

Tips and Ideas

from Institute of Occupational Health Sciences Spring Symposium
Temporary and Contingent Worker Safety and Health: Best practices,
challenges and solutions

May 28, 2015

This handout supplements the webinar recording that is available at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/research/centers-institutes/oregon-institute-occupational-health-sciences/outreach/temporary-worker.cfm>

These tips and ideas were shared by attendees during large and small group discussions. The final afternoon breakout discussions concentrated on these three topics: 1) *Coalition Building/Resources*; 2) *Unique challenges and practices addressing worker compensation and return-to-work for temporary workers*; and, 3) *Preventing injuries and illnesses to workers who are “overeager” or when appropriate training and knowledge doesn’t match job duties*.

Best Practice Tips & Ideas for Moving Ahead

- Language barrier: find friend or family to translate.
- Partner new employees with experienced employees who speak same language.
- Have a senior employee or supervisor who can identify with the culture and language of the temporary worker; this will convey the importance of asking for help by countering the “machismo” attitude and/or overcoming shyness, and increase engagement, in addition to facilitating better training and knowledge transfer
- Get standardized translated forms.
- As a last resort, use Google Translate (high error risk and much is lost in translation, especially in a cultural context)
- Continued check-ins with temporary workers after they’re employed
- Offer employee feedback on time sheets, or use that time to connect with workers to offer appreciation and tips.
- Offer ways for employees to share feedback anonymously (e.g., Box).
- Work with your insurance carrier to assess risk.
- Make sure you document special circumstance; duration of assignment (i.e., ensure you understand state staffing laws).
- Use OSHA consultation and your WC safety consultants.

- Require host to use teach back or require proficiency demonstration to confirm knowledge of skill or safety required.
- Have written company policies, job descriptions, bank of modified work jobs, etc.
- Clarify if there will be multiple jobs done/cross training in work environment.
- Make a wish list of what you'd like under Employee Assistance Program.
- (Staffing agency) Go see what the employee is doing.
- Should be walkthrough before placement.
- Consider offering discount to client to help fill light duty for return-to-work if needed.
- Make employer accountable to provide modified work opportunities for temporary workers who get hurt at their facility.
- Train recruiters to know safety and health.
- Identify troubled company (clients to select agencies best addressing safety and health).
- Staffing agencies can potentially move injured worker to another employer for matched light duty or modified work if it isn't available at workplace where injury originated.
- Evaluating safety culture with employees.
- Get commitment to allow return to work at client job site.
- Lose the term "temp" when referring to employees. Treat them like part of team. Consider calling everyone "team member."
- Return to work – try to get client to take back and provide modified duty.
- Temporary employees need to be part of health, safety and environment system and audit.
- Share injury and near miss reports for all workers, permanent and temporary.
- Encourage temporary workers to participate in client safety committee meetings and to feel welcome.
- Have a process for ensuring client is adequately trained (PPE, procedures and policies, emergencies).
- Keep different training materials (audio; tech; photos; videos) on hand to be available to those with different learning styles, levels of education and with different languages.
- Be aware that it can be difficult to assess job sites where work is variable, requiring more diligence.
- Establish a procedure for dealing urgent requests (fire and restorations), and addressing sites and jobs where orientation is difficult or more complex.

- Temp/leasing firm walkthrough – interview employees; supervisors; etc for sense of safety culture.
- California created a structure for a coalition through the [AB1897](#) law. Cal-OSHA has a subcommittee to hold both, staffing agencies and host companies responsible and through the AB1897 can identify organizations that violate rules (e.g., wage theft and other forms of temporary worker abuse)
- Oregon Legislation can address bills that highlight concerns, e.g., wage theft, minimum wage increase
- Potential partners moving ahead: OR-SHARP and Roseburg: independent association of industries; American Staffing Association: safety committee that meets with federal OSHA and writes documents; State staffing associations; Regional staffing associations
- Moving ahead: All of these organizations can operate together to share resources, and target misconceptions that often surround staffing agencies. A viable plan could be to have a coalition of three West Coast states—Washington, Oregon, and California