What is Return-to-Work?

Return-to-Work is a proactive approach, endorsed by many health care providers, designed to help restore injured workers to their former lifestyle in the safest and most effective manner possible. A partnership among workers, union representatives, employers, and health care provider's stakeholders is developed in a collaborative effort to return the injured worker back to his or her pre-injury status.

Return-to-Work management is the simultaneous coordination of health care services, vocational rehabilitation, and claims development in a caring and cost-effective manner according to the worker's needs. A major benefit for both the injured worker and employer is the Return-to-Work focus on an earlier return to maximum work capacity than would be possible using a non-specialized treatment plan. A cooperatively developed Return-to-Work program assists the worker's recovery by making return to work part of the rehabilitation process. The development, implementation, and maintenance of your company's Return-to-Work program will also strengthen the workplace community through continued communication and one shared goal: the safe return to work of the injured worker.

As all the stakeholders fulfill their responsibilities, Return-to-Work programs can realize their full potential to:

- Reduce the financial burden on employers, on workers, and on the families of workers;
- Reduce the negative effects on workers by reducing the length of time off work;
- Allow unions to continue to protect the employment rights of their members;
- Allow the health care provider to develop more specialized treatment plans; and
- Provide support for the primary care provider in the return to work decision.

The Return-to-Work process restores a worker to the workplace as part of his or her recovery program. This maximizes treatments and minimizes long-term workers' compensation costs. The worker experiences quicker recovery and restoration of his or her lifestyle, and the employer experiences a better-managed compensation system.

The most important element in the creation of a Return-to-Work program is commitment. By consistently applying the procedures you've developed to each job-related injury or illness, you will be well on you way to saving money on your workers' compensation insurance costs.

Why Introduce Return-to-Work Programs?

Workplace injuries, illnesses, and accidents are costly to employers, workers, and the compensation partnership. Although preventing injuries is the best way to protect workers and to control workers' compensation costs, employers and workers need a way to manage injuries if they occur. A Return-to-Work program assists in assuring that the worker obtains prompt medical care both during the initial stages of recovery, and during the subsequent return to productive employment. Workers want to maintain employment security by returning to work after an injury as quickly as possible and respond well when employers offer them an opportunity to resume job responsibilities.

A formal Return-to-Work program facilitates the development and implementation of an individualized Return-to-Work plan immediately after the occurrence of the injury/illness.

A Return-to-Work program promotes communication and establishes the roles of each participant. This enables all parties access to a documented process and to help resolve any difficulties.

Return-to-Work programs benefit all partners in the compensation system:

- Injured workers maintain employment security, seniority, and benefits and receive personalized and effective treatment;
- Employers retain experienced employees while reducing accident and workplace costs;
- Health care providers are supported in their decisions and treatment strategies;
- Unions maintain the employment rights of their members; and
- The workers' compensation system can manage rising health care costs and continue to provide high levels of benefits to injured workers and their dependents.

See: Appendix A - Costs of Absence
Appendix B - Itemized Benefits of a Return-to-Work Program by Stakeholder

COSTS OF ABSENCE

To Workforce:

- Dealing with replacement workers
- Increased benefit costs
- Loss of potential income

To Employer:

- Recovery of production
- Quality and hiring of replacement workers
- Lower morale
- Increased training costs
- Overtime
- Non-productive work time (associated with accident)
- Increased premiums
- Other non-recoverable costs

ITEMIZED BENEFITS OF A RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM BY STAKEHOLDER

The Employer May Benefit By:

- Reduced staff turnover and training costs by retaining experienced and knowledgeable workers.
- Ability to participate in and contribute to the rehabilitation process.
- Improved morale and employee relations by offering Return-to-Work plans for both work-related and non-work-related injury or illness.
- Minimized non-recoverable expenses such as employee benefits, the hiring and training of replacement workers, and the cost of inexperienced workers.
- Improved accident experience, which may be important for companies bidding on contracts.
- Completion of tasks that may have been delayed due to other priorities.
- Decreased the number of grievances and arbitrations.

