

Building a Safety Culture Fact Sheet

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A strong safety culture does more than protect employees—it supports business success by reducing costs, improving morale, and ensuring compliance with federal safety standards. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides guidance to help employers build safer, healthier workplaces. This fact sheet outlines how organizations can strengthen their safety culture while meeting OSHA requirements.



Since the [Occupational Safety and Health \(OSH\) Act](#) was passed over 40 years ago, workplace fatalities and reported injuries have declined by more than 60%, according to the [U.S. Department of Labor](#). Still, the need for vigilance remains. Over 5,000 workers die on the job each year—an average of 14 per day—and more than 3.6 million suffer serious injuries or illnesses.¹ These incidents take a toll not only on workers and their families but also on businesses, affecting productivity, raising costs, and lowering employee morale.

Implementing a proactive safety culture can help prevent injuries, reduce insurance premiums, and boost operational efficiency. It also encourages employee engagement,

What Is a safety culture?

A safety culture means that **everyone in the workplace makes safety a priority** and works together to keep each other safe. This includes owners, managers, and all employees.

When safety is part of the workplace culture, safe choices become a normal part of the day.

Steps to establish a safety culture.

1. Management commitment and leadership.

A strong safety culture begins with committed leadership. Executives, managers, and supervisors must treat safety as a core organizational value, reflected in the company's mission, policies, and daily operations. Leaders should model safe behavior, remind workers to follow the safety rules, and be held responsible for keeping their teams safe.

2. Develop clear safety policies and procedures.

Clear, written safety policies form the foundation of a safe workplace. These policies should be easy to understand and outline the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all employees.

What OSHA requires

Under the General Duty Clause of the OSH Act, employers must provide a workplace that is free from known hazards that could cause serious harm or death. Employers are also required to train workers on how to stay safe, give them the right protective gear, and keep records of injuries and illnesses.

Under OSHA's Whistleblower Protection laws, workers also have the right to report unsafe conditions and take part in safety activities without fear of punishment.

Quick Safety Tips

- Start each shift with a short safety reminder.
- Make it easy to report hazards—allow reports to be anonymous.
- Assign new workers a mentor to help them learn safe practices.
- Use signs and posters to remind everyone of the safety rules.
- Visit [OSHA's website](#) for more helpful safety tools.

Remember: Building a safety culture takes time and consistent effort, but the benefits are worth it. When leaders make safety a top priority, it creates a healthier and more productive work environment for everyone.



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¹Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "Develop Your Safety + Health Program," <https://www.osha.gov/safeandsound/safety-and-health-programs>. Accessed May 2, 2025.