



# Giving Safety Talks

A guide for the construction sector

FACILITATOR GUIDE



**Alberta Workforce Essential Skills**  
Skilled people. Safe, profitable workplaces.

## **Giving Safety Talks: A guide for the construction sector**

- Facilitator Guide
- Participant Workbook
- Self-Directed Guide
- 50 Safety Posters

This resource has been written for safety supervisors, team leads and other staff responsible for delivering safety training within the construction sector. There are three manuals which provide information, tools, tips and practice opportunities for delivering better safety training.

The Facilitator Guide and Participant Workbook can be used to deliver one or two 3-hour train-the-trainer workshops.

The Self-Directed Guide is useful for smaller organizations which may not have the capacity, time or training dollars to hire a workshop trainer.

Each of the manuals can be used in conjunction with the set of 50 Safety Posters depicting different safety topics.

This resource was developed to be used in organizations with workers whose first language is not English.

### **Facilitator Guide and Participant Workbook**

These manuals aim to increase an organization's capacity to deliver more effective and engaging safety talks, and they work best when they are used together with the 50 Safety Posters.

To request a workshop, to download the PDF versions, or to order copies of the manuals, please visit the AWES website: [www.awes.ca](http://www.awes.ca)

### **Self-Directed Guide**

This manual was written for smaller organizations as an independent study for staff interested in delivering more effective and engaging safety talks. It can be used with the 50 Safety Posters. To download the PDF version or to order copies of the manual and the safety posters, please visit the AWES website: [www.awes.ca](http://www.awes.ca)

### **50 Safety Posters**

Fifty highly visual safety posters representing hot topics relevant to the construction industry were developed with plain language teaching points and tips on the back, to aid safety trainers. To download the PDF versions or to order copies of the safety posters, please visit the AWES website: [www.awes.ca](http://www.awes.ca)

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Alberta Workforce Essential Skills (AWES) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a competent, adaptable and innovative workforce through workplace essential skills initiatives.

## Overview

### Why a workshop on better safety talks?

Enhancing your presentation skills is essential if it is your job to communicate crucial safety information to stop accidents, injuries and incidents. Even people who are talented at public speaking appreciate feedback on areas for development. This is especially true as the workforce in the construction sector rapidly diversifies, both linguistically and culturally. Being able to better target the message to the audience will help take that message from the workshop into the workplace, where it ultimately matters.

### Why is the workshop divided into two 3-hour parts?

The workshop is two 3-hour parts to provide flexibility for delivery. It can be done as a full-day workshop or over two days, depending on the time constraints of the organization and participants.

### What is the focus of each part?

- Part 1 is a quick introduction to presenting. The tasks and questions are designed to get all of the participants' knowledge of safety talks and their concerns about safety in their organizations out on the table. It enables you to focus on presentation skills, and separate this focus from other issues, like the broader culture of safety in an organization, that should be addressed in a separate workshop. The initial questions and tasks are designed to get participants talking. Part 1 also includes at least one practice safety talk so that the participants get straightforward feedback up front.
- Part 2 goes into more detail. It provides a model outline and strategies on body language and voice quality, along with checklists. It also includes two more practice safety talks with opportunities for feedback.

### How to use this guide

This guide provides facilitator notes for each activity. Refer to the accompanying Participant Workbook for full instructions.

### Where are the safety posters that accompany the participant workbook?

You can download the safety posters or order hard copies from [www.awes.ca](http://www.awes.ca).

### Can the workshops be longer than 3 hours?

Yes. You could add an extra 30 to 60 minutes to each part if you want to spend more time in discussions relevant to your organization. This could be necessary for organizations or teams that lack a robust culture of safety. Three hours is the minimum time for each part.

### When should I schedule breaks?

Please factor in coffee or lunch breaks on top of the suggested 3-hour time frame for each part of the workshop. Some facilitators like to give a short break every hour.

### What materials will I need?

- Flip chart, paper and markers
- Whiteboard, eraser and dry erase markers (if available)
- Tape

## Learning goals

The goal of all safety training is to prevent accidents and injuries. Being a better communicator of safety is central to achieving that goal. Therefore, for those tasked with raising the safety skills of workers in the construction sector, this training has three main learning goals:

- Strengthen your presentation skills through these learning resources and tools.
- Remove your presentation “blind spots” through real-time feedback from fellow participants and trainers.
- Advance the “culture of safety” in your workplace by enabling you to be a better communicator.