Injured/Ill Worker May Benefit By:

- Maintaining the employment relationship, which provides job security and financial independence.
- Minimizing the loss of physical fitness and muscle tone due to inactivity.
- Maintaining financial credibility. Financial institutions are uncomfortable about renewing mortgages and loans if their client is without a job.
- Maintaining in-house/company pension plans, medical benefits, dental plans, and group life insurance.
- Maintaining vacation/sick day benefits.
- Maintaining social contact and support from co-workers and friends.
- Focusing on their abilities and not their disabilities.
- Maintaining dignity and self worth by remaining productive.
- Maintaining necessary job skills.
- Alleviating feelings of dependency and lack of control.
- Being able to return earlier to a healthy and productive life.
- Reducing the amount of time for recovery.

Co-Workers May Benefit By:

- Improved productivity because skilled and productive workers are kept on the job.
- Minimized accident costs, including workers' compensation costs as well as non-recoverable expenses such as employee benefits, the hiring and training of replacement workers, and the cost of inexperienced workers.
- Improved accident experience, which may be important for companies bidding on contracts.
- Completion of meaningful alternative duties that may not have otherwise been done due to other priorities.

The Union May Benefit By:

- Preservation of jobs, seniority, benefits, and so on for injured/ill workers.
- Promotion of cooperative labor/management relations.
- Increased awareness that the union is there to protect workers' interests and well being.
- Decreased number of grievances and arbitrations.

The Health Care Professional May Benefit By:

- Providing focused and coordinated treatment for the injured/ill worker through the Return-to-Work Program.

- Using the cooperative approach, which allows for more efficient use of health care resources, which are directed toward a specific goal - the return to work of an injured/ill worker.

The Family May Benefit By:

- Continued income.
- Reduced medical expense.
- Reduced impact on family relations.

Support Networks such as Consultants, Community, and Friends May Benefit By:

- Being able to provide more focused assistance and help.

Steps to Creating a Safe Workplace Environment

Before developing a Return-to-Work policy, the employer needs to incorporate safety and health into all work processes. Properly conducted hazard inspections and well documented accident investigations provide employers and employees the tools necessary for potential reduction and prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Safety Inspection

Safety inspections examine your company's physical facilities looking for unsafe conditions, unsafe behaviors, housekeeping responsibility assignment, and the like. The purpose of this inspection is to identify workplace hazards and proactively develop safe practices for behaviors in safe and unsafe conditions *before* an injury occurs. The safety inspection also affords employers and employees the opportunity to work collaboratively to develop training and improve operations. In the spirit of cooperation, it is important to focus on fact-finding, not fault finding.

During a safety inspection, you need to pay particular attention to workplace equipment and processes and employee work practices, as well as workplace facility-wide hazards. Certain considerations for safety inspections would include making sure the individual conducting the inspection is experienced and knowledgeable with the facility and operations of your particular company; knowledgeable of relevant regulations, codes, and company policies; competent of the inspection steps; and capable of collecting, evaluating, and reporting the data.

Part of the design for the development of your safety inspection procedures should include a well-designed approach that is easily duplicated in successive inspections. Because the environment of the workplace is constantly changing, safety inspections should be regularly scheduled in specific increments throughout the year. Not only will this consistency assist with keeping safety first in the minds of employees, it will also demonstrate to staff that safety is a major priority from the highest executive down.

