

STOP[®] for Each Other

UNIT 1 Introduction

What You Will LEARN...

In Unit 1 you will learn how *STOP® for Each Other* works. In completing this unit you'll...

- Think about the importance of safety to yourself and others.
- Think about ways in which injuries affect the injured person, the family, co-workers, and the organization.
- Start to consider why it is important to prevent work-related injuries.
- Understand your role in safety and what you can do to help prevent work-related injuries and illnesses, beginning with yourself.
- Begin to see who is responsible for encouraging safe conditions and eliminating unsafe ones.
- Learn how safety can become a part of your everyday activities.



Principles of STOP®

All injuries can be prevented.

Employee involvement is essential.

Management is responsible for preventing injuries.

All operating exposures can be safeguarded.

Training employees to work safely is essential.

Working safely is a condition of employment.

Safety observations are a must.

All deficiencies must be corrected promptly.

We will promote off-the-job safety for our employees.

STOP® is based on these safety principles that have guided DSS in becoming a benchmark in safety performance.

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UNIT 1

INTRODUCTION



Safety and You

THINK about these questions for a few moments:

C.

- Do you want to work safely?
- Do you want others to work safely?
- Do you want to learn how to prevent injuries to yourself and to others?

You probably answered “yes” to these questions. It makes sense to want to work safely and to eliminate incidents and injuries.

Now CONSIDER these questions:

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- How often do you *think about* safety as you do your job?
- How often do you *look for* conditions and actions that could cause or prevent injuries?

Many people, even those who want to work safely, answer “never” or “hardly ever” to these questions. The fact is that many of us just are not in the habit of thinking about safety.

Now for the last question:

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- Are you willing to take the time to learn how to work more safely, so you can help prevent incidents and injuries to yourself and others?

If you’re really committed to working safely, you’ll answer “YES” to this question. Wanting to work safely is a step in the right direction, but just wanting to work safely won’t prevent injuries. To be safe, you need to take **positive actions** to develop your safety awareness. Learning STOP® principles and practices is the first step in that process.



Why Safety Counts

How important is safety? Well, think about how many people would be affected if *you* were injured. Imagine that your right arm is in a cast, and for eight weeks you won't be able to drive a car.

Write down the people you can think of who would be affected.

YOU

FAMILY	FRIENDS	CO-WORKERS	ORGANIZATION

Injuries don't just affect **ONE** person. They affect many people. This is why safety counts—and why you need to learn about **STOP®**.

HOW STOP® Works

STOP® is a safety training observation program. During STOP® training, you'll learn important principles and practices that will help you work more safely.

Your STOP® training is done one step at a time, with each step building on the previous ones. STOP® training uses a combination of a self-study workbook, on-the-job activities, group discussions, and videos to build your safety awareness. You'll complete the self-study workbook units and field activities. Then your group discussion leader will conduct group meetings and show the *STOP® for Each Other* videos.

STOP® is designed to help you think and act differently about safety. By the end of the program, if you follow each step carefully, you'll be looking at safety in a different way... and working more safely.

How to Use the Self-Study Workbook

The STOP® self-study workbook is easy to use and allows you to set your own pace in learning. Follow these steps to use the workbook.

- **READ** "What You'll Learn" at the beginning of the workbook unit.
- **SKIM** the entire workbook unit.
- Now **GO BACK** and read each paragraph in the workbook unit carefully, thinking about the concepts, examples, and statements.
- **WRITE** your answer to each question in the workbook. It's important to answer the questions because this reinforces STOP® concepts.
- When you complete the workbook unit, **CONTINUE** to the Field Activity. You'll review this with your group discussion leader and at your group meeting.

The NEXT section will get you started learning about safety awareness by explaining how you can prevent injuries.



PREVENTING INJURIES

Creating an Injury-Free Workplace

A key point of *STOP® for Each Other* is that all injuries can be prevented. All of them? Yes, *all* of them.

Some organizations—even those involved in highly hazardous jobs—have gone years without an injury. In almost every case the leadership and the employees in these organizations take responsibility for the safety of one another as well as for themselves.

