

Tips for great health & safety talks

WORKSAFE
NEW ZEALAND | MAHI HAUMARU
AOTEAROA

business.
govt.
nz

Health & safety (H&S) talks are about the business and workers learning from each other to keep everyone safe and healthy at work. It's essential to engage with workers and have ways for them to participate in H&S on a regular and ongoing basis. Not only is it good for performance and productivity, it's the right thing to do. Follow these tips for great H&S conversations.

Be hands-on and practical

Let workers see and try out how things actually work day-to-day. Bring tools to your talks. Show workers the safe and right way of using them, and let them have a go. If possible, hold talks where the risks are located.

Hear issues, reward behaviour

Encourage your workers to feel comfortable telling you about risks or issues. Thank them. Act on it. At the next talk, explain what's been done. Also recognise when H&S is done well. Give a prize or award, or simply share the good story and say "nice work".

Share stories, not numbers

Numbers don't tell the whole story. Share real-life stories — of the good and the bad. Say what happened before, during and after an incident. Use stories from your own business or from the news.

Consider language and culture

H&S talks need to suit the audience. Ask workers how best to communicate with them. Think about the language, the type of words, and who delivers the messages. Use photos and real tools. Chat about it to check everyone understands.

Make it worker-led

Your workers are the eyes and ears of your business and may know about H&S risks and issues you aren't aware of. Encourage them to speak up and offer suggestions and solutions. If they can share their stories, give demonstrations and call out issues, they'll know they're valued and you're all in it together.

For more information, see business.govt.nz's Health and Safety section.