

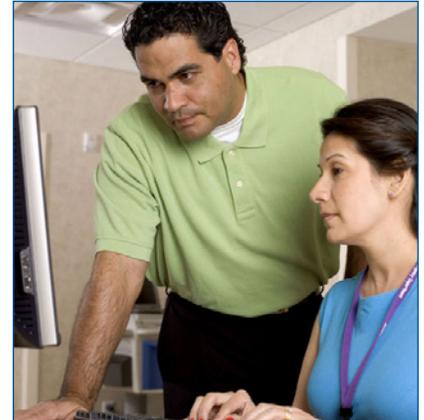
*A responsible hiring process doesn't end when a new employee starts his/her first day on the job. It continues through the first few days of employment with an orientation program to properly introduce employees to the company, their job and important safety information. Prior to turning employees over to their job duties, management should discuss several topics to improve new employees' understanding of their job and help keep them safe in the workplace.*

### General Orientation

An effective orientation program makes new employees feel comfortable and introduces the organization's culture, supervisors and work expectations. A positive first impression is essential. The following steps should be completed for every new employee in the workplace.

- Provide an overview of all operations. Review an organizational chart with new employees, and show them where their supervisors fall in the chart. If your company has a website, take the time to review it. Show employees your products and services, and discuss the company's history. If you have been making top-notch machine parts for 75 years, your new employees will learn that quality is an important part of their jobs. Finally, take a tour of the facilities, including areas outside an employee's typical work area.
- Share information about the organization's goals and culture. According to research from several human resource groups, retention rates improve when employees feel informed about, and subsequently engage in, the organization's plans and goals. Considering that many experts estimate that turnover costs 30- 50 percent of an employee's first-year pay, retention is very important. If your company has won awards

for product quality from your customers, share that information with new employees. If you pride yourself in a safe work environment



with an incidence rate lower than the national average, share that too. Communicating this information right away sets the stage for decisions employees may make during their employment.

- Provide detailed information about the job position. Review the job description with new employees, including the title, duties and performance expectations.

*Continued*

## Safety Orientation

An often overlooked component of the new employee orientation program is a safety training orientation. Under no circumstances should employees be allowed to begin their jobs without a complete safety training program. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), workers with less than one year on the job represent 23 percent of total employment. However, these same workers represent 33 percent of total injuries, a relative difference of nearly 50 percent. Many of these injuries, and even fatalities, occur during the first few days of employment. To reduce the risk of new employee injuries, the following topics should be discussed. This list is not all-inclusive and should be modified to match the hazards of your workplace.

- **Hazard communication** — Employees in many organizations, from manufacturing to construction, are required to use chemicals during their job duties. Before being assigned to their work duties, employees should be informed of the chemicals they will use and how they can work safely with those chemicals. Review the material safety data sheets (MSDS) of all chemicals the employee will work around, and show the employee where the MSDS will be kept for later use. Also show employees the location of the nearest eyewash station, if appropriate.
- **Emergency action plan** — Review your emergency action plan with new employees. Explain where they should go in the event of a fire, tornado, chemical spill or other emergency, and what each alarm sounds like. Review any emergency phone numbers the employee may need to use. This would also be the time to discuss what employees should do if a small fire breaks out. You don't want them running for a fire extinguisher if your policy is to evacuate the building immediately. Finally, discuss information

on bloodborne pathogens, and how they can protect themselves from bloodborne diseases.

- **Lockout/Tagout** — Employees should be aware of the organization's lockout/tagout program. Even if they will never be assigned a lock or tag, it is essential they understand the program's purpose and how their jobs relate to the program.
- **Personal protective equipment** — If an employee's job requires the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), show him/her how to properly put on, take off, store, clean and replace each item.
- **Material handling** — Considering the huge expense of overexertion injuries in the workplace, showing new employees the proper tools for transporting materials is very important. Communicate that using something as simple as a flat top cart is better than carrying a heavy item over a short distance. You can also cover safe lifting practices, such as the avoidance of twisting while lifting, or getting help for items in hard-to-reach areas.
- **Housekeeping** — Many slips, trips and falls are a result of poor housekeeping practices. Discuss housekeeping techniques such as keeping floors clean and dry, putting trash in a designated receptacle and removing damaged pallets from service.
- **Other safety topics** — Discuss all items appropriate for your type of business. This may include ladder safety, forklift safety, electrical safety, driver safety or a variety of other topics.

## For Additional Information

### EMC Loss Prevention Information Manual:

[www.emcins.com](http://www.emcins.com)

- Employment Practices