STOP® for Each Other is based on the idea that *you* can take steps to prevent injuries to yourself and others. If everyone does this, injuries will be prevented.

What do you think about the idea that all injuries can be prevented? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Write your response here.

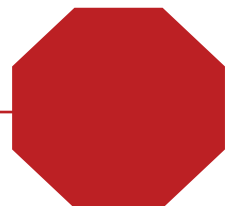
Incidents vs. Accidents

During *STOP®* you'll be reading about "incidents and injuries." Why not "accidents and injuries"? Good question.

Many of us have grown up using the term "accident" to describe things we can't control—"It was just an accident." Incidents have causes that can be understood and prevented. Changing our language can help change the way we think. The *STOP®* philosophy maintains that there is a reason why each incident and injury occurs. Once you learn how to recognize the causes of incidents and injuries, you can take steps to eliminate them. In short, incidents don't just happen; incidents are preventable.

Even if you don't agree with this idea, by the end of *STOP®* training, you may have changed your mind. Right now, though, all you need to do is keep an open mind on the subject. If you do, by the end of *STOP®* training you may find you've made some important changes in the way you view safety. You'll see why we believe that...

All injuries can be prevented.



ABOUT SAFETY AWARENESS

"Seeing Safety"

Let's return to two questions you read earlier:

How often do you *think about* safety as you do your job?



How often do you *look for* conditions and actions that could cause or prevent injuries?



These questions are aimed at building your safety awareness by helping you "see safety." STOP® is all about developing your safety awareness. This involves thinking about safety and looking for safe and unsafe situations *all the time*, so that it becomes second nature—a habit—to "see safety." Most people aren't born with this awareness. Fortunately, with strong safety awareness you can become better at seeing things BEFORE they happen. This ability to foresee events also creates the possibility to prevent them.

"Seeing safety" means *being alert to what you are doing and what is going on around you all the time*. As you learn to look, to question, and to see how you and others are doing your jobs, you'll become more and more aware of safety. Then you'll be able to recognize and eliminate the cause of incidents and injuries for yourself and for others.

Getting Started

One way you can make seeing safety second nature is by continuously observing for safety. Think for a moment about a job you do all the time, something that is second nature to you.

Suppose, for example, that your job always involves working with certain tools. Before you begin the job, you check to make sure you have all the tools you need. If one is missing, you probably notice it right away. This part of your job has become second nature to you.



In the same way, police officers are always aware of what's going on around them, on and off the job. They're trained to be alert to everything, including actions that could indicate a crime is about to occur. They take this alertness with them everywhere they go.

Architects spend a great deal of time thinking about building layout and construction, so they automatically look at the way a building is designed as soon as they enter it.

Do you drive a car? People who have been driving for a while have learned over time what situations can lead to danger—a pedestrian about to cross the street, a car changing lanes quickly nearby, the traffic light changing to red up ahead. Experienced drivers constantly scan the road for potential problems without really thinking about it.

Seeing things this way is second nature to these people because they are in the habit of “noticing” what's happening around them at an almost subconscious level.

What is second nature to you? What do you see quickly, almost without thinking, because you're used to looking for it?

Write your answer here.

Just as you've made this part of your life second nature, you can make seeing safety second nature, too. As you learn to look at your job, your workplace, and the people around you, you'll become more and more aware of what's safe—and what isn't.

Safe and Unsafe Conditions

Seeing safety begins with noticing safe and unsafe conditions. An unsafe condition is something that could cause an incident or injury. Safe conditions are those that promote safe work. Safe conditions result from safe actions, and unsafe conditions are the result of unsafe actions. Maybe you don't realize it now, but as your STOP® training progresses, you'll see that you actually create safe and unsafe conditions.

Think about these questions:



Have you ever forgotten to post warning or danger signs where you needed to when you were doing a job?

Have you ever left tools in a walkway where someone could trip over them?

Have you ever put something on a stair step “just for a minute”?

