

Communicate Your Commitment to a Safety and Health Program

Ready for Level 2?

	YES (✓)	NO (X)
You have identified the reasons safety and health is important in your business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit Building Your Case for a Safety and Health Program (1ML_1a)
You have written a policy affirming safety and health as a core value of the business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit Write a Safety and Health Policy (1ML_1b)
You have communicated your safety and health policy to everyone in the business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit Share Your Safety and Health Policy (1ML_1c)

To-Do

- Assess whether your policy reflects what's really happening in your business.
- Use this assessment to guide changes in your policy and your program.
- Use a variety of ways to communicate your commitment to safety and health.

Assess whether your actions reflect your policy

Your safety and health program is built on a policy—one that can and should support a culture for safety in your business. That policy likely states that safety and health is a core value of your organization. It also likely spells out specific ways you are committed to safety and health, such as:

- Following safety and health regulations and company requirements.
- Clarifying each person's safety and health responsibilities.
- Expecting managers throughout the organization to make safety and health a priority in their day-to-day activities.
- Providing resources for all safety and health activities and for continual improvement.
- Achieving effective worker participation.

But policy statements only mean something if they actually guide the way work is done. Review your policy statements to see if they cover not only *what* to do but *why*—what is the intent behind the commitment? For instance, a statement could talk not only about a commitment to provide training, but also the goal of the training: to improve skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Begin by reviewing information you have gathered as part of Program Evaluation and Improvement (see Level 1 worksheets for this element). This information should shed light on whether the policy is guiding the organization or not. For example, is training being delivered according to the training goals and plan? Is implementation of hazard controls happening in a timely way?

Also gather input from workers, managers, and supervisors. Are they aware of the policy? Are there commitments that are missing or being ignored? Does the policy match what’s happening day to day? Is it guiding decision-making and actions in the organization? Does it need updating because of business changes, such as acquiring another company or new leadership?

You can get this input in various ways, such as informal or formal meetings, one-on-one conversations, and questionnaires. You could also try a short “pulse survey”—a quick survey to take the pulse of an organization. You can hand out a survey at work or send it electronically. It’s always best to have this done during work time, when people are thinking about work. A survey can reach people more easily than meetings. It also can be anonymous, depending on how you administer it and what personal information you ask for. You might want to ask for respondents’ departments or job categories, but you can keep the survey more anonymous by leaving that information out of the results you share.

Below is an example of a short pulse survey designed to find out workers’ perceptions of a company’s policy and practices. Workers rank how strongly they agree or disagree with specific statements. You can adapt the questions for your business.

When analyzing results from a pulse survey, look closely at the answers. See if they point to a gap between your policy and your actions. For some statements, strong agreement means the policy is being acted on; for others it’s the opposite. This is deliberate: it means the questions have to be read and answered carefully. Consider asking a group of workers to help analyze the results and, more importantly, to take action and make improvements.

Example questions for a pulse survey

Workplace:	Department:	Date:			
Job title:	Job:	Shift:			
Instructions					
This survey asks your opinion about various aspects of your workplace. Please check the box that best describes your response.					
Think about your work area, department, or unit	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Production pressures do not lead to cutting corners on safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. We have enough staff to handle the workload.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

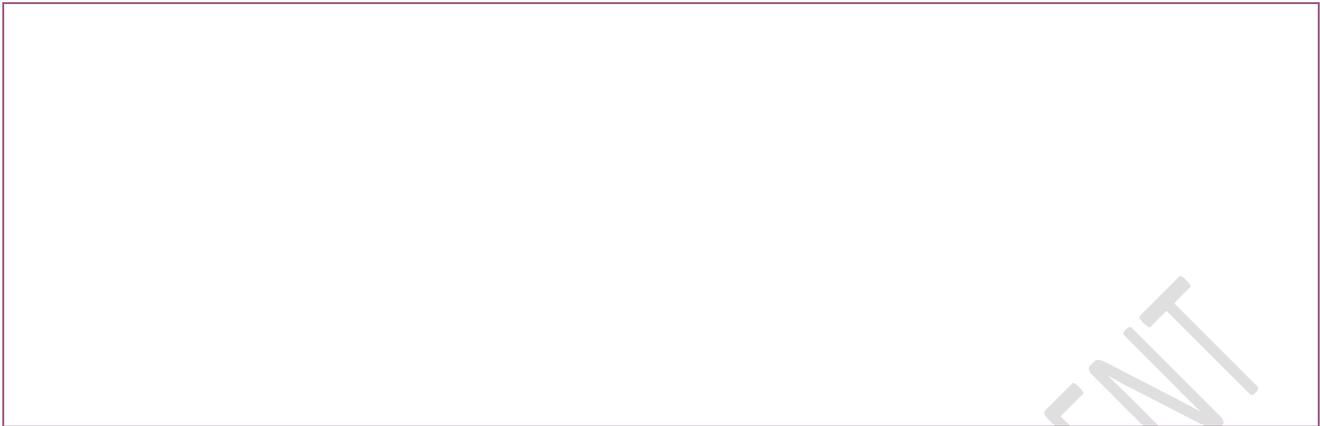
Think about your work area, department, or unit	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree
3. With so many close calls, we are lucky that there aren't more injuries and illnesses at our workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Management is quick to blame individuals when there is an incident.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Everyone in the company knows their role in the safety and health program.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. If I make a suggestion to improve safety, nothing ever happens.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. Management discourages workers from reporting injuries and illnesses.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. My supervisor/manager wouldn't hesitate to shut down an unsafe operation.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. Safety is a core value of this business.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10. Workers are afraid to speak up about safety problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
[your questions]	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	<input type="checkbox"/>				

11. In your opinion, what is the most important safety and health problem at this facility? Why?

Policy revisions/updates

In the box below, based on the input you've gathered, list practices or elements of the policy that need improvement. Management should make these improvements, then follow up to make sure they're working.

Example: As a result of its pulse survey, Paladino Warehousing realized that new workers were unfamiliar with the safety and health program and safety requirements for their specific jobs. To address this, the company started a mentoring program. More experienced workers helped newer workers learn the safe use of equipment and tools, how they could report safety concerns, and how the safety and health program helped keep all workers safe.



Pro Tip: More Ways to Communicate Commitment

Everyone in your organization needs to know what your safety and health policy is so they can keep it in mind in their everyday activities. You can communicate management commitment in other ways too. Managers can take visible actions to help strengthen a culture of safety. For example, they can:

- Be proactive in identifying safety and health issues.
- Put safety on the agenda of all regular meetings.
- Walk through the workplace to find hazards.
- Encourage workers to report all injuries, illnesses, and incidents.
- Always follow up on complaints and suggestions promptly.
- Respond in person to workers' concerns.
- Hold safety and health "office hours" during work time.
- Recognize workers for voicing concerns and suggestions.
- Send out emails or other written communications with safety news, viewpoints, and updates.
- Stop work immediately to investigate or correct any unsafe operation.
- Follow up promptly with corrective actions when there's an injury or close call/near miss.