

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Identify and clarify the health and safety problem. What is the risk? Some issues create more of a hazard and risk than others. Some are annoyances, such as not meeting regularly. The first step is to pinpoint the problem.
2. Gather information. Learn more about the problem. What is the cause of the problem and what may be a solution. You may have to do an internet search, have a brainstorming session with the committee. Look at old committee reports. Check the first aid book. Look at all incidents that have occurred and talk to workers.
3. Evaluate the information. What information did you review? Does the information represent both the worker reps and the employer reps? How accurate is the information? Is it fact or based on the opinion of the committee.
4. Consider alternatives and implications. Draw conclusions from the information and recommend solutions. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each resolution? Most important which solution eliminates the health and safety risk from workers. Cost should not be a factor.
5. Choose the best solution and draft the recommendation. Make sure once the recommendation has been accepted that you follow up and monitor the situation.

**EXAMPLE OF A RECOMMENDATION
WHICH WOULD GO TO THE EMPLOYER**

Date:	
Location:	
Who is on committee:	
Issue:	Needle Stick Injuries

Background

Five workers at Camosun College reported needle stick injuries. Information on whether this is a provincial issue or one related to our site is not available at this time. These injuries exposed workers to bloodborne pathogens, which can cause infection. The most important of these are Hepatitis B and C viruses.

Infections to each of these pathogens are potentially life threatening and preventable.

Discussion - Analysis

The workers who have been exposed have suffered emotional impact - with three still being absent from employment. Currently we have not included needle stick injuries as part of the stress counselling program.

In analysing needle stick injuries in the work place we have identified the following injury trends:

Most were as a result of accidental puncture from students leaving used needles in the wastebasket or in washrooms:

Conclusions - Health and Safety Recommendations

The health and safety committee recommends the following action plan:

1. Workers need to be trained and educated regarding risk factors
This could be accomplished at a staff meeting. The duration should be two hours.
2. Promote safety awareness in the work environment We would recommend posters or fact sheets. One a month for four months starting Jan 1, 2001.
3. Establish procedures for reporting and follow-up of needlestick injuries. This is a requirement of the Workers Compensation Act and Regulation section 6.33 Biohazardous material. A copy is attached for your reference.
4. Develop a written exposure control plan designed to eliminate or minimize worker exposure to bloodborne pathogens This is to be done in the next month on a joint basis (worker and employer participation).
5. Change work practises to eliminate worker exposure. Change how frequently garbage is removed.
6. Free hepatitis B vaccinations should be offered to all workers.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the committee recommendations please do hesitate in contacting either of the two co-chairs of the committee The committee requires a written response within 21 days of this letter. Thanking you in advance for your attention regarding this matter.

Co chair

Co-chair