See: Appendix C - General Sample Safety Rules
Appendix D - General Housekeeping Rules
Appendix E - Hazard Inspection Review

GENERAL SAMPLE SAFETY RULES

- All accidents must be reported to your immediate supervisor.
- Any unsafe conditions must be reported to your supervisor.
- Your supervisor is responsible for having the conditions corrected.
- Safety goggles and respirators must be used or worn in designated areas or for designated activities.
- Appropriate work clothing and shoes must be worn.
- No running, horseplay, or scuffling is permitted.
- Do not stand or walk under suspended loads.
- Use of liquor or drugs is not permitted in the workplace and while performing workplace activities.
- Tripping hazards, such as air lines and electrical cords, should be moved to a safe location when not in use.
- Only authorized items, including pictures and notices, are to be placed on any wall or bulletin board.
- Do not store items on windowsills.
- Electrical controls or panels and fire extinguishers are to be kept clear at all times within all areas on, around, in front, and over.
- Keep all personal belongings in lockers or in the employee break area, not in work areas.
- Clean drinking fountains daily.
- Keep all work benches clean and clear of all personal belongings, fixtures, tools, spare parts, as well as odds and ends.
- Keep all machines clean and in proper repair and adjustment.
- Clean caution and hazard signs regularly.
- Clean and service protective face shields regularly.
- Safety glasses, hard-toed, and other types of personal protective equipment must be worn in designated hazard areas.
- Be aware of any chemicals and/or hazardous substances in the area.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING RULES

- Passageways, storerooms, and service rooms must be kept clean and orderly.
- Workroom floors must be maintained in a clean and dry condition.
- Every floor, working place, and passageway must be kept free from nails, wires, holes, or loose boards.
- Store materials so that they will not fall.
- Clearances must be adequate for mechanical handling equipment in aisles, at loading docks, and through doorways.
- All permanent aisles and passageways must be clearly marked.
- Use the right tool for each job correctly.
- Keep tools in good working condition.
- Do not use damaged, worn, or defective tools.
- Do not use tools until you have been properly trained and authorized to do so.
- Do not remove machinery or equipment guards without authorization.
- Do not make repairs to tools or equipment guards without authorization.
- Inspect electrical extension cords and other wiring to be certain they are properly insulated.
- Do not use frayed or damaged cords.
- When using power tools on a scaffold or other locations where space is limited, get good footing, use both hands, keep cords clear of obstructions, and do not over-reach.
- Before changing drills, blades, or bits, or attempting repair or adjustment, make sure items are disconnected from the power source.
- Do not leave running tools unattended.

REMEMBER, PROPER HOUSEKEEPING IS THE

FOUNDATION FOR A SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT!

Hazard Inspection Review

		Completed By:	
		Date of Inspection	
	Acceptable ?	Electrical Hazards	Notes
		Are electrical cords in good condition w/ ground pins?	
		Are Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters installed near potentially wet locations?	
		Are all panel circuit breakers labeled as to their function?	
		Are all electrical circuits > 50 volts properly insulated or guarded?	
		Is three foot clearance maintained in front of panels?	
		Are lockout tagout procedures written and followed for each piece of equipment in the workplace?	
		Are qualified and authorized employees properly trained in electrical hazards and protective equipment?	
		Are electrical panels and circuits protected from wet conditions, unless specifically designed to be exposed?	
		Are extension cords used for temporary applications only?	
	Acceptable ?	Fire & Life Safety	Notes
		Are combustibles (paper, trash, wood) minimized in and around the structure?	
		Are fire extinguishers available, inspected monthly, and unblocked?	
		Are employees trained annually in fire extinguisher use, if they are expected to use them?	
		Are emergency exits clearly marked by illuminated signs?	
		Is there an internal alarm system to notify occupants of an emergency condition?	
		Are evacuation routes posted?	
		Exit doors are not blocked or locked and they have panic hardware and are self-closing.	
		Is an emergency plan in place and have evacuation drills been conducted every 6 months?	
		Are ignition sources controlled and separated from combustibles? (Smoking, grinding, burning)	

