Young & New: Managing the Risk of Early-Career Workers Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. **Inexperienced Hazard Recognition:** Young and new workers often struggle to identify unsafe conditions, equipment risks, and warning cues, increasing exposure to preventable incidents.
2. **Overestimation of Ability:** Early-career workers may take physical or procedural risks because they underestimate the difficulty of tasks or overestimate their own capability.
3. **High-Pressure Performance:** New workers frequently feel pressure to “prove themselves,” leading to rushing, skipping steps, or handling tasks without proper preparation.
4. **Inadequate PPE Use:** Young workers may not fully understand fit, limits, or proper selection of PPE, resulting in inconsistent or unsafe use.
5. **Communication Barriers:** New hires are less likely to ask questions, raise concerns, or challenge unsafe instructions due to low confidence or fear of judgment.
6. **Unfamiliar Workflows:** Learning new layouts, tools, equipment, and processes creates confusion that increases the chance of slips, missteps, and procedural mistakes.

STATS

- In British Columbia, Canada, nearly 7,000 young workers (aged 15-24) are injured annually from 2020-2024, with about 800 sustaining serious injuries each year, often due to inexperience in high-risk sectors like construction and services.
- Young workers in Canada (15-24) face injury rates 1.5-2 times higher than older workers, contributing to 20-30% of claims in manual jobs from 2020-2024, with males at elevated risk from hazardous tasks.
- In the US, 40% of all workplace injuries occur during the first six months on the job (2020-2025 data), with new workers overrepresented in overexertion and struck-by incidents due to unfamiliarity with site hazards.
- Canadian young workers account for 20% of time-loss claims despite comprising only 15% of the workforce in British Columbia (2020-2024), with 34 fatalities over five years linked to inadequate early-career training.
- In Ontario, Canada, new workers in their first month have a 40-50% higher lost-time claim rate than experienced staff (2020-2023), driven by gaps in hazard recognition and supervision.