



June 12–18, 2017

# Worker Participation

## Empower Workers With Safety and Health Information

### What Is It?

**Worker participation** is meaningfully engaging workers at all levels in establishing, implementing, evaluating, and improving safety and health in the workplace. This means workers understand they are a valuable partner in making their workplace safer and are encouraged and able to communicate with management about hazards on the job. Workers are the experts when it comes to the tasks they do and the tools and equipment they use, which makes them a key resource for knowledge and innovative ideas that can improve safety and health.



### How Do You Do It?

You can engage your workers during Safe + Sound Week by **empowering them with safety and health information**. The more workers have the knowledge, tools, and skills to play an active role in safety and health, the more meaningful their participation will be. The following are a few suggestions and resources to get you started. You can select one of these activities or choose a different [activity to engage workers](#) in your organization.

- Hold a training:** Train workers on every shift to identify and report hazards and “near misses,” as well as your safety precautions and procedures. You can also use this time to brainstorm potential hazards and controls and gather feedback about your safety and health efforts or program. You can do this at the start of every shift or you can have a longer training that all workers attend.
  - [Sample Safety Break Agendas](#)
  - [Sample Safety All-Hands Agenda](#)
  - National Safety Council’s [5-minute Safety Talk](#)
- Invite external experts to speak to workers:** For a fresh perspective on your own safety and health efforts, bring in a speaker from outside your organization (e.g., workers’ compensation or other insurance carrier, outside safety and health professionals, industry trade associations) to discuss safety at work, lead a training with workers, or show your workers the latest industry safety best practices.
- Create a library of safety and health-related material:** Make sure workers have access to the information they need to be an engaged participant in safety and health at work. Make information—such as chemical and equipment manufacturer safety recommendations, workplace inspection reports, and incident investigation reports—publicly accessible (e.g., binder, intranet site, shared computer). Sharing relevant safety and health information with workers fosters trust and supports meaningful participation.
- Or, create your own activity!**

## How Do You Make It Effective?

**Make it work:** Schedule trainings and events during working hours and at times when the most workers can participate.

**Be inclusive:** Ensure that workers at all levels of your organization can participate, regardless of skill or education; take literacy levels into account and provide alternatives to reading-based resources (e.g., illustrations, demonstrations). Provide translation if needed to reach all your workers.

**Implement new ideas:** Show workers that their participation really matters by implementing their ideas for improvement in your safety and health program or efforts.

**Make it fun:** Workers are more likely to participate in trainings, listen to speakers, or provide input if they are actively engaged and have opportunities to ask questions or act out scenarios.

**Create safety champions:** Look for workers who are interested in becoming experts in certain safety areas and give them additional training and a forum to teach what they've learned.

## Show Your Commitment to Safety and Health

Remember to share your commitment to a safe and healthy workplace with all involved in your operations, including workers, contractors, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. Here are a few ways to do that:

- Create a list of important safety resources in break rooms or on your intranet site, and give down time during work shifts to discuss and absorb the materials.
- Share what you learned and the actions you plan to take because of this knowledge in your next company newsletter or communication to workers.
- Compare notes after trainings, speakers, and other activities to encourage communication and cooperation throughout the organization.
- Include photos of your workers participating in training in public materials, such as newsletters, websites, brochures, and annual reports.

Visit the Safe + Sound Campaign website to learn more about [worker participation](#).