



Proper Lifting



Topic: Safe Lifting Techniques

ASK: How many of you have ever had a job that did not require some type of lifting? Lifting is part of everyday life whether you are lifting a stack of office papers, heavy boxes or construction supplies. And, because it is something we do so often, we tend to lift objects without thinking, and consequently injure ourselves.

How many of you know someone who has seriously injured their back due to repetitive lifting or heavy improper lifting?

Out of those people you know, how many have had surgery as a result? And did that surgery relieve all their pain? In most cases surgery does not cure a prior back injury. All too often, once you have seriously injured your back the damage is irreversible.

Training Tip: When conducting your Safety Talk, ask lots of questions. Questions hook the mind and engage your participants. The simple use of questions is a High Impact Training Technique! When asking questions you will get a better response if you raise one hand when you ask any question....try it out! (Wait / encourage responses from the group....be prepared to provide your own example or a recent example from the news. Personal examples will make your safety talk extremely powerful)

ACKNOWLEDGE: Thank you for being here and participating in this safety talk. (Make eye contact with the entire group). I know your time is valuable and I'm going to do my best to make it worth your while.

WIIFM (What's In It For Me?): Today we're doing a brief safety talk about safe lifting techniques. Improper lifting can result in a wide variety of injuries, with chronic, long term back strain being the most common. How many of you want that? Since lifting in one form or another is an essential part of our workday, our goal is to help refresh your skills and prevent you from injuring yourself at work.

ASK: How many of you know the proper lifting techniques for lifting heavier items but sometimes choose to cut corners? I think everyone in this room can admit to that. What are some common things that you have to lift on a day to day basis? (Wait / encourage responses)

ASK: What are the most common mistakes people make when lifting? (wait for answers such as)

1. Lifting with back bent and legs straight
2. Holding load too far away from the body
3. Twisting while lifting – deadly for your back!
4. Loosing balance during the lift due to:
 - a. Feet being too close together
 - b. Load being uneven or unstable
 - c. Load being too heavy
5. Contorting your body to lift in cluttered or non spacious areas.
6. Poor communication when lifting as a team.





Remember to apply these principles when lifting: *(write on a white board or flip chart if possible)*

Make sure to plan the lift. Clear a path, and ensure there is nothing in your way or on the floor that will be a hazard. Assess the load, and if load is too heavy ask for assistance.

Your feet should be shoulder width apart. Get firm footing close to the load

Bend your knees. Use your leg strength to lift your body up. Avoid jerking or twisting.

A suitable grip needs to be maintained throughout the lift.

Carry the load close to your body. Always move feet when turning to avoid twisting your spine.

Keeep your spine aligned with your natural curves. Maintain the “S” shaped curve in your back.

Prevention:

Identify

- What conditions prevent you from using safe lifting techniques?
- Size up the load. Is the load heavy, awkward or hard to hold?
- How are you feeling physically? Is your back tired or do you have a previous injury?
- Plan your path. Are there any obstacles in your path?

Risk Assessment

- Is there a safe work procedure (SWP) for this type of lift?
- Test the weight of the load before lifting.
- Did you clear your path of obstacles and clutter? Is the floor or path wet or slippery?

Control

- Training – Follow SWPs and always use safe lifting techniques
- Work Design / Redesign - Can the object be placed higher so you don't have to bend so much?
- Use powered or mechanical lifts if available and you are trained in the safe use of the equipment.– Team work. Ask for help with the lift. Lighten the load. If carrying 4 boxes is putting strain on your body, lighten the load to 2 or 3 boxes.

Maintenance

- Know your rights, it is your right to be safe at work
- Taking short cuts increases the chance you will be hurt
- Be cognizant about lifting safely
- Always perform a lift test before lifting
- Exercise regularly and keep your body fit and strong



Remember to: Ask for the commitment of your employees, answer all questions, thank them for their time and document that this safety talk occurred.

RECORD OF SAFETY TALK

Date: _____ Time: _____

Given By: _____

Company: _____ Work Location _____

Results of inspection, demonstration or other activity or suggestions during talk:

Employees Attending:

Print Name	Sign Name
1	
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Signed: _____ Position Held: _____