		Is a hot work permit system in place?	
		Are suppression and detection systems tested regularly by an authorized inspector?	
		Are heating devices serviced regularly?	
		Are there provisions for emergency lighting?	
		Are walkways marked and clear?	
	Acceptable?	Flammable and Combustible Liquids	Notes
		Is a class B fire extinguisher within 50' of the liquid?	
		Is the liquid stored in a metal safety can with a self-closing lid and flash-arresting screen?	
		Are containers bonded when dispensing flammable liquids?	
		Are flammable and combustible liquids stored in approved safety cabinets or designed storage rooms when not in use?	
		Are quantities of flammables and combustibles "in use" minimized to 25 gallons or 1 shift's use?	
		Where vapors may be present, are appropriate electrical installations provided (Class I, Div 1, 2)?	
	Acceptable?	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Notes
		Have requirements for PPE been reviewed for each task within the facility? (This must be documented for employers covered by OSHA)	
		Are employees complying with PPE requirements?	
		Do all PPE items meet the appropriate ANSI standard? (They will be labeled or stamped).	
		Are employees trained on use of the PPE including fitting, sizing, inspection, and cleaning? (Required by OSHA).	
	Acceptable?	Respirators	Notes
		Are all respirator users (non-voluntary use) fit-tested annually?	
		Are all respirator users (non-voluntary use) trained annually?	
		If respirators are used, is a written program available and is a qualified program administrator in charge?	
		Are non-voluntary users of negative pressure masks medically cleared to use a respirator?	
		Have industrial hygiene tests been done in the areas where respirators are required, to document that the appropriate respirator has been selected?	
		Have change-out schedules for cartridge respirators been established and are employees following them?	
		Are emergency respirators inspected monthly?	
		Are users of tight-fitting respirators clean shaven?	

	Acceptable ?	Noise	Notes
		Have employees been monitored for noise exposure in areas where noise is present?	
		Are engineering controls used to reduce noise in areas with noise exposures?	
		Are employees using hearing protection devices in areas where the noise levels reach 85 dab TWA?	
		If regulated by OSHA, is the noise standard (1910.95) posted in the work areas?	
		Are employees trained annually in noise exposure issues (if 85 dBA or above)?	
		Are employees given audiometeric testing annually to detect changes in hearing (if 85 dBA or above)?	
		Is appropriate follow-up and counseling of the employee occurring if a threshold shift is recorded?	
	Acceptable ?	Hazardous Chemicals	Notes
		Are all containers labeled as to their contents and hazards?	
		Are employees trained on the hazards of the chemicals they are working with? (Required annually if regulated by the State R-2-K)?	
		Are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) available in the workplace?	
		Is a written program on chemicals available? (OSHA and State requirement)	
		Are non-compatible chemicals separated?	
		Are any carcinogens or long-term chemical hazards present? Have substitutes been sought?	
		Are spill controls in place?	
		Are emergency eye washes and showers available and tested weekly where corrosives may be present? (e.g. battery acid)	
	Acceptable ?	Tools and Equipment	Notes
		Are all rotating and moving parts covered by a guard or device that is in place and operable?	
		Is equipment secured to the floor (by weight or positive connection)?	
		Are tools and equipment in good repair?	
		Are warning labels and operational controls labels in place and legible?	
		Are air-lines, hoses, wires placed so as to avoid tripping?	
		Are tools being used in accordance with their intended purpose?	

	Acceptable ?	Powered Equipment	Notes
		Are all powered industrial truck operators trained?	
		Are operators using seatbelts?	
		Are back-up alarms operable?	
		Is operating speed controlled?	
		Are forklifts' forks kept low to the ground while traveling?	
		Do operators slow and sound horn at blind intersections and corners?	
		Are equipment inspections being done?	
		Is equipment used within its capacity?	
		Are persons tied-off in articulating, elevating lifts?	
	Acceptable ?	Fall Hazards	Notes
		Are railing systems (toeboard, mid-rail, top-rail) provided where fall hazards exist? (4' or higher requires protection per OSHA).	
		Are railings 42" high (+/- 3")?	
		Are stairways provided with railings (4 or more risers)?	
		Are scaffold systems used with rails and fully planked?	
		Are trained persons using scaffolds?	
		Are floor openings 1" or greater covered or otherwise protected?	
		Are covered floor openings in good repair, not causing tripping hazard, secured and adequate for twice the load?	
		Are ladder safety devices (preferred) or cages provided for fixed ladders exceeding 20 feet?	
		Are ladders being used properly (Three points of contact at all times, not on top step, fully open)?	
		Are floor surfacings rated for 0.5 coefficient of friction / slip index?	
		Are absorbent walk-off mats available and in good condition at doors?	
		Are roof drains directed away from walkways?	
		Are provisions for ice removal in place and effective?	
		Are floors cleaned where oils and grease can build-up?	
	Acceptable ?	Ergonomics Hazards	Notes

