



Help reduce incidents with driver safety meetings.

Safety consultants and insurance companies suggest organizations hold safety meetings with the goal of reducing incidents and staying in compliance with safety regulations. Scheduling routine meetings can assist in accomplishing these goals provided they are effectively conducted.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to maintain, upgrade or update the knowledge and skill base of an entire group of drivers. These meetings provide a platform for refresher training in defensive driving concepts and safe driving techniques. All training and attendance at safety meetings should be documented and include the date, topics covered, resources used and distributed, and signatures of those who attended.

Safety meeting components.

Topics should be geared toward accident types the organization is experiencing to reduce the trends. They should also cover severe accident types such as rollovers, and rear-end and intersection collisions, even though they may not be occurring. Due to the severe nature of these incidents, an organization cannot wait for one to occur to provide training. Typical topics include:

- Introduction of new policies and procedures or changes to existing requirements
- Review of existing policies and procedures that are not being appropriately followed
- Review of new regulations or safe work practices and regulatory required training (e.g., HAZMAT)
- Accidents, injuries or cargo-related incidents that have occurred since the last meeting; discuss causes of the incidents and procedures required to prevent recurrence
- Multi-year summary of accidents, injuries or cargo-related losses indicating trends; review corrective measures that the organization is taking to address negative trends and improvement goals

- Current FMCSA out-of-service percentages and SMS BASICs scores; review corrective measures the organization is taking to address negative scores, current trends and improvement goals
- Unique roadside violations obtained since the last meeting and how to comply with the regulation violated
- Current news reports of high-profile truck accidents; use the story to discuss what can happen and how to prevent a similar incident from occurring in your organization
- Positive safety-related information
 - Acknowledge downward trends in accidents or violations
 - Congratulate drivers who have violation-free inspections
 - Share compliments received from customers
- Safe driving techniques and defensive driving concepts: speed and space management, lane changes, intersections, attentive driving, backing safely, etc.

What influences your meeting frequency?

Two to three meetings a year seems to be the industry standard, but how often you hold meetings can depend on different factors. Some of these factors may include:

- The organization's loss experience, violation history and the need to improve
- Frequency and timing of regulatory changes
- Frequency and timing of changes to organizational policies and procedures
- Delivery of other training and safety information such as newsletters, one-on-one communication and training, use of videos and on-line training resources, etc.

Keys to effective driver safety meetings.

- **Plan ahead** — Develop an agenda of key items to cover and determine the best methods of covering the topics for maximum retention of information. Provide the agenda to drivers well in advance of the meeting so they can suggest issues they would like addressed related to the topic.
- **Provide resources** — Make copies of policies and procedures, summaries of new regulations, checklists, etc. for drivers to take with them.
- **Involve driver leaders** — Discuss controversial issues with them before the meeting. Obtain their insight on the issues so you can anticipate objections within the group and better handle them during the meeting. Also, driver leaders who have had time to sleep on the issues will be less likely to react negatively during the meeting.
- **Stay focused** — Don't allow participants to change the subject and distract from the agenda items.
- **Mix up training methods** — Incorporate videos, examples, diagrams, news stories and photos into meetings. Demonstrate procedures and use learning exercises and quizzes.



Have drivers explain or demonstrate what they have learned to improve retention.

Reinforce training with activities.

The effectiveness of safety meetings and training can be greatly improved by using aids or incorporating demonstrations into instruction. For example, if drivers are having difficulty completing a post-trip inspection form correctly, show them examples of poorly completed forms and corrected versions.

Training can be enhanced by following up the demonstration with an exercise where the drivers complete a post-trip inspection on an actual vehicle. Written quizzes can be given to drivers to validate they understand key concepts of what they've learned.

<i>Company Name - Safety Meeting</i>	
Meeting Topics:	
1. Accident trends last 3 years	3. Preventing backing accidents
a. Rear end collisions	a. Get out and look (GOAL)
b. Backing	b. Backing exercise in parking lot
2. Preventing rear end collisions	4. Upcoming changes to HOS regulations
a. Distractions - safety video	5. Turning in your paperwork
b. Proper following distance	
Attendees (print and sign your name)	

Example of a safety meeting form.

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