## Workshop activities

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# Part 1

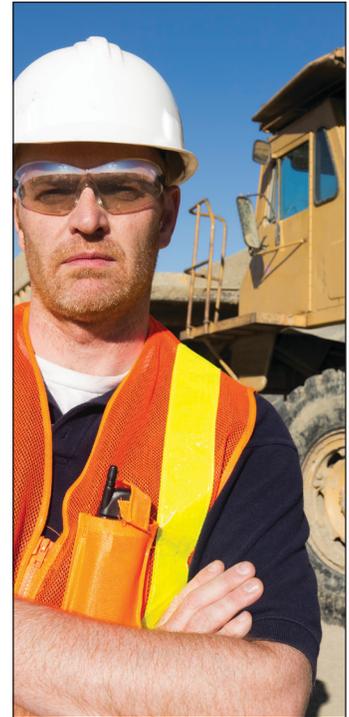
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## The Quick-and-Dirty on Safety Talks

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Like any quick-and-dirty solution, part 1 is a “how to” overview of skills for safety talks. Part 2 goes into more detail. For part 1, you will:

- Build your purpose for enhancing your safety talk skills
- Identify what is essential in the 4 stages of a talk
- Practice talks to get real-time feedback from fellow participants and trainers
- Identify your blind spots
- Obtain strategies to close your blind spots



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## Activity 1 Introductions

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### Activity outcomes

The purpose of the introductions is not only to introduce participants to each other, but also for the facilitator to give pointed feedback to each person as they answer questions 1 or 2.

### Activity guidelines

As participants introduce themselves and respond to either question 1 or 2, make a couple of short notes on each person's communication and presentation skills. You could observe one thing they could stop doing and one thing to keep doing. Once everyone is finished, give each person quick clear and specific feedback from your notes.

For example, "I just want to make a few comments about what I've seen up to this point. It will give you a clearer sense of why you are participating. I will mention one thing you should keep doing when presenting information, and one thing you could stop doing. I will start with Paul. Keep using good eye contact with everyone. It keeps your listeners engaged. I would also suggest you speak a little louder. It will engage people even more."

This immediate feedback strategy is designed to generate stronger buy-in from each person right at the beginning of training.



### Total activity time

30 minutes, including introductions, feedback and explaining the workshop outline

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## Activity 2 Brainstorming on Credibility

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### Activity outcomes

The purpose of this activity is to start participants thinking about credibility and how to build it for a safety talk.

### Activity guidelines

Participants will have likely not chosen the same top 5 qualities. Ask participants to call out their top 5. Illustrate the different responses on the board. See where there is more agreement or disagreement.

Take time to explore the differences and to understand why certain aspects of credibility are more important for some than others. There is a very organic process to building credibility in each profession and workplace.

If possible, keep the written responses up on the board or on flip chart paper. You can use them as reminders or references later in the workshop if necessary.



### Total activity time

15 minutes

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## Activity 3 Being Clear, Coherent and Concise

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### Activity outcomes

The purpose of this activity is to get participants thinking about how to sequence information, and what it means to speak clearly, coherently and concisely. It is also meant to provide insight into how easy it is to miscommunicate.

### Activity guidelines

The activity is meant to be quite difficult for them to achieve. They will be sitting back to back and will only have oral information to complete the task.

The objective is for them to see that to be clear, they need to use terminology that everyone knows; to be coherent, they need to start with the outcome, not the process; and to be concise, they need to eliminate the unnecessary details. The end result is often quite enlightening and can be quite funny as well.

Some people have difficulty in frontloading their presentation right at the beginning. Unless you are giving bad news (which you embed towards the end), you have to frontload your talk with what the audience needs to do or know.

Use the pictures on the next page for this activity. Remember to just give out one for the first round, and the next for the second round.

### Additional materials

- Copies of the diagrams on the following page



### Total activity time

30 minutes

Diagram 1



Diagram 2



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## Activity 4 Setting Goals

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### Activity outcomes

- **Taking ownership of learning** – Participants build their own rationales for participating in the workshop through questions 1 to 5.
- **Parking non-safety talk skill issues** – Questions 3 and 4 help participants “park” critical organizational safety issues, criticisms, requests or other challenges not related directly to better presentation skills. These “parked” items will likely relate to developing a strong “culture of safety” in the organization. This enables them to bring up concerns and then focus on the main aim of the workshop: becoming a better presenter at safety talks.

### Activity guidelines

- **Q 1 to 4** Depending on your time and the needs of the group, you could use flip chart paper (or whiteboard) to write up the responses to questions 1 to 4. Tape them up on the wall.



### Total activity time

30 minutes

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## Activity 5 Preparing. Opening. Delivering. Closing.

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### Activity outcomes

- **Preparation for a short presentation** – Question 1 gets participants thinking about the essentials in a safety talk.
- **Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) statistics as a stronger case for better safety talks** – The global OHS statistics under question 2 can be used together with the latest Alberta OHS numbers to build another layer of momentum in participants for better safety talks.

### Activity guidelines

- **Q 1** Use flip chart paper (or whiteboard) to write up the main points from participants, or request that they write it up on the board or paper.
- **Q 2** Before the workshop, find out the latest Occupational Health and Safety facts on the Alberta Human Services website, under “Work Safe Alberta – OHS Statistics and Reports,” <http://employment.alberta.ca/SFW/53.html>. The global OHS fact sheet can be found through a Google search for “Facts on Safety at Work – International Labour Organization fact sheet, Geneva”.



### Total activity time

30 minutes

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## Activity 6 Talk 1: Using the posters for a 45-second talk

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### Activity outcomes

- **Identify blind spots** – Tasks 1 and 2 allow participants to get real time feedback from peers on their presentation skills. They gain clarity on their strengths and gaps, which provides the final level of motivation for learning.

