

# Employee Training: A Guide For Employers

Properly trained employees are an employer's most valuable asset in today's complex work environment. Employee training can help reduce rising incident rates and the cost of workers' compensation and liability insurance. It is often inadequate or nonexistent safety and incident prevention training that results in incident related injuries. For example, employees who must bend and lift, or who do frequent repetitive motions, must be trained to bend, lift and move in a safe manner. Good techniques will go a long way in preventing a variety of costly muscle and tendon related injuries.

## EFFECTIVE TRAINING METHODS

Individuals who conduct safety training must understand the adult learning process. The information should be presented clearly and must relate directly to the worker's job. Trainees must be made aware of the importance of the new knowledge and skills which contribute to the safety and efficiency of their day-to-day tasks. This can be done by proper preparation, presentation, participation and follow-up.

### PREPARATION

The stage should be set by the trainer so that the training matches the goals intended. Proper training materials, audio visuals, a designated training area, demonstration materials, etc. are all things to consider in preparation. Make sure everything is in order for a smooth training session that truly motivates workers. A disorganized trainer is not effective and wastes a lot of peoples' time. Remember, you can never be too prepared; do your homework before you train.

### PRESENTATION

Effective presentation is the key to good training. Remember that everyone learns at their own pace. Be

sure to take the time for those who learn more slowly. Also, present the *basics* first, then the *nice to know* information if appropriate. Minimize irrelevant information.

Relate training to past experiences. This will allow workers to understand the information from a human perspective and retain it. Good storytelling works if it relates to the training. Lastly, ensure that you present the information clearly and concisely.

### PARTICIPATION

Workers should have the opportunity to apply their new information and skills in a practice situation. For example, they are more likely to learn the details of how to wear safety gear by practicing with the equipment in a group situation, than if they memorize a set of printed instructions.

Employee learning is more comprehensive when the trainees are provided with the opportunity to plan or try out what they have learned before applying it to their jobs. When they put together all the elements of the training in a rehearsal situation, they are more comfortable with their new skills, and more likely to use them with confidence.

Stephen R. Covey said, "To change behavior, reverse the role." When feasible, allow competent employees to conduct some of the training.

### FOLLOW UP

After the training is completed, quizzes and skills tests provide good indicators of trainee learning retention. This also gives them a chance to practice their recall of the training and for the instructor to evaluate the trainees who may need additional training.

Follow-up with workers should be done within short time after training by the supervisor or trainer. This ensures the skills are retained over the long term. Employees also need to be trained on a regular basis, not just when they are new to a job. Annual refresher training is needed as the work environment and regulatory requirements change.

## **SUMMARY**

Your employees are your most valuable asset. An investment in time spent to train them properly in safety and all other areas will pay dividends to your company.

For further information and assistance in employee training, you can contact your local OSHA consultation office, your equipment and materials suppliers, private consultants specializing in safety and health, and the Safety & Health Department at Zenith.



# SAFETY TIPS

## Cashiers and Baggers

1. All cashiers should utilize fatigue mats as well as alternate postures and scanning techniques to reduce fatigue.
2. Allow cashiers to alternate between tasks such as scanning and bagging groceries to lessen repetitive motion.
3. When scanning or bagging, reduce reaching and twisting. Perform work tasks within arm's reach.
4. Establish store procedure for dealing with robbery situations. Train all cashiers on the basics including remaining calm and complying with a robber's demands. Cashiers and front end employees should always pay attention if a co-worker seems to be stressed or acting strange when dealing with a customer.
5. Vary the time of day, schedule and order for collecting cash from the registers. Employees should always have a co-worker with them in a buddy system while conducting this important task. Consider using drop boxes with no employee access, which limits the amount of cash on hand.
6. Small, high-dollar items such as electric toothbrushes, electric razors and baby formula are targeted theft items. These items should be shelved behind a service counter or in an area easily visible to employees. Maintain low stock of such items on the sales floor for loss prevention.
7. If two or more employees are responsible to lock and exit a store at night, a safe method for doing so is for one employee to exit the store and get in their car with the doors locked and wait for the remaining employee(s). All remaining employee(s) can then exit the store together and lock it up for the night. When all employees have safely reached their cars, everyone can exit the parking lot.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com<sup>®</sup>**

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# SAFETY TIPS

## Cuts, Lacerations and Burns

1. Train all food-service employees on the proper use, care and cleaning of knives.
2. Knives should never be left in sinks.
3. Use food-grade scissors for opening food packaging, not knives.
4. Slicer should be used only if the blade is properly guarded. Cut-resistant gloves should be used when wiping, sanitizing and breaking down deli slicers. Slicers should be turned off when wiping down between products and de-energized for sanitizing and cleaning. When control dial is on zero, blade should fully close so that no blade is exposed when wiping it down.
5. Only automatically retractable safety box cutters should be used to open boxes.
6. If a band saw is used in the meat department, it must be properly guarded and its operator trained on proper use and cleaning.
7. Use proper hot mitts and hot pads when working around ovens and grills. If the grocery store has deep fryers and rotisserie ovens, only trained employees can use, filter and clean out these units. Cleaning chemicals are available that easily clean fryers and rotisserie oven parts without harsh side effects for employees.

