

Creating Safe Job Procedures

A Safe Job Procedure is a written, specific, step-by-step description of how to complete a job safely and efficiently from start to finish.

Introduction

Workers don't know what can hurt them when carrying out their tasks at work. In the realm of Job Procedures, one way to increase knowledge of hazards is to conduct Job Hazard Analyses (JHA) on individual jobs or tasks.

A JHA integrates accepted safety and health principles into a specific operation. Each job step is examined to identify hazards and determine the safest way to complete the job. The outcome is called a Safe Job Procedure.

JHAs should always be team efforts to ensure accuracy and completeness. An effective JHA team should include:

- The supervisor.
- The worker must be familiar with the job and its hazards.
- Other workers who perform the job.
- Experts such as maintenance personnel, occupational hygienists, or engineers.

By involving knowledgeable individuals, the JHA will be comprehensive and effective.

Developing Safe Job Procedures

The terms 'job' and 'task' are often used interchangeably to describe a specific work assignment. Examples include:

- **Appropriate:** Operating a grinder, using a pressurized water extinguisher.
- **Too broad:** Overhauling an engine.
- **Too narrow:** Positioning a car jack.

Safe Job Procedures typically include:

- Regulatory requirements
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements
- Training requirements
- Responsibilities of involved personnel
- A step-by-step sequence to complete the job safely

- Required permits
- Emergency procedures

Identifying / Selecting the Job to be Analyzed

While ideally, all jobs should undergo a JHA, priority should be given to:

- Jobs with high accident frequency or serious hazards (critical tasks).
- Jobs with a history of fatalities, disabling injuries, or environmental harm.
- Jobs involving multiple workers performing simultaneous tasks.
- Newly established jobs lacking historical safety data.
- Jobs affected by procedural, equipment, material, or regulatory changes.
- Infrequent or non-routine jobs posing greater risks.

By prioritizing critical jobs, organizations can ensure that the most hazardous tasks are analyzed first.

Breaking the Job Down

Once a job is selected, it should be broken down into steps. Each step should:

- Advance the work process.
- Be recorded sequentially, using action verbs.
- Avoid unnecessary detail while ensuring completeness.

A JHA form should be completed systematically:

1. **List all job steps** before moving to the next section.
2. **Identify hazards** for each step before considering solutions.
3. **Determine preventive measures** to mitigate hazards.

Observing the Job

The observer should:

- Watch an experienced worker performing the job under normal conditions.
- Clarify that the purpose is hazard identification, not performance evaluation.
- Ensure all job steps are captured accurately and sequentially.

After completing the breakdown, the analysis should be reviewed with experienced workers and safety experts to confirm accuracy and completeness.

Identifying Potential Hazards

Each job step should be analyzed for potential hazards, including:

- **Body entrapment risks**
- **Tool, machine, or equipment hazards**
- **Falling object risks**
- **Slip, trip, and fall hazards**
- **Strains from lifting, pushing, or pulling**
- **Exposure to extreme temperatures, noise, or vibration**
- **Lighting and environmental conditions**
- **Hazards from chemicals, radiation, or airborne contaminants**

By systematically assessing each step, organizations can ensure potential hazards are effectively addressed.

Determining Preventative Measures

The final stage of a JHA is identifying controls to mitigate hazards. These controls can include:

- **Engineering controls (modifying equipment or processes, safeguarding)**
- **Administrative controls (training, signage, procedures)**
- **PPE requirements**

Each recommended measure should be practical, effective, and feasible for implementation.

Conclusion

By conducting thorough Job Hazard Analyses, organizations can create Safe Job Procedures that minimize risk, improve efficiency, and ensure compliance with safety regulations. Investing in this process protects workers and fosters a culture of safety in the workplace.