CrewSigned

Near Miss Reporting Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

A near miss is something that almost hurt someone but did not. A hammer that fell off the scaffold and landed a foot from a helper. A forklift that came around a corner and stopped just in time. A ladder that kicked out while nobody was on it. Nobody got hurt, so it is easy to laugh it off and keep working. But a near miss is a warning. The same thing will happen again, and next time the hammer might not miss.

For every serious injury, there are usually many close calls that came before it with the same cause. Each one was a chance to fix the problem for free. When we do not report them, we throw that chance away.

So what counts? Anything that could have caused an injury, illness or damage if things had gone a little differently. A load that shifted. A tool that kicked back. A step you missed. Equipment that failed. Something you noticed that was unsafe, even if nothing happened yet.

Reporting is quick. Tell me or your lead the same day, or use the report form. Say what happened, where, and what you think caused it. You do not need to know the fix. If you would rather not put your name on it, that is fine too.

Here is my promise. Nobody will be punished for reporting a near miss or a hazard, and nobody will be punished for reporting an injury. That is also the law: an employer cannot discourage people from reporting or retaliate against them for it. The point of a report is to find out what went wrong in the job, not to blame a person.

What happens with your report matters. We look at it, figure out the cause, and fix what we can, whether that is a guard, a procedure, a tool or a schedule. Then we come back and tell the crew what changed. If you report something and never hear back, ask me.

Some of the best safety improvements we make come from close calls. Every near miss you report is an injury we get to prevent instead of investigate.

Discussion questions

1. What is a close call you have seen on a job, and what would have stopped it?
2. What would make you hesitate to report a near miss here, and how can we fix that?
3. What near miss from the last month should we talk about today?

OSHA standard

29 CFR 1904.35, Employee involvement in reporting
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1904/1904.35

SOURCES

OSHA Safety Management, Worker Participation: https://www.osha.gov/safety-management/worker-participation
Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs (OSHA 3885): https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3885.pdf

This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC

Near Miss Reporting Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

#	Printed name	Signature	Company / trade
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			

Skip the paper: run this talk and collect signatures on phones at crewsigned.com