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Communication Tools on a Jobsite

There are many different methods to **communicate a message**. It is important to recognize the communication tools used on the job that relay important information for your work task and the work environment. Verbal communication is not the only way to send and receive a message.

Forms of Safety Communication:

When someone says communication, the first thing you may think about is **speaking words** to another person or sending an email. These are just two ways to communicate, but there are many more ways found at work. Some other examples of communication include posters, labels, warnings, bulletins, pictograms, JSAs, SOPs, body language, etc. Depending on any number of factors, each of these tools of communication can be critical for working safely.

Safety Posters:

Many hours and a lot of money are spent by companies to develop ideas for posters, implement the ideas behind the poster on the job, and print them out for their job sites. Safety posters vary greatly in what information they are displaying. While some just have a few words of motivation, others can give great detail on a common hazard in the workplace. It is important to pay attention to anything the company or supervisor puts up on the wall. If it was decided to spend the resources to develop the poster, then it is important for employees to review and understand the information it is communicating.

Job Safety Analyses (JSAs)

Job safety analyses are a proactive tool to prevent incidents, but they are also a method of communication. Much time and thought are spent on developing these tools. If the message that is being conveyed through JSAs is not being read or understood, then the tool does not serve any purpose. Often times JSAs can become repetitive for tasks done over and over, but time should always be given to read the message it is conveying.

The message is often the same if you are completing the same task because, more often than not, it is the same hazards that cause the majority of injuries.

Labels/Warnings

There are labels on just about anything you see in a workplace. All too often, labels are not read over, or unreadable labels are not replaced. Manufacturers of equipment, tools, and chemicals put these labels on for a reason. Labels communicate some of the most important information about a product, including serious hazards, safeguards, and contact information in case of an emergency. Make it a point to review the labels in your work area not only to check to see if they are in good condition but also to understand the message it is stating. If you see a label or symbol, you do not understand, look in the owner's manual, or ask a supervisor for its meaning.

Summary

These are just a few examples of important tools that convey a message in the workplace. On any given day, the most important piece of information you read or take in can be received through any of these tools. It is important to ensure that the message is received and understood by not only you but all the workers in that area.