		Are employees performing repetitive tasks?	
		Are employees performing high-force tasks? (lifting > 50 lbs., pushing, pulling)	
		Are employees in awkward positions or situations?	
		Are employees exposed to cool environments while performing their work?	
		Have any ergonomics injuries been reported (back strains, repetitive motion disorders, etc.)?	
		Are lift assist devices available, used?	
		If injuries and hazards are present, are controls in place to reduce hazards and is an ergonomics task force working on the exposures?	
	Acceptable ?	Compressed Gases / Compressed Air	Notes
		Are compressed air connections properly made? (retaining pins in place)	
		Are tools operating at recommended air pressures?	
		Are pressure tanks inspected by certified inspector and is State certificate posted?	
		Are compressed gas cylinders secured in an upright position with the valve protection cap in place and marked as to contents?	
		Are oxygen cylinders (fulls and empties) separated by 20' from gas cylinders, oils, fuels, or other hydrocarbons? (alternative fire wall separation is permitted)	
		Are gas/air lines in good condition and labeled?	
		Are pressure relief valves tested on a frequent basis?	
		Compressed air is not used for blowing off clothing?	
		Compressed air pressure is reduced to 30 psi closed tip pressure when used for cleaning?	
	Acceptable ?	Medical	Notes
		Are provisions in place for treatment of an employee's medical problem within 4 minutes?	
		Are CPR and First Certifications up to date?	
		Are Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) available in the workplace?	
		Are first aid kits properly stocked and available?	
		Are emergency procedures and phone numbers posted in the workplace?	
		Are first aid trained personnel trained annually in blood borne disease hazards?	

		Is a bloodborne disease written program in place to cover workplace first aid personnel?	
	Acceptable ?	Heavy Lifting Equipment	Notes
		Are documented inspections available?	
		Are monthly inspections of running ropes on cranes being done and documented?	
		Is all lifting equipment marked with its capacity?	
		Are proper rigging techniques used when hoisting loads?	
		Do employees know the weights of the objects they are lifting?	
		Are all slings and rigging rated and marked with a capacity tag?	
	Acceptable ?	Security Issues	Notes
		Is entry into the facility secure? Do guests and visitors have a sign-in location?	
		Do employees confront unfamiliar persons?	
		Does the company have a weapons and threat policy in place?	
		Are confidential areas secured from access?	
		Are background checks performed on employees and security personnel?	
		Are inventory and accounting procedures in place to identify loss?	
		Are alarm systems operable and in place where appropriate?	
		Are visibility mirrors used in hidden locations?	
		Are security cameras used where appropriate?	
		Has local law enforcement participated in a security assessment?	
		Is on-going training provided to employees on workplace security?	
		Are computer resources password protected and procedures in place to control access?	
		Are the facility and parking lot well lit?	
	Acceptable ?	Environmental Hazards	Notes
		Have surfaces painted prior to 1970 been tested for lead content?	
		Where lead is present, is a program in place to address the handling of lead coated surfaces?	
		Have lower areas been tested for radon gas? (> 4 pci recommends remediation)	

