Taking Ownership of Safety Meeting Kit



Taking Ownership Safety Talk

Much of the time spent talking about safety on the job is focused on educating workers to be able to recognize or identify hazards on the job. Less time is spent discussing how to correctly mitigate those hazards. Part of correctly mitigating a hazard in the workplace is taking ownership of it and seeing it through that it gets corrected.

RECOGNIZING VERSUS TAKING OWNERSHIP

There is a huge difference in a worker who is able to recognize a hazard and a worker who recognizes a hazard and owns it until it is corrected. You may have heard someone say after an incident occurs, “yeah I saw him doing that, I knew something was going to happen” or “I knew someone was going to trip over that broken concrete at some point”. These statements show that the person saying this recognized the hazard, but most likely stopped there. They identified it was a hazard, but they did not take ownership of the hazard and follow through on making sure it gets corrected.

RESPONSIBILITY IS KEY

One of the unique things about being an entrepreneur or small business owner is that you are your first employee. You represent your company every day in two ways: the boss and the worker. Ultimately, your standards are the only ones that matter. That’s why taking ownership in business is so important. You’re taking ownership of your work, your employees’ work, and every other aspect of your company. At heart, taking ownership is about taking responsibility and having the initiative to lead. As an entrepreneur, you’ve already invested in yourself. Anything less than the best from you or your team is unacceptable as an investor.

THE BENEFITS OF TAKING OWNERSHIP

1. **Feeling Ownership in Business can Expand Your Organization**

Maybe you’ve heard of word-of-mouth recruitment. If not, it’s one of the most common ways employers fill jobs. Nobody wants to work for someone constantly making excuses. By taking ownership in business seriously, and ownership of your work just as thoughtfully, your employees and colleagues will be more likely to recommend your company to clients and candidates. Don’t let it go to your head but keeping track of where your new hires and clients come from can give you data on where you’re being complimented and in what ways.

1. **Passionate and Loyal Employees**

You get them by building a culture of trust and responsibility in your company. Every job your team completes is an opportunity to show that you are taking pride in a job well done, and not just attaching your name to work someone else did. Be sure to be a member of the team as well as the manager. As a leader, being enthusiastic about taking ownership is a great way to show your employees how to collaborate.

1. **Taking Ownership engages People**

If you're selling a product, a meal, a service, or information, your customers are what pay your bills. When you build a positive reputation in your industry by consistently knocking the socks off of your clients, you're setting yourself heads and shoulders above your competition. This is something you should strive for with every sale and every interaction with your customers.

1. **When You Take Ownership in Business, You Can Communicate Your Ideas More Clearly, and People Will Take You at Your Word**

You can back up your talk with concrete examples of times when you came up with solutions for your employees, helped customers understand what they needed, and went above and beyond the norms. When you know exactly how each process you've created runs, you can build an outline of how each piece in your company is supposed to run. That shows integrity and consistency, hallmarks of ownership.

WHY PEOPLE DO NOT TAKE OWNERSHIP

- "My entire family is overweight – it's in my genes, and it's just the way I am."
- "My boss hates me, so I'll never get a promotion."
- "I don't have time – I work, have kids, and my family needs me to run around after them."
- "It's too hot/cold/rainy/windy to exercise, and besides, I have no energy left after work."
- "I'm too old to change careers – employers only want younger and smarter people."
- "I'll never find a partner because all the good ones are taken."
- "I can't afford it – not in this economic climate."
- "I'm over forty and can't lose weight because of my hormones, so I should stop trying."
- "The traffic's always bad on the way to work – that's why I'm late."
- "We can't have healthy dinners because the kids won't eat them, and I don't like to cook."

While it can feel comfortable and easy to point the finger of responsibility outward, and attribute our lack of success to external circumstances, the simple truth is our lives are worse off for it. By blaming other people or things, we give away our power.

FINAL WORD

Safety in the workplace is everyone's responsibility and injuries affect everyone in that workplace not just the person who gets hurt. When you recognize a hazard do not just keep it to yourself. Doing this may protect you, but it leaves everyone else in that area vulnerable to an injury or incident.