

Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 23 – Monday, June 1- Friday, June 5, 2026

Taking Ownership in Safety

Introduction- Taking Ownership in Safety

Introduction for Leaders (For Your Understanding Before Monday's Toolbox Talk)

Purpose for Supervisors:

This week, we will discuss what it means to own safety, not just follow the rules because we must, but genuinely take responsibility for keeping ourselves and the people around us safe. This is about shifting the mindset from “that’s not my job” to “if I can help prevent someone from getting hurt, I will.”

How Leaders Should Frame This Week's Toolbox Talks:

- These talks are designed to reinforce that safety ownership is not limited to management or safety professionals. Every team member is a leader in safety and plays a role in identifying hazards, correcting unsafe behaviors, reporting concerns, and protecting one another from injury.
- Encourage team members to think beyond their individual tasks and recognize how their actions impact the entire team. Create open discussions where employees feel comfortable sharing examples, asking questions, and discussing opportunities for improvement.
- Speaking up, correcting unsafe conditions, slowing down, reporting concerns, and helping coworkers work safely are signs of professionalism and leadership.

Monday - What Safety Ownership Really Means

Discussion:

Let's start the week by talking about something simple but powerful: what it really means to take ownership of safety. You have heard that phrase before, but let's break it down and make it real for what we do every day here.

Ownership doesn't mean you're responsible for fixing every problem on your own. It means you don't look the other way. It means when you see something that isn't right, you do something about it — fix it if you can, report it if you can't. It means you follow procedures even when no one is watching. And it means you look out for your teammates the same way you'd want them to look out for you.

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4 ways to show ownership on the job:

Own Your Space

- You take responsibility for your immediate work area. If you see a hazard, you don't wait for someone else; you act on it or report it right away.

Look Out for Each Other

- You step in when you see a coworker in an unsafe situation. You don't assume someone else will handle it. Looking out for each other is one of the most powerful things we can do on this team.

Follow Through

- If you say you're going to fix something or report something, you do it. Ownership means your word is your commitment, not just to management, but to your teammates.

Do the Right Thing When No One Is Watching

- You follow the procedure whether your supervisor is present or not. Real ownership means the standard doesn't change based on who is watching.

Here's the thing about ownership: it doesn't require a title. It doesn't matter if you've been here twenty years or twenty days. Every single one of us could own our safety and the safety of the people around us. The question is whether we choose to.

A real-world example:

Rosa had just finished her shift when she noticed a spill near the break room entrance. She was tired and ready to clock out, but she stopped, grabbed some absorbent towels from the supply closet, cleaned up the spill, and put out a wet floor sign while it dried. She didn't know who caused the spill, and it didn't matter. She owned the moment because she understood that the person coming in behind her could have slipped. That's ownership in action.

Team member engagement:

"Can anyone think of a time when you saw someone on this team take real ownership of a safety situation? What did that look like?"

Challenge for the day:

Ownership Challenge:

- "Today, identify one unsafe condition or behavior and take action to correct it and report it."

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Tuesday – Doing the Right Thing Even When Nobody Is Watching

Discussion:

One of the biggest parts of ownership is having the confidence to say something when something isn't right. And I know that's easier said than done. A lot of us have been in situations where we weren't sure if we should speak up, or we worried about how it would come across. So let's talk about that honestly today.

Speaking up isn't about making someone look bad or being a problem. It's about caring enough to say something before someone gets hurt. Think about it this way: if you noticed your friend's car had a flat tire before they got on the highway, you'd tell them, right? Same idea here.

Here are a few ways to make speaking up feel more natural:

- Keep it simple and specific. "Hey, I noticed the lock on that guard is broken, we should get that looked at before we start up" is clear and actionable.
- Frame it around safety, not blame. "I want to make sure we all go home the same way we came in" goes a long way.
- If it feels awkward to say something in the moment, you can always report it through the safety system. The point is that it gets reported.

A real-world example:

During a pre-task walkthrough, Derek noticed that a new team member was about to use a piece of equipment without wearing the required face shield. Derek could have stayed quiet; it wasn't his crew. But he walked over, handed the new employee a face shield from the nearby cabinet, and said, "Hey, this machine throws debris, you'll want that." No drama, no embarrassment. Just one coworker looking out for another. The new employee thanked him. That's what ownership sounds like.

Team member engagement:

"Has there ever been a time you wanted to say something about a safety concern but held back? What got in the way, and what would have made it easier?"

Challenge for the day:

Speak Up Challenge:

- "Today, if you see something that doesn't look right, say something to someone, whether it's a coworker, a supervisor, or through the reporting system. Don't let it pass you by."