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# SAFETY TIPS

## Equipment Safety

1. Inspect all equipment regularly including electrical cords.
2. Inspect all extension cords and replace cords that are frayed, broken or bent.
3. If a piece of equipment is broken or malfunctioning, post a sign indicating the problem and take equipment out of service if necessary.
4. All equipment with moving parts (e.g. meat slicers, balers) must be properly guarded, and operators must be trained to properly use and clean the equipment.
5. Employees must be 18 years or older to load and/or operate and unload balers and compactors. Those ages 16 and 17 can load, but not operate or unload, these units only if the Department of Labor's criteria are met.  
<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs57.pdf>

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# SAFETY TIPS

## Hazard Communication

1. Each grocery store must keep a book of the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) updated and accessible to all employees.
2. All containers of chemicals or hazardous substances must be labeled with the identity of the contents and any appropriate hazard warnings.
3. All employees should receive annual hazard communication training regarding all chemicals and substances they work with and around.

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# SAFETY TIPS

## Manual Material Handling

1. Limit moving items and products around the grocery store as much as possible. Design a plan for moving items so that an item must only be moved one time to its final location. Pre-plan ordering and delivery as much as possible so that when product arrives in receiving, it must only be moved one time to its final location on the sales floor or to the department where it will be used by store employees.
2. Large items such as tables and displays should have wheels (with wheel locks), or be placed on carts or dollies for easy transport.
3. Use mechanical devices such as pallet jacks to assist in lifting heavy product and objects whenever possible.
4. Push, don't pull.
5. Use proper lifting techniques when lifting any object or materials. Lift and push using the legs and not your back.
6. Limit the weight of loads that you lift. Know your lifting capabilities. Ask for help.
7. Never twist, extend, or reach when handling or carrying an object.
8. Store frequently handled items at waist height. This applies to all storage areas such as the back area of the store, freezer and coolers. Try to store lightweight items on higher shelves. Heavy items can be placed on dollies or pallet jacks and pushed to their storage location until needed again.

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## Slips, Trips and Falls

1. Store associates should wear slip-resistant footwear.
2. If possible, pallets, pallet jacks and u-boats should not be on the sales floor during business hours.
3. Inspect all displays for possible trip hazards, especially wire racks that may have awkward supports or extensions.
4. Floors should be cleaned frequently following a cleaning schedule. Use the correct cleaning agent for floor surface and conditions. Regularly change mop heads and mop water to avoid spreading grease, oil and dirt with a contaminated mop.
5. Never leave a spill or slippery floor surface unattended. One employee should remain at the spill while another obtains the wet floor sign and correct cleaning supplies. Clean the floor thoroughly and dry it as much as possible. Remove the wet floor sign when the floor is completely dry and has been tested to ensure it is no longer slippery. Test floor by sliding shoe along it in a safe and controlled manner to check that it is no longer a potential slip hazard.
6. Freezers should be kept free from ice build up and other slip/trip hazards. It is best not to use a ladder or stepladder in a freezer.

### Ladder Safety

Ladders may be necessary to reach items stored at height. Some key points to remember when using ladders are:

- Make sure the ladder is secure on solid ground
- Do not use broken or defective ladders
- Face the ladder and climb down slowly
- Never jump from the ladder
- Never climb past the third rung from the top of a ladder
- If you can't reach an item, move the ladder rather than leaning to the side
- Keep your trunk within the ladder's sides
- Store ladders in a clean, dry place and inspect before use.

Step ladders are helpful to reach items just above eye sight and they can reduce overhead reaching and lifting. The top of an ordinary step ladder should not be used as a step. Step ladders should be equipped with a metal spreader or locking device of sufficient size and strength to securely hold the front and back sections in an open position.

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**ON THE JOB SAFETY BEGINS HERE**

Bargain Barn, Inc. is committed to providing a safe environment. No job or task is more important than the health and safety of our workers, customers and business partners. No job is so important that you cannot take the time to do it safely.

Safety Environment

Associates at all levels are responsible for taking action when a violation is observed. Visitors and contractors on site are also required to abide by the safety rules and regulations. If a violation is observed, they must take action immediately to correct the violation. Associates who fail to follow safety rules and regulations established to protect them and their fellow associates endanger themselves and others.

Associate Responsibilities

Each associate is responsible to follow established policies and procedures. Following directions is critical. Responsibility does not end with just taking care of you. If an employee observes any unsafe or unprotected exposure, which may pose a potential threat to their safety and health, he or she must inform management immediately. It is the responsibility of each associate to work in a professional and safe manner. Failure to do so will result in termination.

