



ERGONOMICS TOOL BOX TALK (TBT) TRAINING GUIDE

Why should I use this ergonomics TBT training guide?

- Ergonomics training using a TBT format may help with improving leading indicators for injury prevention (e.g. workers' knowledge, skills, and use of solutions) for reducing the risk of musculoskeletal injuries in construction.

What is different about these TBTs?

- They were designed to relate ergonomics information to the crew's current job.
- They provide a simple format for planning and leading open discussions about ergonomics with the work crew.
- They help with pointing out problems: current injury risks or issues in work tasks that make it hard to do the work.
- They give suggestions for ergonomic solutions: ways to make work tasks easier to do.
- They are based on research with multiple construction trades.

How were these TBT developed?

Based on a 3 year ergonomics training study with floor layers, sheet metal workers and carpenters, WU researchers developed TBTs for safety reps to use in their safety efforts. During the construction of a mixed residential building, WU researchers performed a case study of the TBTs with the help of a general contractor's safety rep, a union carpenter, and a crew of 36 workers.

Continue reading on page 2 for more information about these Tool Box Talks.

Who should use this training guide?

- Safety representatives who conduct worksite safety training. This includes safety managers, foremen, or crew leads.

Where do I start?

- Read this guide for TBT instructions and to learn about how the TBTs were developed.
- Review the TBTs and consider how you can fit them to your crew's work and safety trainings.

List of Tool Box Talks

1. Ergonomics in Construction
2. Keep Reach Close
3. Positioning
4. Move Materials With Assist
5. Manual Tools
6. Power Tools

Example of Training Cards





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How should I plan for the TBTs?

- ✓ Begin by reviewing TBT 1, Ergonomics in Construction, to become familiar with the training information.
- ✓ Walk the site and take notes for training points that apply to your crew.
 - If possible, take photos of “safe” and “unsafe” examples to share with the crew during the TBT.
- ✓ Write down discussion questions to ask the group.
- ✓ Plan on preparing for each TBT using this checklist.

What else should I know about these TBTs?

The case study showed these TBTs may potentially:

- Improve the delivery of ergonomics training.
- Help safety reps prepare site specific information.
- Improve open discussion of problems and ergonomic solutions between safety reps and workers.
- Maximize the opportunity for workers to participate during these important safety meetings.

When and where should I hold the TBT?

- If possible, give the TBTs as a part of the crew’s regular safety meetings so that ergonomics is included in the safety discussion.
- Try to locate an area with few distractions for gathering the crew.

Who should attend the TBT?

- For a team approach, invite the work crew, site superintendent, project manager and other general contractor and/or subcontractor reps who you feel may be helpful in supporting the training and ergonomics solutions.

What should I bring to the TBT?

- Bring the TBT that you prepared (from the checklist above) with your problem/solution examples and discussion questions.
- Prepare training cards (located on the last page of each TBT) to hand out at the beginning of each talk for workers to follow along.
 - If possible, provide a spring clip or keychain to keep the cards together and remind workers about the talks.
- Remind workers to bring their clip of cards to each TBT.

What were the findings from the TBT case study?

- Ergonomic solutions discussed during the TBTs were used by workers.
- After learning about the results from the case study, the general contractor shared the TBTs company-wide with all of their safety reps for future use.

Safety Rep Feedback

- TBTs were easy to review and prepare 10 minutes before the TBT.
- Able to personalize the talk.
- Felt the information was the right amount and applied to the work.

Worker Feedback

- TBT format was better than their regular safety talks.
- TBTs applied to their job.
- Felt comfortable participating.
- Will recommend the training to others.