### Activity guidelines

- **Task 1** Either assign poster topics, or participants can choose their own. Give them up to 8 minutes to form their 45-second talk.
- **Task 2** Allow sufficient time for feedback. They should record the feedback in chart 2. Participants will be aware of strengths and areas for development that were unknown to them before (blind spots). Sometimes this is a surprise, like hearing one's voice for the first time on an answering machine.

### Additional comments

If the workshop has more than 6 participants, divide them into 2 or more groups to maximize time. Have participants present their 45-second talks to their groups. Feedback is given within the group. You should move between groups to provide feedback as well.

**Workshop evaluation** – This is the final activity to part 1 of the workshop. If part 2 is not planned, or if it is planned for a different day, have participants complete the evaluation sheet located at the end of this resource.

### Additional materials

- Copies of the Workshop Evaluation form



### Total activity time

40 to 60 minutes,  
depending on number  
of participants

## Part 2

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# Better Safety Talks

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Part 2 goes into more detail by utilizing a clear outline for safety talks, and exploring body language and voice quality. For part 2, you will:

- Use the 3-30-3 Outline approach to structure a safety talk clearly, coherently and concisely
- Practice talks to get real time feedback from fellow-participants and trainers
- Apply better body language techniques
- Adjust voice quality
- Use checklists to target your learning curve



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## Activity 7 The 3-30-3 Outline

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### Activity outcomes

- **Developing a logical outline** – The description of the 3-30-3 method, together with task 1, enables learners to “see” an effective safety talk outline mapped out on paper and to notice the use of transition words to mark ideas.

### Activity guidelines

The answers to tasks 1 and 2 are as follows:

#### Answers to task 1 – Outline for WHMIS label safety talk

- Main Point – #2
- Supporting Points – #5
- Body Supporting Point 1 – #3
- Body Supporting Point 1 – #4
- Body Supporting Point 1 – #1

#### Answers to task 2 – Transition words

1. I would like to revisit WHMIS labels in this safety talk, with the main point of making sure you know exactly what you are accountable for as the worker.
2. First, we will do a quick review of the supplier’s responsibilities. Then, the labeling responsibilities of the management team here, meaning your employer. That will make it clear to finally look at your two main responsibilities as a worker on this team.
3. To start, and simply put, suppliers have to obtain, apply and update the labels to their containers. That is their job.
4. As the employer, we need to ensure all containers of controlled products that enter this workplace are labelled properly. That means obtaining supplier labels when there are none or creating workplace labels as required.
5. And just as important, you, the worker are responsible for two critical activities. First, make sure you understand the information on the WHMIS label. That means reviewing the MSDS sheets when necessary. And second, report to me or another supervisor when a label is unreadable or has been removed or defaced. It is not just your safety but also the person working with you that matters.



#### Total activity time

30 minutes

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## Activity 8 Talk 2: Using the posters for a 90-second talk

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### Activity outcomes

- Being aware of effective body language
- Using better voice quality to communicate the safety message
- Integrating the most personally relevant 18 points of a good safety talk into their presentation skills and style

### Activity guidelines

- Read through the Tool 1: Safety Talk Skills Checklist and Tool 2: Body Language and Speech Quality Checklist. Ask participants to mark the aspects they want to focus on developing in this presentation.
- Assign a safety poster, or get participants to select themselves. The participants spend 15 minutes planning the outline of their talks.
- If there are more than 6 participants in the workshop, put them into groups of 3. Spread the groups across the room. They will do the presentations one at a time in those groups, but the groups all present at the same time to maximize time.
- Assign one of the 2 checklists to each person. They will only use that checklist to evaluate, make notes and give feedback for their fellow participants in their group.
- As facilitator, you control the time: 90 seconds for the talk, 2 minutes for feedback for each person.
- Ask participants to make notes on the feedback they get from each person who evaluates them.

### Additional materials

- Tool 1: Safety Talk Skills Checklist
- Tool 2: Body Language and Speech Quality Checklist



### Total activity time

45 minutes

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## Activity 9 Plain Language: Closing language and literacy gaps

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### Activity outcomes

- **Recognizing the importance of plain language skills** – Speaking and writing in plain language is key to delivering effective messages to workforces with low literacy or language skills. This section will help to raise awareness.

### Activity guidelines

#### Task

First, read or discuss the text. Ask participants to identify where plain language could be better implemented into their daily activities and safety habits.

For the task, it will take too long if they work in pairs or groups at the start. Also, it doesn't mimic real work life, where they will probably need to do plain language rewrites independently at first. Instead:

- assign one bullet point to each participant
- ask each person to do the plain language rewrite independently
- ask them to compare their work in pairs; at this point, they can benefit from group work by making improvements to each other's work
- lastly, work as a class to write the best answers up on the whiteboard or flip charts

#### Additional comments

Plain language is best mastered by participants through a separate workshop. Activity 6 is merely an introduction to the concept that will raise awareness. There is a range of plain language training and workshops and resources available through AWES. A follow up workshop on plain language should be recommended.



#### Total activity time

30 minutes

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## Activity 10 Talk 3: A 2-minute Talk on Addressing Safety Hazards

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### Activity outcomes

- Become familiar using plain language strategies to address safety hazards through practice.