		Is there any asbestos containing material (ACM) or presumed ACM? Has a survey been performed to assess potential for ACM?	
		Are all facility discharges permitted? (air, water, waste)?	
		Have chemicals been surveyed for potential human carcinogenity? If these or OSHA regulated chemicals are used (Lead, Methylene Chloride, Cadmium, Asbestos, and others), are written programs, testing and monitoring systems in place?	
	Acceptable ?	Management Elements	Notes
		Is there a certified safety committee in the workplace?	
		Is safety performance tracked?	
		Are supervisors held accountable for safety performance within their department?	
		Are detailed accident investigations conducted or accidents and near-misses documented?	
		Are employees provided with on-going safety training and awareness?	
		Are new processes and facilities designed with a safety review process?	
		Is there a chemical evaluation program that controls chemical purchasing?	
		Does upper management wear PPE and comply with safety rules?	
		Does management enforce, encourage, and demand a safe workplace?	
		Is safety performance communicated to the employees?	
	Acceptable ?	Miscellaneous	Notes
		Is there adequate lighting on all shifts in all work areas?	
		Has the facility conducted a confined space survey, to determine if confined spaces are present? If confined spaces exist, are detailed policy and procedures available and followed for entry?	
		Are HVAC systems serviced regularly? Are areas of mold growth properly assessed by an industrial hygienist and remediated as appropriate?	
		This form is not intended to identify all hazardous conditions that may occur within a workplace. It is only a small sample of considerations that should be taken into account when assessing for workplace hazards. A competent inspection can be provided by insurance loss control representatives, safety and health professionals with requisite experience and education, or a qualified consultant.	

Accident Investigation

Even the best safety inspection cannot guarantee your workplace to be 100% accident free. So, when accidents do occur, it is essential that an accident investigation procedure be in place and staff properly trained to prevent the same incident from reoccurring.

Accident (incident) Investigation - An organized process using *written procedures* that are applied every time an accident occurs regardless of its severity.

The purpose of the accident investigation is to determine the direct cause of the incident and to prevent similar occurrences by documenting facts, providing cost data, and reinforcing the joint labor-management commitment to safety in the workplace. Identifying the causal or contributing factors in a workplace accident provides the opportunity for these facts to be evaluated in order that corrective actions may be taken.

See: Appendix F - Questions to Ask

General steps to follow in an Accident Investigation:

- Be prepared
- Survey the scene
- Emergency response for the injured
- Secure the area
- Gather the evidence - photos, interviews
- Analyze the information - write a report
- Recommend changes - implement corrective action
- Follow-up

See: Appendix G - Accident Investigation Tips
Appendix H - Accident Investigation Procedure
Appendix I - Internal Accident Investigation Form
Appendix J - Educational Safety Inspection/Accident Investigation PowerPoint Presentation

QUESTIONS TO ASK

There are certain key questions that will help an investigator to complete a thorough investigation. The following will work in many instances.

1. Who was involved in the accident?
2. Were there any witnesses?
3. Where and when did the accident occur (specific location and time)?
4. Was there a fatality?
5. What injuries were sustained and by whom?
6. What was the victim doing at the time of the accident?
7. Was the victim authorized and qualified to do this operation?
8. Were approved procedures being followed?
9. Was the victim familiar with the job and procedures?
10. Is the job or process new to the area?
11. Were proper tools or equipment being used?
12. Was the proper supervision being provided?
13. Had the victim received hazard potential training prior to the accident?
14. What was the location of the accident?
15. What was the physical condition of the area when the accident occurred?
16. If there were witnesses, what were they doing at the time of the accident?
17. What immediate or temporary action could have prevented the accident or minimized its effect?
18. What long-term or permanent action could have prevented the accident or minimized its effect?
19. Had corrective action been recommended in the past but not adopted?
20. What equipment or property was damaged?
21. Did the accident involve a motor vehicle?
22. Did the employee exhibit any behavioral or physical signs or symptoms of drug or alcohol impairment?

Other questions may be needed, depending on the accident.

