

# Communication

The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.  
– George Bernard Shaw

## What it is

Sharing information with the right person, in the right form, at the right time and, most importantly, checking the message has been received and understood.

## Why do it

Communication is a key factor in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy forestry operation. It ensures that all workers are fully aware of the plan for the day and their role in keeping themselves and others safe. It is, however, not just about communicating good practice – it is also about creating a culture of safety to prevent incidents and ill health. Good two-way communication ensures that everyone is aware of the risks, as well as the preventive and protective measures necessary to control these risks.

## How to do it

- ▶ Allocate time to discuss health and safety issues
- ▶ Have open and honest discussion on health and safety issues at all meetings (e.g., tailgate meetings) as well as during the working day
- ▶ Record health and safety related decisions made at meetings
- ▶ Keep written and verbal communications simple, to the point, and easy to understand
- ▶ Communicate face-to-face as much as possible
- ▶ Encourage two-way communication, with both the giver and recipient of the information taking responsibility to check messages are received and understood
- ▶ Use different ways to communicate the same message
- ▶ Keep written communications (e.g., H&S minutes and posters) up-to-date
- ▶ Provide the tools necessary for effective communication
- ▶ Develop the communication skills of all workers.

## Track it

Use the following checklist to track whether your communication practices are on track or need action.

In our crew/team, we...	Seldom	Sometimes	Always
Allocate enough time to discuss health and safety matters			
Have the information we need to stay safe and well			
Discuss health and safety issues openly			
Raise health and safety concerns			
	Urgent action required	Action required	On the right track

## Remember...

Workers intentions to adopt safe working practices are influenced by the usability and usefulness of the safety communications they receive.

# Learning

The purpose of an investigation is to understand how things usually go right as a basis for explaining how things occasionally go wrong. – Erik Hollnagel

## What it is

Improving the health and safety of a workplace through learning from both what is working well, as well as from near hits and incident.

## Why do it

To continually increase people's safety and wellness, every opportunity to learn and make improvements needs to be identified and taken. Learning opportunities exist not only in things that have gone wrong (e.g., near hits and incident), but in the everyday work (i.e., things that go right most of the time). There is a significant amount of learning to be had from understanding why things worked well despite less than ideal conditions, as there is from things that go – or have the potential to go – wrong.

## How to do it

- ▶ Look for opportunities to learn in everyday work – don't wait for something bad to happen to learn and improve
- ▶ Focus on how things usually go right as a basis for explaining how things occasionally go wrong
- ▶ Ask: 'What did we do today that helped us to go home safe and well?'
- ▶ Provide opportunities for workers to make suggestions for process improvements
- ▶ Use mistakes, near hits, and incident as opportunities for learning rather than finger pointing
- ▶ Involve workers in investigations so that their insights are included
- ▶ Ask: 'What happened? Why did it make sense for people to do what they did? How did we respond? How can we avoid similar situations in future?'
- ▶ Discuss how to hold each other to account
- ▶ Report the findings of all investigations to workers.

## Track it

Use the following checklist to track whether your learning practices are on track or need action.

In our crew/team, we...	Seldom	Sometimes	Always
Learn from what we do well			
Learn from our mistakes			
Take part in investigations			
Share ways to improve our health and safety			
	Urgent action required	Action required	On the right track

## Remember...

Look for opportunities to learn from everyday work – don't wait for something bad to happen to learn and improve.

# Recognition

Recognition is the greatest motivator. – Gerard C. Eakedale

## What it is

Encouraging, appreciating, and rewarding safe and healthy working behaviours.

## Why do it

Recognition has the effect of motivating desired behaviors. People who receive positive reinforcement for a behaviour are far more likely to repeat it. This is the basis of creating a workplace culture that promotes and supports healthy, safe work practices. We do what we do because of consequences. Recognising healthy, safe work practices reinforces that the health and safety of workers is valued. Feedback lets workers, and others, know how well they are progressing toward the health and safety goals, allowing them to adjust their efforts to meet those goals.

## How to do it

- ▶ Clarify what are safe and unsafe work practices
- ▶ Discuss and agree what, and how, healthy and safe work practices should be recognised
- ▶ Discuss the importance of everyone recognising safe and healthy practices
- ▶ Provide positive, immediate, consistent feedback for safe and healthy work practices
- ▶ Provide feedback that is meaningful to the person receiving it
- ▶ Talk about safe and healthy work practices in crew meetings
- ▶ Get workers to identify others who are working safely
- ▶ Celebrate health and safety achievements
- ▶ Develop the skills to provide effective feedback
- ▶ Consistently hold people accountable for unsafe practices.

## Track it

Use the following checklist to track whether your recognition practices are on track or need action.

In our crew/team, we...	Seldom	Sometimes	Always
Give positive feedback for healthy, safe practices			
Celebrate health and safety achievements			
Call each other out on unsafe or unhealthy work practices			
Discuss what supports healthy, safe practices			
	Urgent action required	Action required	On the right track

## Remember...

People who receive meaningful recognition for a particular behaviour are more likely to repeat it. We want positive feedback to be part of our workplace culture (i.e., the way we do things here).