Reporting and Investigation

Report all incidents immediately to the supervisor on duty, no matter how slight.

**After hours reporting call Zenith Insurance Company at 800-440-5020.**

More information on reporting injuries can be found on the Worker's Compensation poster located with all mandatory postings or on AWC including a list of Physicians. An investigation will be conducted after each accident prior to employee returning to work.

Return to Work Policy

The company has a process in place to bring injured workers back to work as soon as possible after an on-the-job injury. This includes providing transitional work based on the treating physician's written recommendations.

Confirmation of Safety Program

This is to certify that I have read and will observe the safety practices as outlined and other rules presented to me during my employment. I understand that the safety practices listed are not the only procedures and/or rules that I will be called upon to follow.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Do's and Don'ts of Safe Stocking

### DO:

1. Lay pallets flat.
2. Use stock trucks or carts whenever possible.
3. Load stock trucks or carts so they pass through aisles or doorways with ease.
4. Break down empty boxes and containers; discard them promptly so they don't accumulate.

### DON'T:

1. Stack merchandise in aisles, stairs or in front of exits.
2. Use boxes, pallets or other items in place of a ladder.
3. Overreach when stocking. Stretching may result in falls or strains.

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## Safety in a Retail Store

1. Stack cartons so that they're not piled at the end of aisles where people could trip over them.
2. Clean all walkways (floors, aisles, stairs) and keep them free of debris, trash, spills or fallen merchandise.
3. Lie floor mats and carpets flat, without ripples or curled edges, and make sure they are slide-resistant.
4. Clear all exit paths of obstructions.
5. Stack merchandise in a stable manner that's easy to reach.
6. Remove protruding objects (that can block walkways) from displays, counters, tables and floor stacks.
7. Maintain at least 30" of clearance around all sources of ignition such as heaters, boilers and electrical panels.

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## Tips for Proper Lifting

1. Size up the load. If it looks too heavy, use lifting equipment or ask for help.
2. Check the route to make sure it's free of obstructions, water and other trip-and-fall hazards.
3. Place your feet close to the object, bend your knees and get a firm hand hold. Lift smoothly, primarily using your leg muscles.
4. Lift straight up, keeping the load close to your body without twisting or turning.
5. Turn your body by changing foot position as you start walking, rather than twisting.
6. Set down the load slowly, bending your knees. Do not let go until you've lowered it securely onto the floor.
7. Transport carts and wheel racks by pushing—not pulling.

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# SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

- No employee is expected to perform a job until he/she has received instructions on how to do it properly and safely and is authorized to perform the job.
- No employee should undertake a job that appears to be unsafe.
- No employee should use chemicals without fully understanding their toxic properties and without the knowledge required to work with them safely.
- Mechanical safeguards must always be in place and kept in place.
- Employees are to report to a supervisor all unsafe conditions or work practices encountered during work.
- Any work-related injury or illness suffered, however slight, must be reported to management at once.
- Personal protective equipment must be used when and where required and properly maintained

## Safe Use of Box Cutters

### 7 Ways to Leave the First Aid Kit on the Shelf

Box cutters are one of the most frequently used cutting tools in the grocery industry. They are also a common cause of lacerations in the store, so employee training is essential to help prevent injuries. Managers should demonstrate proper technique for the safe use of box cutters, especially to new employees. Frequent verbal instruction or a friendly word of caution reminds all employees to take personal responsibility for accident-free use of box cutters.

Managers should also provide safe tools for employee use. Outdated or dull box cutters are a major cause of cut injuries. Dull tools also contribute to the damage of store merchandise. A few general rules and safety products can help protect employees as well as aid in minimizing damage to stock.

#### General Rules:

1. Always use a sharp blade.
2. Keep the blade covered when not in use.
3. Angle the blade away from your body when opening a case.
4. Do not use your thumb to control the cutter.
5. Cover the blade before placing the box cutter in your pocket or apron.
6. Never leave a box cutter on a shelf or counter.
7. Avoid damaging product inside the box by exposing less of the blade when cutting.

When purchasing box cutters for your store, consider models that include valuable safety features. Right and left hand models are available. Some box cutters are designed with ergonomic handles that help users reduce repetitive motion symptoms. Other models are designed with safety release levers to help with blade changes.

#### Related safety products:

- Safety box cutters and supplies
- *Preventing Cuts and Lacerations* training VHS, DVD, and manual available in English or Spanish.
- Cut-resistant gloves
- Sharps container

Contact the Grocers Safety Supply Catalog for safety products designed for the grocery industry:  
800-777-3602 ext. 1622 ▪ 503-833-1622 ▪ Order online at [www.grocersinsurance.com](http://www.grocersinsurance.com)