

Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 24 – Monday, June 8 – Friday, June 12, 2026

Giving and Receiving Feedback in Safety

Introduction - Giving and Receiving Feedback in Safety

Introduction for Leaders (Use Before Monday's Toolbox Talk)

Purpose for Supervisors:

This week, we're going to talk about how we give and receive feedback around safety. Done well, feedback is one of the most powerful tools we have to keep each other safe and keep improving. Done poorly, it shuts people down and erodes the trust we need to build a strong safety culture. Our goal this week is to get comfortable with both sides of the conversation.

How Leaders Should Frame This Week's Toolbox Talks:

- Model the behavior you'd like to see. If you've ever received feedback that was hard to hear but helped you, share that. It normalizes the experience for the whole team.
- Remind the team that feedback is not discipline, it's communication between people who care about the same outcome: everyone going home safe.
- Create space for honest conversation. This topic can bring up past experiences. Let people share without judgment.

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Monday- Why Feedback Matters in Safety

Discussion:

Let’s start the week with a question: when was the last time someone gave you feedback about how you were doing something on the job? How did it feel? Was it helpful, or did it put you on the defensive? Feedback is how we learn. It’s how we catch small problems before they become big ones. In safety specifically, feedback might be the difference between someone going home fine and someone going home with a serious injury. That makes it worth talking about directly. There are many kinds of feedback that show up in a safety culture, and they can come from any direction: your supervisor, a team member, or even the person doing the job, giving feedback to leadership about what isn’t working.

TYPES OF FEEDBACK IN A SAFETY CULTURE

TYPE OF FEEDBACK	WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE IN SAFETY
Positive Feedback	“Hey, I noticed you stopped to re-check the lockout before starting that job. That’s exactly what we want. Keep that up.”
Corrective Feedback	“I want to talk to you about what I saw earlier. When you skipped the pre-task inspection, that puts you and your crew at risk. Let’s walk through why that step matters and make sure it happens every time going forward.”
Peer Feedback	“Hey, can I say something real quick? I noticed you were reaching over that guard instead of using the tool we have for that. I know it’s faster the other way, but that could lead to a serious injury.”
Upward Feedback	“I wanted to let you know the crew has been feeling like safety concerns raised in our meetings aren’t always getting followed up on. We want to keep reporting things, but it helps when we see something happen after we do.”

All four of these matter. And all four require something from both the person giving the feedback and the person receiving it.

A real-world example:

A new employee, Marcus, was shown the correct way to handle a chemical transfer during his first week. His trainer, Linda, checked in with him a few days later and noticed he had started skipping one of the steps because it seemed unnecessary to him. Instead of writing him up, Linda sat down with him and asked what he thought the next step was. When Marcus admitted he wasn’t sure, Linda explained the reasoning behind it, a spill risk that wasn’t obvious at first glance. Marcus appreciated being treated like someone capable of understanding the “why,” and he never skipped the step again. That’s feedback done right.

Team member engagement:

“Think about a time someone gave you feedback that actually helped you. What made it land the right way?”

Challenge for the day:

- Give one piece of positive or corrective safety feedback to a team member.

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Tuesday – How to Give Safety Feedback That Actually Helps

Discussion:

Giving feedback, especially corrective feedback, is a skill. Most of us were never formally taught how to do it, so we either avoid it altogether or we do it in a way that puts people on the defensive. Today, let's talk about what makes feedback effective, especially when safety is on the line. The most important thing to remember is this: the goal of feedback is not to make someone feel bad. The goal is to give feedback to help, not hurt.

A few things that make feedback stick:

- Be specific. "You need to be more careful" doesn't give someone anything to work with. "When you were adjusting that machine, I noticed you didn't verify the energy was isolated before reaching in" tells them exactly what you saw.
- Do it in private when it's corrective. Calling someone out in front of the whole crew puts them on the defensive and embarrasses them. Pull them aside. Give them the chance to respond without an audience.
- Connect it to the why. People are more likely to change a behavior when they understand the real risk behind it, not just that they broke a rule.
- Ask a question instead of just telling. "What's your understanding of why we do it that way?" opens a conversation. It shows respect and often reveals whether it's a training gap, a habit, or something else entirely.
- Positive feedback counts too. If you only speak up when something is wrong, people start to brace for impact every time you approach them. Catch people doing things right and say so.

A real-world example:

During a shift, supervisor Deb noticed a longtime employee, Ray, moving a load without a spotter in an area where spotters were required. She could have filled out a write-up right there. Instead, she caught Ray at a natural break point, away from the crew, and said, "Hey, Ray, I want to check in on something I saw earlier. You moved that load without a spotter. I know that's a step that can feel unnecessary when you've done it a thousand times, but I've got to be honest with you, it worries me. Can you walk me through what happened?" Ray explained he hadn't noticed the no-go zone had expanded due to some new equipment placement. They updated the crew together that afternoon. No discipline, no defensiveness, just a better outcome.

Team member engagement:

"What tends to make it hard to give someone feedback about their safety behavior? What gets in the way?"