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TIPS

- Accident investigation should be done promptly. This will help in collecting the most accurate information before conditions change.
- Ask questions first that focus on “what” happened. By concentrating on the events that occurred which relate “details” such as time, location, and objects involved in the early questioning, there is a better chance of getting factual data.
- Concentrate fact gathering on what caused the accident to occur and not on the result (injury or illness) of the accident. The same accident could have results that may range from near miss to fatality.
- Try to talk first with witnesses on an individual basis so their opinions will not be swayed by others.
- Use open-ended questions when interviewing witnesses to avoid influencing their opinion. For example, it would be better to ask a witness to “tell me what you saw,” rather than questions such as “do you think the injured person committed an unsafe act before the accident occurred?”
- Listen! It is difficult to avoid interrupting someone when you have a question, but let people explain what <u>they</u> saw or know in <u>their</u> own words, as completely as possible, before trying to ask more questions or clarify information.
- Try to gather your information with people at the actual accident scene. This will enable a clearer picture of the events that can be obtained while trying to recall what happened from an office interview.
- Get recommendations from people who do the same job. Ask what kinds of corrective measures might prevent a similar accident.
- Look at facts obtained to determine action that will eliminate or reduce the burden of the employee trying to “remember proper actions” or “being careful.” Whenever possible, take corrective actions that design out the hazard or physically guard the employee from the hazard if it can’t be removed.
- An accident report is most useful for one thing -- to provide information that can be used to keep a similar situation from occurring. Make sure your information is objective, factual, and followed through with appropriate corrective measures.

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

When an accident occurs, the investigator must act quickly. No two situations are alike, but normally the following is correct.

A. Attend to the injured employee.
B. Assess accident scene to determine if it is safe to enter.
C. Secure the accident scene.
D. Notify your immediate supervisor.

The amount of action will depend on the severity of the accident. Follow established company procedure. Begin your investigation as soon as possible.

Be objective -- Don't let emotions or your own opinions cloud your investigation. Proceed as follows:

A. Interview everyone who saw or was involved in the accident, including the victim (may have to be done at a later date). Use this procedure:

    1. Put them at ease -- explain that you are finding facts -- not fault.

    2. Interview "on the spot" -- if possible.

    3. Interview each person separately -- group interviews create confusion.

    4. Encourage the person to tell "what they saw."

    5. Ask open-ended questions: "Why? What? Where? When? Who? How?"

    6. Repeat the story back for confirmation.

    7. End on a positive note.

    8. Keep the pipeline open. Some people will remember important facts later.

B. Observe the accident scene -- Look for obvious defects in equipment, tools, the object causing the injury. In some cases photos or drawings may help.

C. Record critical information promptly -- don't delay. Use a prepared form to help remember key questions.

D. Gather facts, not opinions. Use them to identify activities that contributed to the accident.

E. Make conclusions based on facts and knowledge, not suppositions.

F. Make recommendations to correct physical hazards, revise job procedures, and identify employee-training needs.

INTERNAL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORM

This form is an internal accident investigation document meant to facilitate, change, and improve the work environment for your employees. The investigation process is not fault finding and should not be used as an impetus for disciplinary action.

These steps will help you investigate an accident and fill out the form:

1. Discuss the accident with the employee involved and with any witnesses. Be sure to question the why ~ what ~ where ~ when ~ who ~ how aspects of the accident.

2. Inspect the equipment or materials involved for conditions that could be made safer.

3. Study the job set-up and process of doing work. Could it be improved?

4. Is the employee involved suited for the job he/she is doing? Did he/she receive adequate training? Are there any other contributing factors/problems? (i.e. use of drugs or alcohol, or emotional problems)

5. Recommendations to correct the problem must be practical. Be sure your recommendations will not create other situations, which could result in injury to employees.

6. Use the form to organize information gathered from your observations and interviews.

7. Complete your investigation report no later than the next working day after the accident.

Accidents Don't Have to Happen!

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORM

Employee Involved _____ **Dept**. _____

Employee # _____ **Employment Status** P/T F/T **Temporary Shift** ____

Date of Accident ___/___/___ **Time** _____ am or pm **Location** _____

Job _____ **Activity at Time of Accident** _____

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT: What happened at the time of the accident?

_____
_____
_____

Witnesses: _____

WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT?

Determine the cause by analyzing all the contributing factors if either a person, machine, or other physical condition was involved. Find out **HOW** and **WHY**.

Use the form to organize information gathered from your observations and interviews.

