

Hiring for safety:

Performance reviews

Safety responsibilities

While every business is different, it's important to define safety responsibilities at all levels. Here's a sample list:

Managers

- Provide a safe and healthful workplace.
- Establish a safety policy.
- Clearly define safety expectations.
- Set a good safety example.
- Participate in safety meetings.

Supervisors

- Carry out safety program policies.
- Provide safety training.
- Conduct accident analyses.
- Observe employee safety practices and correct unsafe behavior.
- Set a good safety example.
- Participate in safety meetings.

Employees

- Work safely and follow all safety work rules.
- Report any unsafe conditions or unsafe work practices.
- Immediately report any injury.
- Set a good safety example.
- Participate in safety meetings or add input for safety meetings.

A great way to improve safety at any organization is to include it in performance standards. When supervisors are assigned and held accountable for specific safety responsibilities, safety becomes part of everyday operations. Over time, safe behavior becomes a habit, which results in a safer work environment and reduced losses.

This handout can help you get started. You should also consult with legal counsel or a human resource professional as you design performance standards.

Give regular feedback

Coaching to reinforce safe work practices shows that safety is as important as every other aspect of the job. By the time their annual review rolls around, employees should already know how they're doing because you're talking with them every day. These daily interactions also should improve performance and communication.

Set performance standards

Use the job description to write performance standards that align with important job duties. Ensure that all employees are subject to the same standards, and that standards are reasonable and can be measured. Many employers use a rating scale to describe performance; make sure all employees know and understand these ratings as well as the performance standards. Avoid vagueness and subjectivity in ratings criteria and ensure all standards are job-related. Include a copy of the standards in the employee manual and review them if anything changes.

Prepare for reviews

- To effectively evaluate employee performance, supervisors should:
- Review performance expectations with all employees when hired.
- Set a schedule for regular employee check-ins to discuss performance.
- Set job-related goals with employees in writing.
- Consistently observe employees doing the work.
- Solicit feedback from those who work with the employee.
- Have employees fill out a self-evaluation.
- Train managers and supervisors on performance evaluation criteria.
- Conduct interpersonal training with managers and supervisors so they can deliver feedback effectively.
- Include performance evaluation policies and procedures in the employee handbook.

Learn what to include

- Ensure these items are discussed at every performance evaluation:
- Progress made on the employee's goals
- Safety responsibilities, safety performance results, and safety projects and improvements
- Work examples that demonstrate greatest strengths and identify areas of opportunity
- Suggestions for what an employee can do to improve their performance
- What an employee should have completed by the next meeting
- Overall employee performance