Do you see how easy it is to create safe and unsafe conditions? Maybe you've created an unsafe condition because you were in a hurry, or maybe you just weren't thinking about safety. But now you're starting to see that unsafe conditions can lead to injury to yourself or others. This is the beginning of safety awareness.

You've probably also done things to create safe conditions. Maybe you barricaded an area around a spill or picked up a dropped tool lying on the floor. You might have done these things without thinking, but now you can see that you were creating safe conditions. From now on you'll be looking carefully at what you do so you can create safe conditions all the time.

Seeing Safe and Unsafe Situations

Seeing safety doesn't just happen. It takes practice to learn to look for safe and unsafe situations all the time. One way to start to see safety is to think about what is safe and unsafe.

Here are some examples of safe and unsafe situations. Write "S" for a safe situation or "U" for an unsafe situation.

- _____ A machine is guarded properly.
- _____ An electrical cord from a power tool is stretched across a walkway.
- _____ A high, well-maintained fence prevents entry into a hazardous area.
- _____ A file drawer is left open while the employee leaves the area to attend a meeting.
- _____ Uneven pavement is being repaired. The area is barricaded and warning signs are posted.

An electrical cord stretched across a walkway is a tripping hazard. An open file drawer is unsafe because someone could bump into it. On the other hand, guarding a machine properly helps prevent injury. So does providing a fence for a hazardous area. Barricading and posting signs where work is being done are ways of creating a safe situation.

As you think about these examples, ask yourself if you see—really see—safe and unsafe situations as you do your job. If you're not used to noticing them, now is the time to start. Begin looking around you for safe and unsafe situations.



Safe and Unsafe Acts

Think about this question. What is the cause of most on-the-job injuries?



- ☐ People's unsafe acts
- ☐ Heavy equipment
- ☐ Sudden equipment failure

You may be surprised to learn that the great majority of all injuries are caused by *the unsafe acts of people*.

This point is absolutely critical as you learn to see safety. Once you see that people, not equipment, cause most injuries (without meaning to, of course), you'll understand why STOP® says that all injuries can be prevented.

Simply stated, if you take away the *cause* of injuries, you can eliminate injuries. Since unsafe acts cause most injuries, you can eliminate the actions that lead to injury. At the same time, if you follow and encourage safe work practices, you help create a safe workplace for yourself and others.

Think about this.

An office employee was looking for a folder in a file drawer. When the telephone rang, she turned to answer it but didn't take time to close the drawer. While she was on the telephone, another employee came into the office and bumped into the open drawer.

Would you say this injury was caused by an unsafe act, an unsafe condition, or both?

If you consider this situation carefully, you'll see that the injury resulted from an unsafe condition caused by an unsafe act—leaving the file drawer open. In fact, just about all unsafe conditions can be traced to unsafe acts.

STOP® for Each Other is based on the idea that we need to look out for ourselves and for one another. This means looking for safe and unsafe situations that could lead to an injury to you or to someone else. A basic idea of *STOP® for Each Other* is "We depend on each other."

It Starts with You

Here's something that's important to remember: other people aren't always the ones who create safe and unsafe conditions. *You* could be the person who does something that results in an incident or injury...or you could be the person who prevents an injury to yourself or to someone else. Your personal safety awareness will help you eliminate and prevent incidents and injuries. Working safely starts with you.

Developing Safety Awareness

How can you develop your safety awareness? Here are some ways:

- Before you begin a job, consider how to do the job more safely.
- Make sure you know how to use all personal protective equipment needed.
- Check that your tools are right for the job, in good condition, and used correctly.
- When you enter a work area, scan it to see what is going on.
- As you work, check your position to reduce strain on your body.
- If you spot an unsafe act or unsafe condition, correct it or take steps to see it's corrected.
- While you're working, become aware of any changes in the area—people coming or going, jobs beginning or ending.
- Start talking with others about safety.
- Become more aware of safety at home.



