

Member Communication Experience

How Safety Training Can Improve Employee Engagement and Retention

Written by: Rebecca Williams, Controller, Health and Safety, Aerotek

Employee engagement has become a focal point in the workplace over the last several years. Assessing the level of worker motivation and passion for their tasks can assist companies in improving their retention strategies. It's widely recognized that employee engagement is a critical element in achieving operational success, especially in industries such as construction. Unfortunately, according to Gallup, employee engagement is declining across the globe.

A decline in workforce engagement can lead to higher attrition, lower productivity, and a less safe workplace. When employees feel less engaged with their role, employer, or colleagues, their adherence to safety protocols may become compromised. One effective method to bolster engagement on your construction site is through comprehensive and thoughtful safety training initiatives. Safety training not only helps workers feel valued, but also ensures their wellbeing and safety, fostering a culture of trust and commitment within the workplace.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SAFETY TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Safety training is more than a regulatory requirement – it is an essential element in creating a secure and productive work environment. According to Aerotek's most recent Job Seeker Survey that tracks the motivations of recent job applicants, 83% of respondents currently or most recently working in construction say that a better understanding of a company's safety initiatives increases how committed and involved they are in their job. When employees feel safe, they are more



likely to be satisfied with their jobs, leading to higher levels of engagement, loyalty, and dedication. Companies that prioritize safety demonstrate to their workforce that they value their employees' wellbeing.

Safety training develops a sense of confidence and security among workers. Additionally, a strong focus on the safety of the individual can carry over to the entire team. When workers are taught and held accountable to safety expectations, it creates a workplace where everyone is looking out for each other.

KEY COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TRAINING

When it comes to construction safety training, it's important to go beyond the minimum required. To maximize the benefits of

safety training and enhance worker engagement, employers should focus on several key components:

Comprehensive Content: The content of the safety training should cover all potential hazards and risks associated with the job. This includes physical dangers like falls, electrical hazards, and equipment malfunctions. Also consider ergonomic issues like repetitive strain from using tools. This ensures that employees are prepared for any situation they might encounter.

Interactive Learning: This idea plays a crucial role in effective safety training. Engaging employees through interactive sessions, such as scaffold assembly simulations, equipment handling drills, and fall protection exercises, improves their understanding and retention of the material. These practical experiences make the training more memorable and applicable to real-world scenarios.

Regular Updates: It's important to consistently update safety protocols and guidelines to reflect new information and evolving industry standards. By keeping up-to-date, employers demonstrate their commitment to the wellbeing of their workforce and adapt to changes that could impact safety.

Accessibility: Access to training materials is essential. All employees, regardless of their shift schedules or locations, should have easy access to these resources.

SAFETY TRAINING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT


There is no single solution to reverse declining worker engagement. It requires a comprehensive approach from managers and stakeholders across the organization. However, safety training can play a significant role in enhancing efforts. Construction companies can adopt several strategies to elevate employee engagement through safety training:

Personalize the Training Experience: Tailoring safety training to address specific roles and responsibilities ensures that the content is relevant and impactful. For example, training sessions designed for crane operators should focus on safe rigging practices and load management, while sessions for electricians should emphasize electrical hazard prevention and proper use of protective equipment. Employees who see the direct application of training to their tasks are more likely to engage actively. In addition, personalized training can address unique challenges and risks associated with specific job

functions, making it even more effective.

Incorporate Feedback Mechanisms: Soliciting feedback from employees about the safety training programs can provide valuable insights for improvement. This inclusion helps employees feel heard and valued. Implementing their suggestions can lead to more effective and relevant trainings. Feedback can be collected anonymously through a hotline or messaging drop box. You can also ask your crew to deliver feedback during your routine meetings.

Foster a Collaborative Environment: Encouraging team-based training sessions where employees can share experiences and solutions promotes a sense of community and collective responsibility. Such collaboration allows employees to learn from each other's experiences and best practices, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of the safety training.

Effective safety training is a powerful tool for improving employee engagement in construction. By investing in comprehensive, interactive, and accessible training programs, employers can create a safer and more productive work environment. This commitment to safety not only protects employees but also fosters a culture of trust, loyalty and collaboration. Ultimately, enhancing safety training strategies is an investment in the wellbeing and satisfaction of the workforce, leading to long-term success and sustainability for the company. 



About the Author

Rebecca Williams is a controller for health and safety at [Aerotek](#).

About the Article

Reprinted from [Construction Executive](#), July, 2025, a publication of [Associated Builders and Contractors](#). Copyright 2025. All rights reserved. Associated Builders and Contractors is a national construction industry trade association representing more than 21,000 members. Based on the merit shop philosophy, ABC helps its members develop people, win work, and deliver work safely, ethically, and profitably for the betterment of the communities in which they work.

Any views and opinions expressed in this article may or may not reflect the views and opinions of the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA). By publishing this piece, CMAA is not expressing endorsement of the individual, the article, or their association, organization, or company.