

H1 – Toolbox Talk Alcohol & Drugs

Alcohol

Working under the influence of alcohol is strictly prohibited. This means more than just not drinking whilst at work. Tests have shown that alcohol can still have an effect on your body up to 18 hours after you have stopped drinking.

Alcohol is a sedative. Drinking any quantity of alcohol impairs a person's judgment, thinking ability, and coordination to some degree. Some people can 'handle' alcohol better than others, but it is a fact that any alcohol consumed has some effect.

After drinking, you are no longer in a position to assess your own capabilities. You don't have to be drunk to have sustained some impairment. If you cannot make it through the day without a drink, you could have a serious problem and should seek professional help.

If you know of a co-worker who drinks then you are not helping them or yourself if you:

- Cover for the drinker's poor productivity
- Cover his/her mistakes, or
- Make excuses on his/her behalf.

Take control of the situation, and:

- Don't allow the situation to continue. Stop covering for the drinker.
- Talk to your supervisor. It is your responsibility to talk to your supervisor whenever any performance or safety issues affect your job. A drinking worker could be just as dangerous as a defective saw. You wouldn't hesitate to bring the faulty saw to your supervisor's or line manager's attention, would you?
- If you are uncomfortable, suggest to your supervisor that there may be a problem. A good supervisor or line manager will take the initiative and pick up the issue from there.

Whatever you do, make sure you do something. Watch out for your co-worker as he/she may need help. If you don't, you may pay dearly for someone else's mistake.

Non-prescribed Drugs

- You are far more likely to have an accident on-site when under the influence of drugs.
- You may feel you do not have a drug problem and this has got nothing to do with you but if you get hurt, it's a bit late to wonder what the other person was under the influence of.
- If you know somebody is taking drugs, tell your supervisor or line manager. Help to stamp it out.
- Signs to look for: watery eyes, pin-point or dilated pupils, running nose, constant sniffing, tight lips, sores, ulcers, trembling, fatigue, and irritability. If you see it, report it.



- All drugs can affect your ability to work safely.
- Some effects of drugs: slow reaction times, clumsiness, poor decision making, and distorted vision.
- If you get offered drugs, say 'No, I'd rather work safely', and report it immediately to your supervisor or line manager.
- Drugs and work don't mix. Don't let it become a problem.

Prescribed Drugs

The most common side effect of over-the-counter cold and flu medicine is drowsiness, which reduces a person's level of alertness and increases reaction time. Tens of thousands of vehicle accidents are attributed to sleepiness every year. Fatigue is a factor in nearly one third of HGV accidents where the driver is killed.

Taking medication, and then coming to work and using machinery or sharp tools, can be dangerous. In many cases, we do not want you to show up for work when you have a bad cold or the flu. Not only does your risk of injury increase when medication causes you to be drowsy, your productivity is likely to be poor as well. In addition, you may pass on a virus to co-workers so that they too become ill. Finally, your own recovery may be delayed if you are not getting enough rest to fight the ailment. However, sometimes you must come to work and you need to take medication. If this is the case, remember the following:

- Let your supervisor know.
- Follow the recommended dosages.
- Do not mix medications.
- Read the label.
- Do not try new remedies during work hours.
- Wash your hands often.

Remember, you must:

- Never come to work under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- Never bring alcohol or prohibited drugs to work, or consume them at work.
- Inform your manager if you have to take any medication which may affect your work.
- Inform your supervisor if you believe a colleague is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.



Training register

Date

Name of attendee

Signature

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