

JANITORIAL SAFETY TIP SHEET

A series of health and safety tips to prevent work-related injuries in the janitorial industry



The goal of this tip sheet is to provide a brief overview of Safety Leadership topics we are offering. If questions arise regarding the information below please email us, we would love to hear from you.

What is Safety Leadership?

- A collaborative effort to prioritize safety in the workplace between:
Employer > Management > Employee
- Safety leaders set themselves apart by influencing others to follow safety steps.
- Demonstrated through policies, procedures and practices.
- Safety leadership in practice builds a work culture with a shared vision and values for safety.

Employer	Manager/Supervisor	Employee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates commitment: communicates safety as a company value, provides safety policies, resources, training, and safe equipment, coaches managers/ supervisors to promote safety. <p>Example: Company trains new employees on safety policies and provides easy access to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates commitment: communicates, safety knowledge, implements safety policies fairly, coaches staff to use safe procedures and practices on the job. <p>Example: Supervisor prioritizes safety by replacing a sick employee rather than asking staff to risk injury from understaffed work conditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates commitment: communicates safety concerns, complies with safety policies and practices, supports coworker safety. <p>Example: Employee works as a team player by communicating safety needs, concerns, and collaborating when asked or by asking for help when needed.</p>

Safety leadership Qualities

Management (supervisor)

- Supporting worker safety voice by:
 - Building trust with respect
 - Active listening
 - Motivating team
 - Ethical problem solving

Employee

- Communicate with management when there is a potential safety hazard.
- Learn about safety to protect yourself.
- Support coworkers in prioritizing safety in the workplace.



Do you believe your management is equipped to have open communication about any safety concerns?

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Safety leadership Scenarios

Below is an example of how **miscommunication** can affect workers safety:

Effective Safety Leadership	Poor Safety Leadership
<p>Carmen, a long time company employee has a strong relationship with her supervisor. She feels supported and comfortable asking them for help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carmen’s daily task is to mop the floors. • She is scrubbing the floors harder lately because the mop is ripping. • Carmen’s back starts to hurt. • She asks her supervisor to replace the mop. • Carmen waits for a reply and reminds them the following week at work. • Supervisor honestly tells her they forgot and discusses with Carmen, how to find a safe solution. • Supervisor works on solving the issue immediately and finds a new mop that provides greater safety. 	<p>Julio has a hard time at work because his supervisor does not help problem solve any equipment issues at work. He works twice as hard until the issue is resolved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julio’s daily task is to mop the floors. • He is scrubbing the floors harder than usual because the mop is ripping. • Julio’s back starts to hurt. • Julio mops, but the floor remains dirty because the mop is adequate isn’t able to successfully finish his task • He hesitantly reaches out to his supervisor for a replacement. • His supervisor talks down to him and asks “<i>Do you want a job or not?</i>” • Julio feels intimidated and continues mopping although he has back pain. • Julio considered filing a claim but he fears losing his job if he does so. 

In your opinion, what could the supervisor (in either scenario) have done differently?

In a company where employers create a safety culture and supervisors are equipped with safety knowledge, commitment, and strong communication skills, Julio would not have to work through an injury or the stress that comes with lack of respect and mistreatment.

Committing to safety leadership is effective in keeping Washington janitors safe.