Challenge for the day:

Give a Good Catch:

- *"Today, find one opportunity to give someone specific, positive feedback about something you saw them do safely. No generic 'good job' — tell them exactly what you noticed and why it mattered."*

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Wednesday – How to Receive Feedback Without Getting Defensive

Discussion:

Today, we will talk about what it's like to be on the receiving end of feedback. Because honestly, that's the harder side for a lot of people. Even when feedback is given well, our instinct is often to explain ourselves, defend what we did, or shut down, and that's a completely human reaction. Nobody likes being told they did something wrong. But here's the thing: if we get defensive every time someone tries to give us safety feedback, people stop giving it. And the next time there's a close call, nobody says anything because they already know how it's going to go.

Here are some practical ways to receive feedback better:

- Pause before you respond. Your first reaction is almost always defensive. Give yourself two seconds to breathe before you say anything.
- Listen to understand, not to respond. Try to actually hear what the person is telling you before you start thinking about your rebuttal.
- Say thank you and mean it. It takes courage to speak up, so give a thank-you and simply acknowledge their effort. Acknowledging that keeps the door open.
- Ask a clarifying question if you need one. "Can you tell me more about what you saw?" shows you're taking it seriously and helps you understand what actually needs to change.
- You don't have to agree on the spot. It's okay to say, "I hear you let me think about that." What's not okay is dismissing it without actually reflecting on it.

A real-world example:

Tony had been in his role for twelve years. When a newer team member, Alicia, pointed out that the way he was stacking materials near the aisle was creating a visibility hazard for forklift operators, his first instinct was to say, "I've been doing it this way for years, and nothing's happened." But he caught himself. He stopped, looked at where Alicia was pointing, and actually thought about it from the forklift operator's perspective. She was right. He moved the stack, and later that day, he told her, "Good catch, I appreciate you saying something." Twelve years of doing something a certain way doesn't make it the safest way. Tony knew that. He just needed a moment to remember it.

Team member engagement:

"Has anyone ever received feedback that was hard to hear in the moment, but turned out to be right? What helped you get past the initial reaction?"

Challenge for the day:

Practice Receiving:

- *"Today, if someone gives you any kind of feedback, big or small, try responding with 'thank you' before anything else. Notice how it changes the conversation."*

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Thursday –Building a Culture Where Feedback Flows Freely

Discussion:

We've talked about how to give and receive feedback well. Today, let's zoom out and talk about what happens when a whole team gets good at both. Because the real goal here isn't just individual improvement, it's building the kind of environment where people feel safe enough to give feedback in any direction, at any time, without fear. That kind of culture doesn't happen by accident. It happens when leaders model it, when people see that speaking up leads to real change, and when feedback is treated as a sign of respect rather than a personal attack.

What a strong feedback culture looks like in safety:

- Near-misses are reported openly, not hidden out of embarrassment or fear of consequences.
- People feel comfortable telling their supervisor when a process isn't working or a procedure doesn't match reality.
- When someone gives corrective feedback, the response is curiosity, not defensiveness.
- Positive feedback is specific and genuine, not just a checkbox or a pat on the back to soften bad news.
- Leaders actively ask for feedback from their teams and take visible action on what they hear.

A real-world example:

After a series of near-misses in the same work area, supervisor Tomas started ending every shift with a two-minute check-in: "What's one thing that felt off today, and what's one thing that went well?" At first, nobody said much. But after a few weeks of Tomas actually acting on what he heard, getting a guardrail repaired, adjusting a procedure that wasn't working, recognizing a crew member by name for a good catch, people started opening up. Within two months, near-miss reports in that area had increased significantly, indicating the team was catching and correcting problems before they became incidents. Feedback had become part of how that crew operated.

Team member engagement:

"What would make it easier for you to give or receive feedback on this team? What would need to change or stay the same?"

Challenge for the day:

Close the Loop:

- *"If you've given someone feedback this week or received some, follow up today. Check in on how it landed, or let them know what you did with what they told you. Closing the loop is what turns feedback into trust."*

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Friday – Week Wrap-Up

Discussion:

This week, we talked about why feedback matters in safety, how to give it in a way that actually helps rather than hurts, how to receive it without getting defensive, and what it looks like when a whole team makes feedback part of how they work.

Here's what it comes down to: feedback is an act of respect. When someone takes the time to tell you something, whether it's a team member pointing out a hazard, a supervisor addressing shortcuts, or a team member telling leadership that a process isn't working, they're saying, "I care enough about this to have an uncomfortable conversation." That's not something to push back against. That's something to be grateful for.

The teams with the strongest safety cultures aren't the ones where nothing ever goes wrong. They're the ones where people catch problems early, talk about them openly, and learn from them together. Feedback is what makes that possible.

Team member engagement:

Let's take a few minutes to hear from the group. There are no wrong answers, just honest ones.

- *"Did anyone give or receive a piece of safety feedback this week that made a difference? What happened?"*
- *"Is there anything about how we give feedback on this team that we should keep doing? Anything we should do differently?"*
- *"What would help you feel more comfortable speaking up either to a team member or to leadership when you see something that needs to be addressed?"*
- *"What's one thing from this week that you want to carry forward into how you engage with safety feedback going forward?"*