Suppose your job involves driving a forklift most of the day. When you know you have a lot of loads to move and will be on the forklift for a while, you always wear your seat belt. But when you have just one load to move to a place nearby, you often choose not to wear a seat belt.

**Is this an example of an unsafe act?
Why or why not?**

Sometimes it seems that if we're doing something for only a few seconds, it's all right to "forget about" safety. Of course, this isn't true. Seeing safety is something that has to be practiced all the time. Safety awareness doesn't take a vacation—even for a second.

Now suppose that you work in a warehouse. You are responsible for unloading, moving and storing many kinds of materials. Normally, you handle the materials properly, but today, you're in a hurry. You begin moving heavy boxes without using a mechanical assist and strain your back.



Is this an example of an unsafe act?

- ☐ No, because moving boxes is part of the job.
- ☐ Yes, because an injury could have been prevented by taking the time to get a helper or using the proper equipment and doing the job safely.

Sometimes we do things in a hurry—and this can be dangerous. We need to think about what we're doing all the time, even if it takes a minute or two longer to prevent an unsafe act. Being alert to what we're doing at all times is part of safety awareness. Think about what could happen if you're not alert and get injured. The job won't just take longer to do...it might not get done at all.

Here's another situation.

After picking up a machine part from a co-worker, you start walking down the stairs while also checking email on your cell phone. You have no hands available to hold the handrail.

Not using the handrail could lead to falling. Using your phone while walking distracts you from what's happening around you. Now think about how you might handle the situation differently to avoid these unsafe acts.

What could you do differently to work more safely?



You could put your phone away, so you can hold the handrail. Putting the phone away also helps you pay attention to your surroundings, so you'll be able to notice any trip hazards and avoid bumping into other people. It's all a matter of being aware of potential injuries to you and to others.

Now suppose you're going to be using a scissor lift which requires wearing personal fall protection. You decide that since you're "just doing a quick repair," you won't put it on. Once you are up in the lift, you climb up on one of the side rails to reach the repair site.

Could these unsafe acts lead to an injury? You probably know the answer is “yes.” Now think for a moment. Have you ever worked without proper personal protective equipment? Have you ever bypassed correct job procedures? Or seen someone else do it?

These unsafe acts could lead to serious injuries. How could you eliminate these acts?

Wearing personal protective equipment and following job procedures shows safety awareness. In these examples none of the employees were trying to get hurt. But none of them were trying to see safety, either. In each case a lack of safety awareness caused the employees to create an unsafe situation.

When unsafe acts are eliminated, incidents and injuries can be prevented. Step by step, STOP® helps you increase your safety awareness to become a skilled safety observer. When you observe and eliminate unsafe acts, you prevent injuries to yourself and to others.

Developing Skills in Seeing Safety

You’re building your safety awareness by thinking about safe and unsafe situations and the role you play in creating them. Let’s look at some more examples that will develop your skills in seeing safety.

“But I’ve Always Done It This Way!”

Did you ever do something you knew was unsafe because you’ve “always done it this way”? Maybe you stood on a chair to change a light bulb, or maybe you didn’t put on gloves when you were handling wooden boards. Maybe you think this is all right because you’ve “always done it this way.”

The fact is that most injuries *don’t* occur the first time a person commits an unsafe act. Most injuries occur after an unsafe act has been repeated over and over. This is why you need to work safely all the time, every time.

An employee noticed a leak from a piece of equipment and ignored it. Later, another employee slipped on the liquid and injured her arm.



Think about this incident. Who could have prevented this injury?

The person who noticed the leak and didn't barricade the area was responsible for creating an unsafe condition. That led to an injury to someone else. Remember, we depend on each other to work safely.

The person who slipped and fell didn't create the unsafe condition, but she wasn't practicing safety awareness, either. She could have walked around the puddle. Then she could have notified the person responsible for the area about the unsafe condition. She could have stayed in the area to warn other people about the leak or barricaded the area until the condition was corrected.

In short, both of the people in this example needed to practice safety awareness. By using safety awareness, everyone can help eliminate unsafe acts and unsafe conditions.