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Wednesday – Taking Ownership as a Team

Discussion:

Individual ownership is powerful, but when a whole team owns safety together, something special happens. The culture shifts. People stop waiting for someone else to fix things. Near-misses get reported instead of ignored. And everyone goes home safe, not because the rules say so, but because the people around them genuinely care.

So, what does team ownership look like? It looks like holding each other to a high standard — not in a bossy way, but in the way a good teammate does. It looks like calling out unsafe shortcuts not to get someone in trouble, but because we want everyone to make it home. It looks like celebrating when someone does speak up or does the right thing, instead of treating safety as a burden.

What team ownership does NOT look like:

- Walking past a hazard because it's not in your area.
- Staying quiet when you see a teammate taking an unsafe shortcut because you don't want the awkwardness.
- Treating safety reports as something that gets people in trouble instead of something that protects them.

A real-world example:

Two teammates, Jaylen and Joe, were prepping for a task when they realized the checklist they'd been given was out of date and missing a step for verifying energy isolation. Instead of just doing the job and figuring it was probably fine, they stopped, called over their supervisor, and asked for the updated procedure. It slowed things down for about ten minutes. But when the supervisor pulled the current version, sure enough — there was an additional step that would have been missed. Their willingness to slow down and speak up probably prevented a serious incident. They owned it, together.

Team member engagement:

“What's one thing this team does well when it comes to owning safety together? And what's one thing we could do better?”

Challenge for the day:

Team Ownership Challenge:

- “Today, find one opportunity to support a teammate's safety, whether that's lending a hand, sharing a heads-up about a hazard, or simply acknowledging someone who did the right thing.”

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Thursday – When Ownership Gets Hard

Discussion:

Let's be honest about something today. Taking ownership of safety isn't always easy. There are days when production pressure is real. There are moments when slowing down feels like it might cause problems. And there are times when speaking up about a hazard might feel uncomfortable or like it won't make a difference anyway.

Those are exactly the moments when ownership matters most. It's easy to own safety when things are going smoothly. The real test is what we do when the pressure is on. That's when the difference between a close call and a real incident is often just one decision, the decision to slow down, to speak up, or to follow the procedure even when it feels inconvenient.

Some honest truths about ownership under pressure:

- Production pressure is real, but no schedule is worth a serious injury. If something isn't safe, it's never the wrong call to stop and address it.
- Making a mistake and owning it is far better than covering it up or hoping it doesn't become a problem. Near-miss reports are one of the most valuable tools we have.
- You don't need all the answers to take ownership. Sometimes owning it just means saying, "I'm not sure this is right, let's check before we go further."

A real-world example:

During a busy Friday afternoon, Carmen noticed a new team member bypassing a machine guard to speed up a repetitive task. She knew the pressure they were under; they were behind and trying to catch up. But she also knew that the guard was there for a reason. She decided to ignore it and continue working. Her team member was injured later in the day. She had the chance to speak up and try to help protect her team member, but instead, she did not. She did not show her ownership of safety even though it was within her ability to do so.

Team member engagement:

"Have you ever been in a situation where taking ownership of safety felt hard because of time or production pressure? How did you handle it, or how do you wish you had?"

Challenge for the day:

Under Pressure Challenge

- "Before you start any task today, take thirty extra seconds to ask yourself: Is there anything about this situation that I know isn't right? If the answer is yes, own it and address it before you start."

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Friday – Week Wrap-Up

This week, we talked about what ownership really means, why speaking up is such a big part of it, how ownership becomes even stronger when the whole team is in it together, and what it looks like to stay committed when things get tough. There common thread through all of it is this: safety ownership is a choice. It's a choice we make every shift, to pay attention, to say something, to do the right thing even when it's inconvenient. And when enough people on a team make that choice consistently, it stops being just a habit and starts being who we are. It becomes the culture. That's what we're building here. Not just a team that follows the rules, but a team that genuinely looks out for each other. And honestly, there's no better place to work than one where the people around you have your back.

Team member engagement:

Let's take a few minutes to look back at this week together. There are no wrong answers here. I just want to hear from you.

- *“Did anyone have a moment this week where you chose to own a safety situation instead of letting it slide? What happened?”*
- *“Was there anything from this week's conversations that stuck with you or made you think differently?”*
- *“What is one thing you want to carry forward from this week into how you approach safety every day?”*
- *“Is there anything about how we report hazards, communicate concerns, or support each other that we could do better as a team?”*