

Safety Talk

Survey the Scene

You walk into the workplace and find a coworker collapsed on the floor. What do you do? The most important thing to do is to look at the setting that you find your coworker in, not just your coworker. Important information that can help save the victim can be gathered by looking at the whole picture. There are several questions to ask yourself that will help you focus on collecting the pertinent information. But remember to always alert your supervisor and/or call 911/ emergency services ASAP.

Can you safely approach the victim?

This is crucial because you don't want to become someone else that needs help. You should check for fallen electrical wires, fire and any unusual smells that could indicate the presence of some kind of toxic gas or fumes. Any of the things would make it unsafe for you to try to help your injured coworker. In this kind of situation the safest thing for you (and the coworker) is to immediately call 911 or EMS and provide all of your observation of the scene. This information will allow the professionals to prepare for the type of rescue they're facing.

Is the victim in immediate danger of further injury?

If/when you reach the victim, decide if it's safe to leave the victim where they are. It is best to leave a victim where you find them unless doing so puts them in immediate danger; is there a fire or fallen wires? Moving a victim, unless absolutely necessary, could worsen their injury. By moving someone with a closed fracture (a break where the bone remains covered by skin), you could cause it to become a more serious, potentially life-threatening open fracture where the bone ends push through the skin resulting in bleeding and muscle and nerve damage. Improperly moving someone with a head or neck injury could cause paralysis or death. If the victim must be moved, you need to follow these important precautions:

- You must provide support for the victim's head and spine.
- You must never bend or twist the victim.
- You should drag the victim to safety, keeping the body straight, never drag them sideways.
- When moving someone, be sure to use good body mechanics to keep your back safe; keep your back straight, knees bent and stand close to the victim.

What has happened?

If the victim is conscious, ask for details; how did the accident happen and where does it hurt? The victim may be able to tell you if anyone else has been hurt. If the victim is unconscious or incoherent, look for clues in the immediate area; an overturned ladder may indicate a fall while exposed wires might point to electrocution.

Look closely at the victim for clues. Are they wearing a medical alert tag? This may tell you what happened and how best to help the victim. Are the ears, nose, head, face or neck bleeding? This may indicate a spinal injury. Any time there is the slightest chance of this type injury you should treat the victim as if it does exist.

How many people are injured?

Check the immediate area for anyone else that may have also been injured. Before approaching, be sure it is safe for you to do so. If you do find multiple victims, remember that the person screaming the loudest may not be injured as severely as an unconscious one.

Are there others that can help?

Anyone else in the area may be able to provide information about what happened including specific medical information about the victims. Bystanders can also help with the victims as well as keeping onlookers at a distance.

It is very noble that you want to help an injured coworker but it is important to keep these questions in mind so that you don't become another victim and worsen the situation.

Discussion Questions

What should you do if an injured coworker is surrounded by fallen live wires?

If there is a medical emergency at the workplace, what should be your first reaction?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

____/____/____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

____/____/____
Date