

Alcohol Consumption toolbox talk

A simple, 5 minute outline of what to cover in a toolbox talk on Alcohol Consumption.

Alcohol and the effects of alcohol at work is not only a hazard risk to yourself, but also your work colleagues. Alcohol abuse can have a significant impact not only to individuals but also to work colleagues and potentially their employers. In this toolbox we will look at the safeguards required by employers (PCBUs) and employees.

Why run an Alcohol Consumption Toolbox Talk?

- Prevent unnecessary injury from working whilst impaired from alcohol, by improving awareness and training
- Company policy on alcohol
- Assist with understanding of legislative aspects
- Fewer injuries and not being impaired by the effects of alcohol, means higher productivity

Why is alcohol a significant risk in the workplace?

Working under the influence of alcohol will cause impairment, which can lead to poor decision making and concentration, negative health impacts to the worker, impaired problem solving skills, slower reaction times, and increased error rates.



Health and Safety Duties

Under relevant legislation for the country (e.g. in New Zealand the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015), employers and employees both have a duty to ensure that the workplace is safe.

- Employers should provide employees with the highest level of protection from risks, as reasonably practicable.

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own and others' safety by doing the 3 following things:

- Turn up fit for work and consider their safety
- Ensure their actions do not harm the health and safety of others
- Comply with any reasonable policy, procedure or instruction given by the employer (PCBU) about how to work in a safe and reasonable way

Things to consider for your alcohol policy

- Minimising harm associated with alcohol
- Helping workers who may have problems with alcohol e.g. offering rehabilitation
- Promoting a sensible and responsible attitude
- Giving workers the information, they need to take the right actions with anyone affected by alcohol
- Who is responsible for what – workers' roles, supervisors' roles, and managers' roles

- Consequences of violating the alcohol policy
- The availability of help for people with drug abuse issues, such as EAP, Alcohol and Drug Helpline or other providers
- What's acceptable on site or in the workplace

Key takeaways:

1. **Do not consume or be under the influence of alcohol at work** - do not aggravate health and safety risks by drinking alcohol at work
2. **Be fit and ready** – Don't be hungover and turn up to work
3. **Look out for your work mates** – Don't harm yourself and your work mates, also help others who may have an alcohol problem.

[See all our toolbox talk topics here](#)

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