Toolbox talk template (pack of 12)

A toolbox talk is a short talk to the people doing the work on one health and safety topic. This pack gives twelve outlines to adapt (four key points, two discussion prompts, a place to record who gave it and when, and a sign-on sheet each), a guide to giving a talk, a topic log and a talk record sheet for questions, actions and follow-up. The key points are examples to change to your own site, equipment and procedures; they are not a complete rule set, and no source sets their wording. A talk does not replace training, competence checks, a permit briefing or a risk assessment. A safety moment (one message, one question, one commitment) and a safety observation record (a note of something seen) are separate forms. Not legal advice.

Giving a talk

Before

- Pick a topic from your own hazards, inspections, incident, near miss and observation reports, worker feedback or the work about to start
- Take the outline, add local detail (which ladder, which extinguisher, which procedure) and cut what does not apply here
- Choose a place near the work, with the real equipment to hand
- Decide who will answer questions you cannot, and where actions will be logged

During

- Say what the talk is about and keep to that one topic; about five to seven minutes is our planning figure
- Use your own words and the real equipment, and tell the group why it matters to this job today
- Ask the two prompts and wait for answers; write down what is said
- If you do not know an answer, say so, name who will find it and by when
- Sign on everyone present

After

- Complete the record sheet (page 6) the same day, with the questions raised and actions agreed
- Put each action in your action log with an owner and a date; write its number on the sheet
- Brief anyone who was absent and record when
- At the next talk, tell the group what happened to their points
- Review now and then: do the topics match what your own reports show?

Topic log: the twelve outlines (pages 2 to 5)

No.	Topic	Why chosen now (incident, near miss, observation, inspection, coming task, other)	Date delivered	Delivered by
1	**Working at Height**			
2	**Hot Work & Fire Watch**			
3	**Slips, Trips & Falls**			
4	**PPE: When and Why**			
5	**Manual Handling & Lifting**			
6	**Lone Working**			
7	**Electrical Safety**			
8	**Confined Space Awareness**			
9	**Chemical Handling & Spills**			
10	**Tool & Equipment Safety**			
11	**Driving for Work**			
12	**Mental Health & Fatigue**			

The order is not a calendar. Choose the talk that fits the work and the hazards this week, and add your own topics on a copy of any outline.

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1 Working at Height

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Ask first whether the work can be done from the ground; if not, choose a way to prevent a fall before a way to reduce its effect
- Inspect ladders, scaffolds, platforms and harnesses before each use
- Confirm the anchor points and the equipment in use are suitable, and that the people relying on them know how
- Agree the rescue arrangements before work starts, not after a fall

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

2 Hot Work & Fire Watch

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Permit or written authorisation in place where your site requires one for this job
- Move combustibles away or protect them; set the distance from your own assessment and procedure
- Suitable extinguisher within reach of the work
- Someone watches for fire during the work, and for as long afterwards as your procedure sets

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

3 Slips, Trips & Falls

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Report spills and leaks straight away and mark the area until it is cleaned
- Keep walkways, stairs and exits clear
- Wear footwear that suits the floor and the job
- Mind cables, hoses and uneven surfaces: route them, cover them or tell someone

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

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4 PPE: When and Why

Key points (examples to adapt)

- PPE is the last line of defence: look first at removing or reducing the hazard at its source
- Inspect it before each use, as the maker's instructions say
- Replace damaged kit straight away; do not improvise or carry on
- Fit matters: if it does not fit or gets in the way of the work, speak up

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by

Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

5 Manual Handling & Lifting

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Assess the load: weight, shape, how far it goes and where it ends up
- Use a trolley, hoist or other aid where you can
- Keep the load close, bend the knees, avoid twisting
- Team lift what is too heavy or awkward: agree who leads and the signal first

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by

Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

6 Lone Working

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Agree check-in and check-out with someone who will notice if one is missed
- Carry a charged phone or alarm and know that it works where you will be
- Know who to call and what happens if a check-in is missed
- Risk-assess the task before starting alone; some tasks should not be done alone

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by

Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

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7 Electrical Safety

Key points (examples to adapt)

- No daisy-chained extension leads and no overloaded sockets
- Damaged cable, plug or tool: stop using it, tag it out and report it
- Use the protection your site specifies on portable tools, for example residual current devices
- Lock off the supply before maintenance; only authorised people work on electrical equipment

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

8 Confined Space Awareness

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Enter only under your site's permit or entry system
- Test the atmosphere first, as your procedure requires
- Keep monitoring during the work, with an attendant outside
- Rescue arrangements planned and practised; never go in after someone without them

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

9 Chemical Handling & Spills

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Read the label and the safety data sheet first
- Wear the PPE that the data sheet and your assessment specify
- Know where the spill kit is and how to use it
- Report exposures and spills immediately

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

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10 Tool & Equipment Safety

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Right tool for the job, used as it was designed to be used
- Check before use: guards in place, cables and handles sound
- Report defects and take the item out of use; do not use it
- Store tools safely after use so they are found in good order

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

11 Driving for Work

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Check the vehicle before the trip: tyres, lights, load secured
- Phone away while driving: stop somewhere safe first, in line with your policy and local rules
- Plan the journey and rest breaks
- Adjust for weather, load and tiredness; do not drive when too tired

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

12 Mental Health & Fatigue

Key points (examples to adapt)

- Recognise the signs in yourself and in others
- Speak up: it is fine to ask for help
- Manage workload and breaks; say when shifts or tasks are piling up
- Know what support exists, such as an employee assistance service

Make it local (place, equipment, procedure number)

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here?

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently?

Delivered by	Date delivered

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

More than eight people: use the signature list on the talk record sheet (page 6).

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Talk record sheet

One sheet per talk, completed the same day. Copy it as needed. Record what was said and agreed, not a verdict on anyone; the sheet shows the talk happened and what followed it, and does not by itself show that anyone understood or was competent.

Topic and why it was chosen now (incident, near miss, observation, inspection, coming task, other)			
Date delivered	Time and minutes taken	Site, area or crew	Delivered by (name, role)

Format

☐ Spoken at the work area ☐ Demonstration with real equipment ☐ Handout or card ☐ Video ☐ Other

Key points covered (tick each, or note what was left out and why)

☐ Point 1 ☐ Point 2 ☐ Point 3 ☐ Point 4 ☐ Added local points

Discussion prompt 1: When did this last happen here? What the group said

Discussion prompt 2: What would we do differently? What the group said

Attendance

Sign-on sheet (name, signature)	Signature	Name	Signature

Absent crew briefed later (name, date, by whom)

Questions, actions and follow-up

Questions or concerns raised	Answer, or who will find it out	Actions agreed	Owner	Due	Action log no.

Follow-up (what was checked, by whom, on what date; what the group was told at the next talk)

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Delivered by (presenter)			
Reviewed by (supervisor or manager)			

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