



10 ways to engage staff when implementing an EHS solution

Introduction

When implementing a new environment, health and safety mobile app, engaging staff in the new working practices you're trying to roll out is vital in ensuring that the system is widely adopted and actively used across the workforce. After all, if employees are not inspired and motivated to embrace and follow the processes you're hoping to enforce, then subsequent results, return on investment and overall safety standards are likely to suffer.

In this white paper, NordSafety introduces some of the key ways that you can introduce a new EHS app in order to rouse interest and to impart value to those who will be using it.

Why do staff need to feel engaged?

Bringing a new EHS mobile system into the working practices of an organisation is a decision likely to be made by senior personnel or health and safety management team. The positives of using such a platform will have been weighed up, with the conclusion being to put the software into widespread operation to produce a safer and more efficient environment for all. At the buying stage, it's unlikely that opinions will have been sought from those who will be required to use the app on a daily basis, with the assumption being that take-up will be high, or mandatory, and that success rates will surely follow.

Whilst staff may be obliged to use the new digital methods you employ, those who feel unexcited to do so, intimidated by the technology, or inconvenienced by the change are not going to produce the best results. Using a new app should not feel like a chore for those in the field, but as a beneficial addition to the way they work.

In order for workers to view the roll out with positivity, they will need to understand the importance of the new approach, how it can assist them, and ultimately why they and their colleagues will be safer as a result.

Ways of engaging staff

Asking your workforce to feel immediately connected and enthused by a new way of working can be a challenge. They may be required to learn new skills and use different devices and methods, and some may be indifferent, or actively resistant to change.

Here are some of the ways that you can ensure that everyone is on the same page when establishing a new EHS mobile application:

1. Make personal safety paramount

Individuals can often take their own safety for granted; they may not be as concerned for their welfare as they should be, or simply be unaware of potential hazards. Staff should be made conscious of the necessity of their well-being, and the consequences of their actions, along with their responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and of their colleagues. Once workers understand the fundamental importance of staying out of harm's way and reducing risks for all, they are likely to feel more valued and welcome solutions that facilitate their protection.

2. Develop an EHSQ ecosystem

Create a culture where all individuals are part of a greater whole, with each having a part to play and a responsibility to others. All on-site staff should know that they are personally accountable for monitoring their working environment and helping to prevent incidents from occurring, and for using the new EHS app to the best of their ability. When done collectively, resolving or reporting hazards and registering maintenance issues can be a much more effective process, and a group mentality encourages all individuals to engage with their surroundings, have better safety awareness, and to guard themselves, colleagues and on-site third parties from harm.

3. Outline the company vision

When staff understand that safety really matters to your organisation, and why, they're more likely to want to help you to achieve your aims. Putting health and safety at the heart of your business will demonstrate that you are serious about minimising threats and potential problems, and will inspire loyalty. Outlining your core EHS values and displaying brand integrity will act as an incentive to your workforce, and will allow everyone to understand why you're taking new steps towards a smarter way of working.

4. Keep communicating

Explain why you're installing an EHS mobile platform, the way you envisage it being used and how it will aid the business to keep all members of the team, and relevant third parties informed about the process and its desired outcomes. Those who are resistant to change can be reassured by hearing what is going to happen, how it will affect them, and what part they are expected to play in achieving your goals. Communicating your reasoning and relaying the results you're expecting to see will help everyone to feel involved and more connected to the changes that are taking place, and to understand why they're necessary.

Good communication practices should also be extended to stakeholders by issuing reports and details of the new app implementation. The contractors and subcontractors used by your organisation should also be involved in all communication and training strategies.

5. Lead by example

Instructing employees to follow new guidelines or use a new system will not be effective without the support of those in authority. Higher management and supervisors must lead by example, showing how new procedures should be implemented correctly, supporting their team members to use the app constructively, and to instill a culture of positivity and collaboration from every level of the organisation. Appointing a specific project manager for the implementation provides a point of call for answering questions and making things happen.

6. Explain the personal benefits

Using a mobile app for health and safety tasks such as incident reporting, risk assessing and submitting observations doesn't just reduce the risk of accident and injury. It can also save users significant amounts of time on daily tasks, reduce paperwork and administrative efforts and allow them to access the tools they need from wherever they happen to be. Promoting the ways in which the EHS app will make things easier for everyone will go a long way towards staff and third parties viewing the new system as useful, helpful and an indispensable addition to the way they work and manage their EHSQ priorities.

7. Optimise your mobile investment

To maximise the likelihood of your new EHS app being adopted successfully, ensure it is used to its best advantage and is given the opportunity to fulfil its potential. This can be done by providing comprehensive training, increasing the chances of continuous and problem-free use, and promoting all features, so that every element is utilised. Consider how those required to do so will access the app, and provide smart devices to enable and accelerate use.

8. Be inclusive

Make sure that internal workers, and all individuals and third party companies working closely with your organisation, are actively involved in the rollout, rather than dictated to. It's important to run a pilot with a motivated group of users to collect ideas, including those who are usually averse to new apps or technology to gauge how they react. Creating an activation program helps users to become familiar with the new solution in an accessible manner, allows them to feel supported and clarifies what is expected of them moving forwards.

9. Give the workforce a voice

Empowering your staff to voice their thoughts, opinions and suggestions will make them feel more appreciated and engaged with the changes that are taking place. Request regular feedback on how the app is performing or how processes could be improved, and show that these views are being taken into consideration with your resulting actions.

10. Make it easy to engage

When rolling out your EHS mobile application, complicated and difficult instructions or unreasonable demands will act as deterrents to engagement. When your staff are already busy and focused on their core roles, avoid adding to their workload by keeping it as quick and simple as possible to learn a new system and to incorporate it into their full schedules.

Things to avoid when implementing an EHS mobile app:

- Nucleating commitment and change management
- Expecting to see results without leading by example
- Dictating new processes without clear explanation
- Failure to commit staff from the beginning, so that they feel excluded
- Allowing staff to feel indifferent or ignorant to the safety of themselves or others
- Being unclear on what is expected of users
- Providing insufficient training, instruction or incentive
- Giving complicated or unreasonable demands and targets

Summary

Implementing an EHS mobile platform across your business can make for a safer and more productive workforce, and ensuring that workforce is enthused, engaged and involved with the process will generate the best possible results.

When selecting EHS mobile software, outline realistic goals of what you wish to achieve in advance, and ask plenty of questions of how you can make this happen. Roll out the software in stages, and communicate the changes, benefits and expected results to your workforce. Give the correct training and support, and encourage feedback, as well as nurturing a culture of health and safety awareness and core values of staff welfare. Circulating news of successful results and praising staff activity will incentivise users even further.

In this way, employees will feel confident in the new technology, will have the tools they need to be more productive in their work, and will feel more inspired to take an active part in maintaining the safety of themselves and others around them.



Get your staff on side with NordSafety.

The NordSafety mobile solution creates a more engaged and productive workforce, promoting the reporting of incidents and increasing safety awareness throughout your facility. To see for yourself how NordSafety is leading the way in mobile EHSQ innovation, get started with a [guided product demo](#), or to find out more about ways our app could increase EHSQ participation, simply [contact our team](#).

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