### Activity guidelines

#### Task

- Participants use the workbook sheet Addressing Safety Hazards and Low English Skills as a Safety Hazard to develop their safety talk. They could also use the Tip Sheets 6 to 9 at the back of the resource, as suggested.
- The participants spend 15 minutes planning the outline of their talks.
- If there are more than 6 participants in the workshop, put them into groups of 3. Spread the groups across the room. They will do the presentations one at a time in those groups, but the groups all present at the same time to maximize time.
- Ensure you have extra checklists available for evaluation.
- As facilitator, you control the time. 2 minutes for the talk, 1 minute for feedback for each person.
- Ask participants to make notes on the feedback they get from each person who evaluates them.

#### Additional materials

- Tool 1: Safety Talk Skills Checklist
- Tool 2: Body Language and Speech Quality Checklist



#### Total activity time

40 to 60 minutes,  
depending on number  
of participants

## Addressing Safety Hazards

### Definitions

- Addressing safety hazards means telling partners or co-workers that they are not following safe practice or procedure. Addressing safety hazards caused by others is different to reporting near misses, incidents and accidents, or doing field-level hazards assessments.
- It means speaking up out of concern for the person's well-being, as well as for yours and the team's safety.
- Sometimes, it requires confronting another person. You may not know the person, but their lack of safety puts others at risk.

### Why talk about safety hazards?

It is good to discuss openly and set out guidelines together as a team for telling co-workers or other trades and clients that they are not following safe practice or procedure.

- Intimidation. Some people are more easily intimidated by more experienced or senior workers, by more confrontational or closed people.
- Culture. In some cultures, "saving face", yours or mine, is more important than speaking up to address a safety issue.
- Due diligence. People, environment, tools and materials are always changing.
- Law. OHS can shut down a job site at any time. They can visit a job site 24/7. They don't take ignorance as reasonable defense.

The best way to prevent or control hazards is to speak up when you see them.

### How to speak up!

Use the following strategies for speaking up.

- Reminder. "Hey buddy, you forgot your glasses."
- Suggestion. "Hey man, it's good practice to wear your glasses."
- Ask. "Hey buddy, could you wear your glasses. There are a lot of rookies around here who do what you model."
- Advise. "Hey bud, it's good practice to wear your glasses. Those sunglasses won't help you when the wind kicks that sawdust up."
- Code. "Hey man, OHS code is pretty clear: wear your glasses."
- Warning. "You need to wear your glasses. Otherwise, for your safety and mine, I will need to say something to the foreman. "

Failing this, the person may need to be reported.

### Ask

Have you ever seen a co-worker fail to follow through on safety? Have you ever wanted to say something, but didn't? Did you ever feel awkward having to address someone else's poor safety habit?

### Tip

Talk as a team about the best and worst ways to tell a co-worker or sub-trades he or she is not working safely.

Do a quick role play of what you should and shouldn't say.

### Example

A worker up in the Oil Sands developed a pain in his back. He told his supervisor that he was not fit for work, that his inability to move properly was a hazard to his partner and the team. The supervisor said he was exaggerating and should get back to work. He went home. The company laid him off.

WCB arrived shortly after that and shut the job down for 3 months. All the other trades were now on hold until all the supervisors completed a "leadership for safety excellence" workshop. Lesson learned: listen when someone speaks up to address a safety hazard.

## Low English Skills as a Safety Hazard

### Definitions

- Newcomers to Canada make up an important part of the labour force in the construction sector. Some of those newcomers may not have enough English skills to understand everything related to safety on the job site. Continued labour shortages make this an ongoing reality for the construction sector.
- Low English skills, or even cultural differences, can compromise safety at times. They can be a safety hazard. Controlling low English skills, if they are a safety hazard, is important. It is also important to support newcomers as they learn English and grow in their knowledge and practice of workplace safety in Canada.

### Why think about low English skills as a safety hazard?

This approach to controlling hazards is not meant to single out workers with low English skills, or to put them at a disadvantage. Instead, it is simply a process to make sure that all hazards are addressed and controlled whenever possible.

### How to use the Hierarchy of Controls

Use the Hierarchy of Controls as a way to assess a work scenario that has workers with low English.

First rank the severity of the hazard (language barriers) i.e. imminent danger, serious, minor, or not applicable.

Second, rank the probability of the specific incident occurring i.e. probable, reasonably probable, remote, extremely remote.

Then apply the Hierarchy of Controls:

- **Eliminate:** First try to eliminate the hazard completely e.g. reallocate an English-speaking worker to do the job.
- **Substitute:** If elimination is not possible, pair the worker up with a co-worker who speaks English and the newcomer's first language. Or, if that is not possible, pair the newcomer up with an English-speaking co-worker who can speak in plain English and use patience to reduce safety risks.
- **Administrative controls:** Provide the newcomer with the right training in safety, English and/or workplace culture, and enough of it. This could be through coaching, mentoring, in-house courses or training at the right schools. Use more supervisor follow ups on work e.g. checklists, face-to-face reporting with open-ended questions (see Tip Sheets 3 and 4).
- **Equipment controls:** Use electronic tools such as dictionaries and iPad Apps for translation as the last line of defense. Try to keep English as the language of work at all times unless someone has been appointed to act as permanent translator for an individual or a team of non-English speakers.

