. Showing that the school is going above and beyond the considerations of legislation and regulations to ensure a safe workplace will give each and every employee the peace of mind that the school is doing more than enough to create the safest workplace possible. In turn, employees will take safety more seriously and help maintain these high standards.

7. Support a work environment that fosters trust, creativity, and general wellbeing. Don't let this be a slogan, live it and you will reap the rewards. Celebrate your successes! Don't keep good news to yourself. Let employees know their dedication to safety is not going unnoticed and that it is making a difference. Publish safety statistics for everyone to see. Reward employees or departments who are going beyond the call of duty.

8. Continually Improve Your Safety Management System

Review the school's health and safety strengths and weakness. Carrying out reviews of safety and health performance will confirm whether your safety and health plans are still appropriate. They will check the validity of the safety and health policy and the extent of its implementation. Many companies are now publishing the results of these reviews in their Annual Reports.

- Audit safety and health performance to ensure legal compliance
- Create an audit process
- Decide what needs to be audited and by who
- Keep the safety and health management system up to date
- Review annually and if there are any changes
- Investigate accidents, injuries, illnesses and near misses as they happen
- Conduct frequent (daily, weekly as needed) inspections of specific equipment and processes
- Evaluate your injury and illness statistics
- Record all your safety work
- Change analysis: Review new and changed processes, materials, facilities and equipment for hazards
- Evaluate effectiveness of training
- Keep listening to and involving your employees

The most important thing to remember is, health and safety is not an "extra" part of your business. It is in fact an integral part of the success of any company and as soon as you start treating it as such, you will see all round improvement, not just financially, but in attitude and overall happiness of your employees.