TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-WAD · Work as Planned, Work as Done Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: Workers, leading hands and supervisors in every workplace · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 20 November 2026

For every crew: why the way a job is written down and the way it is really done drift apart, why speaking up about a procedure that does not work is wanted, why critical controls are never shortcut, and how to raise a gap.

Every procedure, safe work instruction and SWMS or equivalent is a plan for how a job should go. Real jobs meet late deliveries, missing tools, breakdowns, night shifts and short-staffed days, and people adapt to get the work done. Over time the way a job is written down and the way it is really done drift apart. The gap is normal, and most of it is people making the work work. It only becomes dangerous when nobody talks about it, or when it reaches a critical control.

This talk explains the gap and why it opens, why the business wants to hear about procedures that do not work, why critical controls are never shortcut, why anyone unsure stops and asks, how to raise a gap, and what the business will do with it. In the group activity the crew picks one routine job and maps how it is written against how it is really done. It is awareness, not training in writing procedures or investigating incidents.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Explain the difference between work as planned and work as done, and why a gap between them is normal
- Recognise why the gap opens: time, tools, people, conditions and procedures written for an ideal day
- Know that speaking up about a procedure that does not work is wanted, not a complaint
- Never shortcut a critical control, and stop and ask when unsure
- Raise a gap the right way, and know what the business will do with it
- Map how a routine job is written against how it is really done

What it covers

Module	Covers
Why it matters	Work as planned and work as done; Why the gap opens; A gap is not the same as breaking the rules
Controls that work	Critical controls: no gap; Fix the procedure or fix the conditions; Procedures written with the people who do the job
Your part	Stop when unsure; Raise the gap; What happens next

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Activities

- How it's written, how we really do it: the crew picks one routine job and maps the written steps against how the job really goes
- What would you do: workers decide what to do in four situations where the procedure and the job do not match, from a missing tool to a control that cannot be applied

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Is this telling workers they can ignore procedures? No. It explains why procedures and real work drift apart, and asks workers to raise the gap so the procedure or the conditions can be fixed. Procedures are still followed, critical controls are never shortcut, and anyone unsure stops and asks. It is not a disciplinary process, and it does not replace your business's own procedures or its consultation arrangements.

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

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TOOLBOX TALK

Work as Planned, Work as Done Awareness

How the job is written, and how it is really done

20–30 minutes · Workers, leading hands and supervisors in every workplace

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

WAD

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What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ Work as planned and work as done
- ✓ Why the gap opens
- ✓ Critical controls: no gap
- ✓ Raising a gap, and what happens next

This talk is not

- ✗ Writing procedures
- ✗ An incident investigation
- ✗ Permission to work around a control
- ✗ Our process: **[How we change procedures]**

Awareness only. Licensed work still needs its own licence, training and competency.

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Work as planned, work as done

Every procedure is a plan. Real days are not ideal days.

- Work as planned: the procedure, SWI, SWMS or equivalent
- Work as done: how the job really goes
- People adapt to late parts, breakdowns and short crews
- Most adapting is people making the work work
- A gap is not the same as breaking the rules

A composite example

- The procedure says to use the trolley to move the drums. The trolley has had a flat tyre for a month.
- The crew carries the drums by hand. Nobody has said anything, because the job still gets done.

The gap is normal. Not talking about it is the problem.

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Why the gap opens

The conditions on the day

- Not enough time, or a deadline moved
- The right tool or part is missing
- Short-staffed, or a new crew member
- Night shift, breakdowns, start-up
- Contractors who do it their way

The procedure itself

- Written for an ideal day
- Out of date: the plant or site changed
- Too long, or steps in the wrong order
- Never tested on the real job
- Written without the crew

Fix the conditions, or fix the procedure. Blame fixes neither.

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Duties under health and safety laws

The business must

- Provide safe systems of work
- Consult workers on how work is done
- Keep procedures and controls working
- Act on the gaps workers raise

You must

- Follow procedures and critical controls
- Stop and ask when unsure
- Raise a procedure that does not work
- Report hazards and near misses

Most health and safety laws give these duties. Check the law where you work (in Australia, WHS or OHS laws).

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Work as Planned, Work as Done Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

How a job is written and how it is really done drift apart. Talk about it. Keep this page.

Closing a gap: the order of controls

1. Redesign the job so the workaround is not needed
2. A safer method or tool
3. Keep people away from the hazard
4. Fix the equipment or access
5. Procedures rewritten with the crew
6. The right PPE, last

Critical controls

- ■ No gap: never shortcut, skipped or adapted
- ■ Cannot apply it? The job stops
- ■ Not sure? Stop and ask

Never

- ■ Work around a critical control
- ■ Copy a quicker way before it is checked

Before the job

- ☐ Do I know which steps of my job are critical controls?
- ☐ Do I know the rule: not sure, stop and ask?
- ☐ Do I know how to raise a gap, and who to tell?
- ☐ Do I know what happens to a gap once it is raised?
- ☐ Have I told someone about a procedure that does not fit the job?

What happens to a gap

- ■ We sort it: can it be followed? Safer or riskier?
- ■ We fix the procedure or the conditions, and tell you

Raise a gap

- ■ **[How to raise a gap here]**
- ■ **[Who to report to here]**

The gap is normal: talk about it. Critical controls: no gap. Not sure? Stop and ask.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not training in writing procedures or investigating incidents.

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