

G908B

Inductions, toolbox talks and briefings

GUIDANCE TO PRESENTERS OF TALKS & BRIEFINGS

Related process:

[P908](#) *Inductions, toolbox talks and briefings*

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these notes is to assist Supervisors to deliver effective briefings to site personnel and others.

2. GENERAL MATTERS

2.1 Minimising distractions

The presenter should ensure that the talk will have the minimum of distractions or disruptions — such as from people coming or going, noise from plant and equipment, and the weather.

2.2 Visual aids

All material used should be directly relevant to the talk being given and involve only simple equipment. Check that everything needed is readily available. Can material be seen by the group or will it need to be handed round? Photographs and diagrams may need to be enlarged so that they are big enough to create impact.

2.3 Time and effort

The time and effort that is put into preparing and delivering a briefing session will have a direct effect on the quality and effectiveness of the talk.

2.4 The presenter's attitude, sincerity, knowledge and enthusiasm

The attitude of the presenter will have a marked effect on the effectiveness of the briefing.

The operatives at a briefing session will instinctively know whether the presenter is sincere — it will have an adverse effect on the group if this is not so.

It is essential that the presenter has adequate knowledge on the subject. A briefing should not be a one-way session and the presenter should act as a discussion leader. This is very important, particularly if there are people in the group who are experienced and knowledgeable in the subject themselves.

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Enthusiasm is a vital component. If the presenter is enthusiastic and displays an appropriate level of interest, this will help to involve and enthuse the members of the group.

2.5 Method statement briefings

Briefings relating to risk assessments or method statements should, where possible, be carried out at the location at which the activity is to take place. The presenter should encourage discussion to ensure that the participants have clearly understood the hazards associated with the activity and the control measures that are to be applied.

3. THE PRESENTATION

3.1 Introduction to session

It is important to get the involvement of everyone right from the start. Welcome them to the talk and give information about the session — what the briefing is about, why it is being held and how long it will last.

3.2 Delivery

Speaking to a group, like conducting any form of safety meeting or training session, is not easy. It will, however, become less difficult with practice, particularly if sufficient time and effort has been put into preparing for the session.

Key points of delivery technique include the following:—

- Speak clearly and ensure that everyone can hear.
- Talk at an even pace, which is neither too fast nor too slow.
- Maintain eye contact with the whole of the group by looking at everyone individually. **This is a very important point.** Do not concentrate on just one or two people or on a small section of the group.
- Use confident body language which is non-threatening, avoiding pointing at anyone. Do not remain static with folded arms but, conversely, do not move about so much that it distracts the audience.
- Get people's attention.
- Use humour in the right place at the right time, but be serious when highlighting the key points. Remember that health and safety is a serious subject and must not be treated in a flippant manner.
- A good beginning and a good ending are important. People will tend to remember them, so it is vital that they contain good key points.
- Make sure that those attending will remember the critical points by concentration on relevant information at every stage of the session. Limit the

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briefing to **three** or **four** stages with no more than **five** pieces of information at each stage.

3.3 The use of questions

Questions are one method of obtaining the involvement of the group and maintaining people's interest. Points to bear in mind are:

- Pose questions during the talk. People will start thinking when a question is asked, so do not wait until the end.
- The process of asking a question should be to **ask** the question, **pause** to give people time to think and **choose** the person you want to answer.
- Give as many people as possible get the opportunity to answer questions.
- If someone gives an incorrect answer, do not ridicule. Re-state the question, making sure it is clear, and give people time to answer.
- Avoid giving the answer yourself unless there is no alternative.
- When an answer is given, repeat the reply so that the whole group can hear. This will allow the understanding of the answer given to be checked and will give people in the group an opportunity to contribute their experience or knowledge.

3.4 Common mistakes in delivery

Common mistakes include:

- Lack of proper preparation.
- Appearing to be insincere or lacking enthusiasm.
- Simply reading from the card, using it as a script rather than as a reminder.
- Playing with something in a pocket or in the hand, for example, jingling coins or keys. It is a distraction and the group will tend to concentrate on the presenter's behaviour instead of the subject of the talk.
- Talking or mumbling in such a low voice that the group will have difficulty in hearing.
- Talking too fast or alternatively talking too slowly.
- Allowing the discussion to be side tracked onto another subject. For example, if someone raises a different problem, make a quick note and tell the person that it can be discussed separately at the end of the session.
- Not looking at the group but staring, or looking at just one person.

3.5 Conclusion

At the end of the presentation:

- Ask the group if they have any questions. Pose key questions that will show whether people have taken in and understood the subject matter.

- Summarise with two or three key points delivered in a positive manner.
- Thank people for listening.
- Keep a record of those who have attended, preferably by using a form.