



# Toolbox Talks

## Safety Stand Downs



**LeeMax Safety Solutions, LLC**

Safety Training, Staffing, Consulting, Supplies

There is no set formula for conducting a stand-down in construction, but putting together a plan that prioritizes the end goal and keeps participants engaged typically involves some key steps.

### **1. Establish purpose and goals**

The first step is to define the purpose of the stand-down. This could be to address a specific safety concern, reinforce safety policies, or discuss recent incidents that occurred offsite or onsite. The goals of the stand-down should be clear and measurable. Setting goals enables management to ensure that safety measures are being adhered to.

### **2. Plan and schedule the safety stand-down**

Construction firms should schedule the stand-down at a time that is convenient for all employees. It should also be long enough to cover all the necessary topics without rushing, but shouldn't waste critical work time that affects the project's completion timeline. Executives and managers need to ensure that as many workers attend the meeting as possible.

### **3. Prepare discussion topics**

The topics construction firms should discuss during the stand-down should be relevant to the employees and the work they do. This could include job-specific hazards, protective methods, recent incidents, industry developments, the company's safety policies, and more. Speakers should prepare to answer all relevant questions workers may have.

### **4. Decide on speakers or engaging activities**

Depending on the size and nature of the company, the stand-down could include presentations by safety experts, discussions led by supervisors, or interactive activities like equipment inspections or rescue plan development. These activities can lead to a more active and receptive audience which should result in better safety results.

### **5. Execute the stand-down**

In addition to proper planning, executing the stand-down is equally important. Below are some key steps to ensure the stand-down runs smoothly:

1154 46th Street  
Vienna, WV 26105  
(681) 229-1457

[admin@leemaxss.com](mailto:admin@leemaxss.com)  
[www.leemaxss.com](http://www.leemaxss.com)



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- a. Create an inviting environment:** The environment should be conducive to open discussion and learning. This could involve arranging the space in a way that encourages interaction, or providing refreshments.
- b. Host an engaging presentation:** Construction firms should present the information in a clear and engaging way. This could involve using visual aids, real-life examples, or interactive activities.
- c. Encourage employee interaction and engagement:** Employees should be encouraged to participate in the discussion, ask questions, and share their experiences.
- d. Provide feedback opportunities:** Employees should have the opportunity to provide feedback on the stand-down, including what they found helpful and what could be improved. This feedback is critical to help management create more effective safety meetings.
- e. Communicate future plans:** At the end of the stand-down, construction firms should clearly communicate the next steps to their employees. This could include any changes to safety procedures, follow-up training, or future stand-downs. Without actionable next steps, a jobsite team may not progress toward their safety goals.

### 6. Take action after the stand-down

Once the stand-down is completed, both leadership teams and employees should have actionable steps to take. These could include:

- a. Compile and review employee feedback:** This feedback can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the stand-down and areas for improvement.
- b. Update and implement safety procedures/plans:** If the stand-down identified areas where construction forms could improve safety procedures or plans, they should make these changes and communicate them to the employees.

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[www.leemaxss.com](http://www.leemaxss.com)