

# How to Run an Effective Safety Committee

You finally have your safety committee established—now it is time to make sure your committee is effective! Utilizing a safety committee can increase safety awareness and encourage employee involvement. The following information provides tips to ensure your safety committee is beneficial and effective.

## Goal Setting and Expectations

Review your safety committee charter to ensure it clearly states the purpose of the committee and member responsibilities. Consider establishing committee-specific goals for the year to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the committee. Make sure any committee-specific goals you create align with your organization's safety and health (S&H) goals. Refer to the SMCX One Pager, "[S&H Goals and Objectives](#)," for additional information.

### AGENDA ITEMS

#### Old Business

- Minutes from last meeting
- Status of assigned tasking
- Progress of established goals and objectives
- Target date revisions, if needed

#### Accidents

- Number and types of incidents reported since last meeting
- Significant cases, including corrective actions and suggestions
- Accident trends
- Effectiveness of implemented accident prevention efforts

#### Inspections

- Completion of safety inspections performed
- Significant findings
- Corrective actions
- Responsible person(s) and timeline

#### New Business

- Safety suggestions and improvements
- New safety procedures, equipment, and other items of interest
- New safety goals or objectives
- Upcoming S&H events and committee involvement

## Meeting Schedules

Develop and follow a meeting schedule to identify the frequency and location of committee meetings.

Communicate this information to management so they can make sure committee members are available and can get to the meetings on time. They can adjust assigned tasking if needed.

Schedule committee meetings during paid working hours. Allocate the appropriate amount of time for employees to attend meetings and carry out assigned action items. A set schedule every month or quarter increases committee member attendance.

## Meeting Agendas

Create a safety committee agenda before each meeting to identify the topics of discussion. It is a good idea to circulate the agenda to all committee members at least 48 hours before each meeting. Allow committee members to submit additional discussion items before each meeting. The format of the agenda and agenda items vary per organization. Make sure the items for discussion are relevant and add value. Having a solid agenda completed and distributed prior to committee meetings helps to ensure a successful meeting.



**Employees should work with managers to identify alternates if they cannot attend a committee meeting.**

**The alternate employee should be from the same work area and level as the committee member within the organization.**

### **Committee Meetings**

Have copies of the agenda readily available for committee members (or the agenda projected on a screen), and use a sign-in sheet to capture committee member attendance.

Call the meeting to order. Introduce any guests, speakers, or agenda changes. Stick to the agenda to keep on track and finish in a timely manner. Discuss progress made on assigned action items from the previous meeting.

The Chairperson must show strong leadership by keeping the meeting on track and moving forward. Prohibit the discussion

of non-safety related issues – this takes time away from agenda items and the overall meeting time. Stop and table any non-safety-related discussions for a later time. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to speak during the meeting.

Refrain from spending too much time scrutinizing every detail during accident reviews. Only discuss the information needed, including trends, to identify possible solutions and initiatives to improve your safety management system. If committee members have a new agenda item to discuss (and did not mention it before the meeting), consider tabling it until the next committee meeting.

Avoid excessive discussions that do not include concrete solutions to solve a problem or issue at hand. Be decisive and task committee members with action items and timelines. This process ensures your safety committee is meeting its purpose in improving your safety management system.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Use your notes to put together the meeting minutes. Document the committee members who did attend, and those who did not attend. Include a summary of assigned tasking, responsible person(s), and established timelines.

Distribute the minutes to all committee members and managers within one (1) week of the meeting, as good practice. Including managers in this distribution allows them to be proactive in addressing S&H concerns – even if they are not on the committee! Consider publishing the finalized and approved meeting minutes in newsletters or on your organization’s website to keep non-committee members informed of the committee progress and involvement.



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### **Action Items, Follow-Up, and Improvement**

Following through with action items and evaluating improvements is critical to your committee’s success. Ask responsible person(s) for periodic progress updates on committee assignments to see if they are on target for meeting established timelines. Follow-up on implemented actions to make sure they are effective and working well.

Use trend information, employee feedback, and input to identify ways to improve your safety management system!

For additional information on the SMCX’s services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smscx.org/>