### Ask

Have you ever worked with someone who had low English skills? Did you ever think the communication gap might cause problems with safety? How did you limit the potential safety concerns? What happened?

### Tip

Use Tip Sheet 6 and 7 to identify ways to keep communication gaps closed.

### Example

Many newcomers come from work backgrounds where "saving face" is part of the workplace culture. They may not like confronting or disagreeing with supervisors directly. They might not like to say they don't understand. Instead, they will "save face" by communicating indirectly. They might use silence, or body language. They might laugh or breathe heavily. They might walk away and try to figure it out alone. Use Tip Sheets 3 and 4, 6 and 7 with your teams to make sure you close the gaps that lead to safety issues.

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## Activity 11 Reviewing Goals

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### Activity outcomes

- To set clear and specific goals for applying newly acquired insights, knowledge and skills to the workplace.

### Activity guidelines

Participants take time to review the insights gained in their own presentation capacities, and their organization's culture of safety. They think of practical next steps for applying acquired learning into the daily and weekly routines for safety.

**Workshop evaluation** – This is the final activity to part 2 of the workshop. Have participants complete the evaluation sheet found at the end of this resource.

### Workshop materials

- Copies of the Workshop Evaluation form



### Total activity time

15 minutes

## Safety Talk Skills Checklist

Tool 1

Opening	Keep doing	Start doing	Additional comments
Introductions – does necessary introductions			
Topic – gives title or topic of the safety talk			
Main point – frontloads main point clearly			
Accountability – connects the main point with the group			
Outline – sets out the supporting points			
Rapport – connects with the audience			

Delivery	Keep doing	Start doing	Additional comments
Personalizes – uses life experience to explain points			
Demonstrates – uses actions or activities to explain points			
Repeats – repeats key points, terms and concepts			
Participates – involves group during the talk			
Transitions – uses markers to transition between ideas			
Imparts confidence – avoids self-deprecation			
Speaks clearly			
Speaks concisely			
Speaks coherently			
Respects – respects audience's time			

Closing	Keep doing	Start doing	Additional comments
Summary – restates the main point			
Accountability – restates the application into the workplace			

## Body Language and Speech Quality Checklist

Tool 2

Body language	Keep doing	Start doing	Additional comments
Eyes – makes eye contact across the audience			
Gesture – strengthens and supports speaking			
Expression – confident, friendly, focused and open			
Spatial command – relaxed, calm, collected			
Other...			

Speech quality	Keep doing	Start doing	Additional comments
Speed – speaks at a moderate speed			
Pause – uses well-placed pauses			
Volume – speaks loud enough for everyone to hear			
Rhythm – varies speech pitch with inflection and intonation			
Tone – creates a positive, open and optimistic mood			
Clarity – pronounces words clearly			
Interjections – limits interjections (like, sighs, um, ah)			
Repetitions – avoids unnecessary repetitions			
Compensation strategies – uses effective strategies			
Other...			

## Giving Safety Talks

## Tip Sheet 1

### The aim

Becoming a slick public speaker is not the goal; instead aim to advance a culture of safety at work. Aim for engaging talks that get high transference of safety from the safety meeting into the workplace.

### The approach

Give clear, concise and coherent safety messages. Eliminate the unnecessary. That means simple language. To the point. And logically organized.

### The focus

Eliminate the unnecessary – build your talk around what the audience needs to know and/or do.

### Get feedback

Use the “keep-stop-start” method to regularly seek direct feedback from colleagues. Use their feedback to further improve your skills.

### Transition clearly

Use clear transition words such as first, next, lastly, to move from one point to the next. Also, repeat key words, terms and concepts.

### Less is more

Less is more. Don’t try to pack too much into a safety talk. Instead focus on a few specific points and aim for high transference of knowledge into the workplace.

### Eliminate stage fright

You can control stage fright because it is rooted in the following non-reality: “Someone else can deliver exactly the same safety talk better than you, and score a 10 out of 10. No mistakes. No slips ups.” We know there is no such person. No one is a 10. Every speaker walks away doing it better the next time. Your cure for stage fright maybe unique, but you can start with the following:

- Prep well. Practice the talk out loud beforehand. It will boost your confidence when you stand before the audience.
- Recognize it but don’t feed it. Stage fright feels real but can be controlled. Put yourself mentally ahead 5 minutes in your talk. The first few minutes of a talk can be tough as you are trying to find your “groove,” or natural flow of thought. Once you are past those first few minutes, you find your flow.
- Be realistic. There are no perfect 10s. Stop thinking “me” and focus your thoughts on “them,” the audience. You are giving the safety talk to guide and enable them to not get hurt or hurt others. It is not about you.
- Many ways, many talks. There is no one way to give a talk. Yours is one way. Focus on figuring out the best way in that moment with that audience. It will likely be done differently next time.
- Build your credibility in your own mind so that you feel “qualified” to speak.
- Use notes. Have an outline on paper that you can turn to if you lose focus.
- Seek feedback. Be open to improving by getting feedback from trusted co-workers.

