



## **Situational Awareness: Training Ideas for Attainment**

A WSA member wrote to us saying: “I have a topic that is larger than the sum of any one man. I know because I have been trying to change the way my crew approaches their daily tasks and it can be a struggle at best. Maybe you can assist me in getting my message clearly understood.

“My topic is “situational awareness” every day and even more during the holidays. How can we help individuals “see” what they are only looking at — if that makes sense.

“All too often our employees are so focused on their tasks at hand that they don’t take the time to “see” possible dangers: bulk items, signs down, people lurking in the middle of the night, and just plainly being more aware of our surroundings. What might be done to make headway on this training topic?”

### **AI’s Answer...**

To effectively enhance situational awareness among your team, especially during busy periods like the holidays, consider implementing a structured approach that combines training, practical exercises, and a culture of vigilance. Here are several strategies to help your employees become more aware of their surroundings and potential hazards:

### **Training Programs**

1. Situational Awareness Training: Regular training sessions can help employees recognize and respond to threats. Consider utilizing courses that focus on situational awareness principles, such as identifying hazards and understanding the importance of vigilance in various scenarios.

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2. Interactive Workshops: Facilitate workshops that encourage team discussions about past incidents or near misses. This can help employees learn from real-life examples and understand the importance of being aware of their environment.

### **Practical Exercises**

1. SLAM Method: Teach your team the SLAM method—Stop, Look, Assess, Manage. This technique encourages employees to pause before starting a task to evaluate their surroundings for potential risks:

- Stop: Reflect on the task at hand.
- Look: Observe the area for any hazards.
- Assess: Identify risks and ensure they have the necessary tools and training.
- Manage: Take action to mitigate identified risks.

2. Role-Playing Scenarios: Use role-playing exercises to simulate emergency situations or common hazards in the workplace. This hands-on approach can help employees practice their responses in a controlled environment.

### **Creating a Safety Culture**

1. Encourage Reporting: Foster an environment where employees feel comfortable reporting unsafe conditions or behaviors. Implement a “Stop Work Authority” policy that empowers staff to halt operations if they perceive a danger.

2. Regular Safety Meetings: Hold frequent safety briefings to discuss situational awareness tips and share observations from the team regarding potential hazards they have noticed during their shifts.

3. Visual Reminders: Utilize signage and visual aids throughout the workplace to remind employees of key safety protocols and situational awareness practices. For example, signs that prompt them to “Look Up” or “Be Aware” can be effective.

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### **Promoting Continuous Improvement**

1. **Feedback Mechanisms:** After training sessions or drills, gather feedback from participants about what they learned and how they can apply it in their daily tasks. This can help reinforce lessons learned and identify areas for further improvement.
2. **Monitor Progress:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of your situational awareness initiatives through observations and employee feedback. Adjust your training programs based on these evaluations to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

*By integrating these strategies into your team's routine, you can cultivate a culture of situational awareness that not only enhances safety but also empowers employees to take proactive measures against potential dangers in their environment.*

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