

Building Employee Buy-In



Employers will be more successful with policy compliance if employees actively support a policy.

A survey of National Safety Council members showed the importance of employee buy-in; employers without policies reported that “lack of employee support” was the #1 barrier. When employers with successful policies share what works, much of their advice is not about the policy itself, but about educating, inspiring and involving employees. ***To gain employee support to build a safe driving culture, use the following tips from organizations that have had success.***

Tips to build employee support

- Before policy implementation, hold open meetings to discuss the need for a policy with employees. Many materials in this Kit will help you communicate. Request feedback from employees anonymously if that’s helpful. Don’t spring a policy on employees as a surprise. This could result in long-term negativity and lack of respect for the policy. When unions are involved, the union steward is a key stakeholder. Hold a pre-meeting with union reps to get them on board.
- Recognize that for some employees, this policy will change deeply ingrained habits. Any change can bring initial stress. Give employees the opportunity to discuss potential barriers, conflicts with their beliefs and their doubts. These are objections, and hearing them is valuable because it gives you the opportunity to understand concerns and work through them together.
- Ask employees to offer solutions to these objections. This makes employees part of the decision-making. The solutions become things they choose to do.
- Employees must see and hear that top management supports the policy. Employees will sense the level of commitment. If you don’t have leadership commitment, consider delaying employee rollout until you do have management buy-in. After all, management is part of the employee population.
- Invite cross-department employee teams to solve barriers to implementation. Have teams share the solutions with all employees. While working together, they build and reinforce the social support for a policy.
- Have a mix of senior management, front-line supervisors, union representatives, and other employees serve as spokespeople for the new policy process.
- If someone in your company has a personal story, invite him/her to share it. Then ask employees to help prevent this from happening to other people.
- Involve employee stakeholders in shaping how compliance is supported through reminders, training, and follow-up steps
- After policy implementation, communicate positive results to employees. Consider surveying impact on productivity and share the results. The results are likely to be more positive than people expect.