### Build rapport

People don’t really care how much you know until they know how much you care. Care has to do with how much you actually care about your topic, your work and the people.

A safety talk begins days and months before you stand in front of people. The credibility you have with your audience comes from how you model what you want them to practice. It is not just what you practice, but how you practice it with them daily. And at a deeper more effective level, do you know the people?

It was said that the reason people followed a mad man like Napoleon is because he knew the first names of more than a thousand of his soldiers at any time. Building rapport is just as vital as building credibility.

## Recognizing Learning Style

## Tip Sheet 2

These are the three most recognized learning styles. Although everyone has a preference for one, the best learning occurs when we engage people using more than one style. Use all three styles in your safety talks.

Learning style	Definition	Ways to engage
<b>Auditory</b>	Learn best by hearing. Auditory learners often talk aloud to process information. They can be easily distracted. They have difficulty with written instructions, preferring to talk through the steps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read aloud.</li> <li>• Repeat key points.</li> <li>• Make time for open or group discussions.</li> <li>• Get them to repeat back to you.</li> <li>• Use personal stories.</li> </ul>
<b>Visual</b>	Learn best by seeing. Visual learners observe first rather than act or talk. They are organized in their approach to tasks. Their mind may stray during verbal discussions. They find verbal instructions difficult, preferring to see it on paper or in a drawing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide handouts, memos, pictures.</li> <li>• Use PowerPoint for formal meetings, with large font and lots of white space.</li> <li>• Be colour-coded and be strategic with various fonts and sizes.</li> <li>• Allow time for note-taking.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the point in front of them.</li> </ul>
<b>Kinesthetic</b>	Learn best by touching, doing and moving. Kinesthetic learners like to solve learning problems by physically working through them. They will try new things are outgoing by nature. They are tactile, preferring to touch objects and people as they engage them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get them to physically demonstrate it, touch the object, engage the point in some physical way.</li> </ul>

## Using Open-Ended Questions

## Tip Sheet 3

Open-ended questions ask for experience, opinion, reflection and application. They cannot be answered in one word. They encourage more information and deeper thought from your audience. Use the following examples as needed.

Purpose	Examples
Draw on experience	How have you used these tools?
Give opinion	What has your experience been in trying this _____ ?
Predict outcomes and consequences	What would happen if we _____ ? What could happen if we don't _____ ? What if all new employees were required to _____ ?
Make comparisons	How is this the same as _____ ?
Find alternatives	Are there any alternatives to come up with the same result?
Challenge thinking	Do you agree with _____ and why or why not?
Place value, priority, importance	How do you feel about _____ ?
State relationships	Why are these two things connected?
Bring understanding	Why do you think the company is asking the people to _____ ?
Demonstrate understanding	Show me how you properly attach _____ ?
Explore motivation	What is the rationale behind the _____ policy?
Apply	Would you use this procedure at home?
Make evaluations	How has this machine improved?
Confirm	How do you know that is working?

## Using Closed-Ended Questions

## Tip Sheet 4

Closed-ended questions focus on factual information. There is often a right or wrong, yes or no answer. They require short responses. Use the following examples as needed.

Purpose	Examples
Recalling information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you summarize main points?</li> <li>• Who is the procedure written for?</li> <li>• Do you wear this in your daily work?</li> <li>• What hazards are there on this job site?</li> </ul>
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some possible outcomes of this disease?</li> <li>• Where does this happen at your workstation?</li> <li>• What are the right conditions for this to happen?</li> <li>• When would you use this safety device?</li> </ul>
Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where or what group does this chemical belong to?</li> </ul>
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the proper way to wear this PPE?</li> <li>• What is the proper procedure for hazard identification?</li> </ul>
Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has happened when proper ergonomics are not followed?</li> <li>• What are the hazards with not keeping your eye on the weather?</li> </ul>

## Dealing with Disruptions

## Tip Sheet 5

Here is a list of common disruptive behaviours you might experience with an audience, and tips for dealing with the behaviours. Refer to them as needed.