A. Describe any ***UNSAFE*** acts:

_____
_____
_____

B. Describe any ***UNSAFE*** conditions:

_____
_____
_____

C. Describe the ***FUNDAMENTAL ACCIDENT CAUSE***:

_____
_____
_____

WHAT CORRECTIVE ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN?

What have you done or what do you recommend to change or modify to prevent recurrence of a similar accident?

_____
_____
_____

Has it been done? Yes No If Not, Why? (Explain)

_____
_____
_____


*Appendix J
First Things First
Safety Inspection
And
Accident Investigation

Objectives of Hazard Identification

- List basic reasons for conducting safety inspections
- Describe what to inspect
- Identify guidelines & considerations for conducting an inspection
- Define Job Safety Analysis
- List the steps in a Job Safety Analysis

Safety Inspections? Inspection vs. Audit

Are you AUDITING or INSPECTING?

- Safety Inspections examines physical facilities - looking for unsafe conditions, safe behavior, housekeeping responsibilities….
- Safety Audits examines procedures & policies

Safety Inspections WHAT?

- Equipment and Processes
- Employee Work Practices
- Workplace Facility-Wide Hazards

Safety Inspections
WHY?

- Identify:
  - hazards
  - safe practices,
  - behavior & conditions that are safe and unsafe
- Get employees involved & trained
- Improve operations

Focus on **Fact Finding** NOT Fault Finding

Considerations for Safety Inspections

- **Individual conducting the inspection:**
- Experienced with the facility & operation
- Knowledgeable of relevant regulations, codes, & company policies
- Competent of the inspection steps
- Capable of collecting, evaluating, & reporting the data

Safety Inspections
HOW?

Guidelines for Conducting Safety Inspections

- Decide what to inspect
  - Gather needed supplies
- Remember your “people skills”
- Record observations
- Handle emergencies

Job Safety Analysis

- Definition:

  Process used to:

  - Review Task Methods
  - Identify Hazards
  - Develop & Specify Control Measures

Job Safety Analysis
WHY?

- Improve job methods
- Reduce costs
- Improve worker health & safety
- Leads to recommended action or procedure to perform the job safety

Job Safety Analysis
HOW?

Four Basic Steps:

1. Sequencing of Basic Job Steps
2. Identifying Potential Hazards
3. Prioritizing the Hazards
4. Recommending Action(s) or Procedure(s)

Learning Activity

Focus on Hazards

Complete a

Job Safety Analysis

Accident (Incident) Investigation Objectives:

After training, the participants will be able to:

- List the **benefits** of conducting the investigation
- Explain the **purpose** of investigating ALL incidents and near-misses

Accident (Incident) Investigation Objectives:

- List the **steps** in conducting an incident investigation
- List the **tools** needed to properly conduct an investigation
- Explain the **responsibility** of the investigator

Accident (Incident) Investigation Objectives:

- Describe the proper interview techniques to gather information from the witness(es)

Accident (Incident) Investigation Definition:

- Organized process using written procedures that are **applied every time an incident occurs** regardless of its severity.

Who - What - When- Where - How & Why

Accident (Incident) Investigation Purpose:

- Determine Direct Causes (root cause)
- Prevent Similar Occurrences
- Document Facts
- Provide Cost Data
- Reinforce Commitment to Safety

Accident (Incident) Investigation Procedure:

!!Fact finding NOT fault finding!!

- ✓Identify causal factors (contributing)
- ✓Evaluate causal factors & other hazards
- ✓Select Corrective Actions

Accident Investigation

- ✓Tools
- ✓Investigator responsibilities?

Accident (Incident)Investigation

Steps to follow:

1. Be Prepared
2. Survey the scene
3. Emergency response for the injured
4. Secure the area
5. Gather the evidence – photos,interview
6. Analyze the information- write report

Accident (Incident)Investigation

7. Recommend changes
   - implement corrective action
8. Follow up

And **remember:**

!!Fact Finding NOT Fault Finding!!