Distraction	Definition	Strategy
Disinterest	The person seems bored, yawning loudly, looking at their watch. You should deal with disinterest or it may affect other audience members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move closer. Standing close to the person will focus their attention.</li> <li>• Ask the person a question that engages and brings him or her into the safety talk.</li> </ul>
Sarcasm	The audience member makes sarcastic jokes. You need to deal with sarcasm or your audience will lose respect for you.	Confront the individual directly. This person has an issue that needs to be addressed. Ask, "What do you mean by that?" Encourage him or her to state the concerns so that you can deal with them before moving on.
Arguing	The individual confronts you in front of the group, disputing your points. You need to deal with argumentative approach otherwise the group may join in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appear relaxed. If you appear angry or unsure of yourself, the audience will lose trust in you.</li> <li>• Calmly respond to the individual's comment. If the individual wishes to continue the discussion, invite them to discuss it with you in private after the talk.</li> </ul>
Dominating	The person speaks a lot during your safety talk, frequently offering their comments and opinions. Dominators speak so much that no one else is able to contribute to your presentation. This annoys the rest of the audience and could cause them to stop paying attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask closed questions to the dominator. This satisfies their need to contribute but forces them to give a short answer.</li> <li>• Ask questions to other audience members. This encourages them to contribute and takes the focus away from the dominator.</li> <li>• Politely ask "Can we hear what others think about this?"</li> <li>• Explain that, while you appreciate their contribution, you would like them to allow others to speak. Be respectful.</li> </ul>
Side conversations	Audience members engage in a private conversation while you are making your presentation. This creates a distraction for the others in the audience and encourages more side conversations.	<p><b>For related side conversations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They may be translating or getting clarification; use the opportunity to raise the question to the group in case others also need translation or clarification.</li> </ul> <p><b>For unrelated side conversations, do one of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand closer. They will likely stop.</li> <li>• Pause. Continue once they have stopped talking.</li> <li>• Ask if they have a question or comment for the group.</li> <li>• Respectfully ask them to stop, and explain that their behaviour is a distraction to the others.</li> </ul>
Cell phones	People take cell phone calls during the safety talk.	Don't compromise on this. Ask people to turn off their cell phones. Getting safety right must take priority. Business or personal matters can wait until after the meeting.
Latecomers	The persons have a habit of arriving late for safety meetings.	Bring the latecomer up to the front, and build them into the safety talk by having him or her demonstrate the safety point, or tell a related safety story.

## Bridging Communication Gaps

## Tip Sheet 6

### Use plain English

Use simple word choices and whenever possible avoid idioms, slang, occupational jargon, expletives, colloquialisms, and complex humour like sarcasm.

### Speak slowly, not loudly

Pause briefly between your thought groups in each sentence, like news anchors do on TV. It is easier for listeners to process what you say.

### Use marker words

Separate your ideas with words like ‘first’, ‘then’, ‘next’, ‘after that’, ‘at the end’ etc. It becomes easier to connect your ideas.

### Repeat key words

Be aware of your key words and ideas so that you can repeat them. This reinforces the listener’s understanding.

### Be linear

Begin with the end. What do I want the person to know or do at the end of the conversation? Organize your thoughts before you speak so that you are clear, specific, and to the point.

### Use gestures and visuals

Gestures can support basic ideas. Drawings and other visuals can explain more complex details. Write it down if necessary.

### Listen actively

Pay attention. Show that you are listening. Allow the person to finish. Provide feedback. If pronunciation challenges make it difficult to understand, try mentally repeating the person’s words as they speak. Confirm what you did understand. Then ask the person to repeat slowly what you didn’t understand.

### Use a translator as a last option

Take the time to use English at work. Only use a translator when absolutely necessary. It is worthwhile to make it a habit of putting English first. Unless customers or safety issues are involved, the daily patience of using English, and not giving up, will be worthwhile in the future.

### Encourage others

Create a culture of encouragement on teams so that people are not worried about “losing face” if their English is incorrect. Encourage co-workers when their communication improves or when you see them trying to use English. Give constructive feedback to help them grow. Encouragement builds confidence in newcomers.

## Bridging Cultural Gaps

## Tip Sheet 7

### Ask open-ended questions

“Losing face”, due to not understanding, may worry some newcomers. Therefore, avoid using yes and no answer-questions. For example, instead of saying “Do you understand?” ask “What are you going to do first?” or “What are the three things we need to get done?”

### Adapt to different communication styles

Culture can influence communication, such as the degree of directness, or the amount of emotion and personal disclosure etc. Sometimes this good for a team, and at other times it can stop people from working well together. Training may be necessary to develop better communication skills on teams.

### Look for indirect communication

Because people may not want to offend or “lose face”, they may communicate indirectly. You might need to “read between the lines”, or understand the hidden meanings in body language such as smiles, sighs, or even laughs. Ask. Be curious.

### Be aware of personal space

Culture, religion and gender can significantly influence norms of personal space and touch. Ask newcomers about their understandings of space, touch. Ask them about their previous workplace cultures. For the most part, newcomers are eager to talk about their cultures and previous workplaces.

### Recognize different internal clocks

Culture wires the “internal clocks” of people differently. This might affect communication, deadlines and punctuality, multi-tasking etc. Even religious practices and community commitments can set the rhythms of work. Ask newcomers about their ideas of time in the workplace. Compare your Canadian company norms with their cultural backgrounds to raise everyone’s awareness of differences. Get to know newcomers so that you can talk about issues. Stay curious.

### Understand how hierarchy affects behaviour

People from more hierarchical work cultures might act differently with supervisors. For example, they may not show lots of initiative – always waiting to be told what to do. In a leadership role, they might seem “bossy”. Compare and contrast the leader-subordinate relationship in their culture with your own workplace. Discuss how trust, credibility, rapport and respect are built in your workplace.

### Notice how credibility is built

Credibility affects trust and respect. It might be built through work accomplishments or personal character, by education, leadership positions and important responsibilities, family and influential people, money and possessions, age etc. How is credibility built on your team? Brainstorm with your team. Start a discussion at lunch.

### Notice how rapport is developed

Become more aware of how people build relationship at work, of how much personal information they share and the things they talk about. Bring newcomers into conversations. Explain sports and other popular culture. Be curious about other cultures. Chat. Ask. Find out. Share what you learn with others on your team.

### Build trust, not silence

Get to know newcomers. Help them find that “fit” at work. Look for the right timing to talk and offer advice. You have lived here from the beginning – you have “lessons learned” to offer them. They, in turn, can expand your worldview more than a TV show ever could. Do as they say at National Geographic, “Live curious.”

## Building Cultural Intelligence

## Tip Sheet 8

### Stay curious

At National Geographic they say “Live curious.” Cultural curiosity can go beyond noticing different physical traits, forms of dress, food or rituals.

You can ask people about books, sports, music and raising kids. You can ask about growing up in another part of the world. Best memories. The role of parents and grandparents.

You can get into even more interesting discussions about relations on teams and with supervisors, what can and should not be talked about, how time is best used at work. How respect is shown in another language. How credibility and rapport are built at work. The conversation starters are endless.

When you make deposits of respectful curiosity into others, you build up trust, the most powerful resource on a team. Stay curious.

### Suspend judgment

Have you ever had a cultural experience that was uncomfortable? You are not the first person. But you might be the first on your team to suspend judgment.

Suspending judgement means taking hold of your feelings, or emotions. Don't judge the situation as right or wrong, or even unimportant. It is like getting a rude email and waiting until the next day when you can think calmly about the right response.

In a difficult cultural moment, try to think about what the person's motivations might be. It is probably not meant to be rude or difficult. What you find is that human motivations are similar, but the way they come out can be very different.

A gentle response and a curious approach will get better reactions. Suspending judgement works.

### Become mindful

Cultural intelligence means seeing both differences and similarities between people. What you should avoid is minimizing those differences, or over-emphasizing similarities.

Minimizing simply puts your own cultural norms onto others, because you think everyone is the same. Cultural norms are not universal. Even neighbours like the US and Canada differ in workplace cultures. In fact, culture hides itself best from its own followers.

Be mindful. Deepen your understanding of your own cultural norms. Go beyond the surface of things like dress, foods and sports to how you communicate, build credibility or make friends. Become mindful.

### Be adaptive

Follow the golden rule: “do to other cultures as they would prefer.” This implies increasing your general and specific knowledge of the other cultures you work with. Even if it is a simple thing like adapting your eye contact or personal space, or a little more complex like adjusting your communication style. Why? Good relations. Less conflict. Better use of your time. Increased safety. Job quality. Respect and trust.

At the same time, if you recognize specific workplace norms need to be clearly shared with newcomers, don't keep silent. Draw on the trust you build with them and be open about differences.

Work to have a clear and common agreement on what behaviours and attitudes work best between you and your co-workers. Be adaptive too.

## Creating Understanding with non-native speakers of English

## Tip Sheet 9

### What to do when a newcomer doesn't understand you

If a newcomer doesn't understand your spoken message, use the following guidelines:

- Front load your message – put the most important point first by focusing only on what you want the person to do or know.
- Make sure you are using plain language, and avoid slang, colloquialisms and idiomatic phrases.
- Speak slower not louder. Pause between ideas. Use marker words.
- Ask the person what they did understand, and then what they didn't understand.
- Re-explain the difficult part, keep it simple but don't lose the key meaning of your message.
- Write the most important points down in sequence.
- Use gestures and visuals if necessary.
- Use a translator, if nothing else works.
- Always confirm the person's understanding with open-ended questions, such as "What should we do first?"

### How to check a newcomer has understood you clearly

If you know a newcomer usually finds it difficult to understand you, use the following guidelines:

- Before you start, invite the person to ask questions at any time they don't understand.
- Tell the person you are going to stop sometimes and ask him or her to repeat back or to answer a question. Tell the person that you would like him or her to ask questions at those moments as well.
- If in doubt, always check the person has understood by asking open-ended questions. Avoid "yes" and "no" answer questions. Instead, ask the person to explain what they are going to do, or get him or her to show you.
- Later, ask follow-up questions on details, such as safety related concerns, to check their understanding and progress.
- Watch for body language and indirect signals, such as smiles and laughs or head movements, that suggest the person is not understanding.
- Think of what you have not mentioned that you assume the newcomer knows.
- Write it down, or support yourself with gestures and visuals, or use a translator if nothing else works.
- Ask the person to give you an update at a specific time soon afterwards to avoid going too far in their work with a mistake.

## Workshop Evaluation

Please take time to complete the workshop evaluation.  
Targeted feedback will be incorporated into future training.

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

1. I am able to use what I have learned during this workshop in my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The learning goals were clearly explained at the start of training.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The content was explained in a way that was easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The learning activities engaged me in learning.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The learning activities gave me enough practice.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The learning activities gave me enough feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I achieved the goals I set for myself at the start of training.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Do you feel you were able to fully participate in the workshop? Why or why not?					
9. Please rate the overall quality of the workshop. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory					
10. Identify anything the trainer(s) can stop, start or keep doing.					



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