



SUPERVISOR INSTRUCTIONS:

- Use toolbox trainings to encourage safety/environmental discussions during monthly meetings with employees.
- Campus Services' employees should maintain the employee sign-in sheet in their department's safety/environmental compliance binder as a record of training. All other groups should maintain a record of training in accordance with their Division's training procedures.

Increase Safety Awareness and Decrease Safety Incidents

Think about how many times you have jammed a finger or bumped into something while performing a task. How many times have you simply stumbled while walking? Is it possible these things happened because your mind wasn't 100% on what you were doing at that moment or because you didn't look for and control a hazard that was present? The answer is **YES**, because often:



- We become distracted by someone or something.
- We are so focused on our thoughts that we fail to recognize things around us that could cause injury.
- We don't take the time to assess our surroundings and plan our task.

Don't let a lack of safety awareness cause you to be injured at work or at home. **Always be aware of where you are, what is happening around you, and the steps you need to take to perform tasks safely.** Using the SLAM (Stop, Look, Assess, Manage) Technique, which is discussed below, can help you increase your safety awareness.

SLAM Technique

Planning your task and being aware of your surroundings will drastically reduce the chances of an **avoidable incident**. To increase awareness of your surroundings (also known as situational awareness):

- **Stop**, think about what you are about to do and ask:
 - Is this a new task?
 - Has the task changed?
 - Am I qualified to do this task?
- **Look** before, during, and after completing the task.
 - Survey your work area. Do you see any obvious hazards, such as:
 - Low-hanging overhead objects
 - Sharp edges
 - Standing water
 - Exposed wiring
 - Unguarded equipment
 - Housekeeping issues

SAFETY/ENVIRONMENTAL TOOLBOX TALKS – SAFETY AWARENESS

- Determine what needs to be done about the hazards you identified in the area.
- **Assess** whether you can perform the task safely.
 - Have you been trained?
 - Do you have the correct procedure?
 - Do you have the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) and tools?
 - Do you need help from a co-worker?
- **Manage** or eliminate the hazards before you begin the task.
 - If you need help controlling the hazards, notify your supervisor or the Environmental Health and Safety Office at 404-727-5922.
 - Wear your PPE and use the correct tools.
 - Adjust, minimize, or slow your movements as required by your work environment to avoid contact with objects.
 - Be aware of your body position and hands in relation to machinery, equipment, and other objects.

After you have completed the task:

- Ask yourself:
 - Did anything unexpected happen?
 - How can I be better prepared and plan for this in the future?
- Share your experiences at your next team meeting.

Remember: Workers who become too comfortable with their work surroundings may begin to overlook potential hazards.

Exercise on Awareness of Surroundings

1. Take out a sheet of paper and answer the following questions without taking your eyes off your paper:
 - What color are the walls?
 - How many lights are on the ceiling?
 - How many people are in the room with you?
 - Where is the nearest fire extinguisher?
 - Are there any markings or posters on the wall? If so, what do they say?
2. Share a story with the group about an incident or near miss you experienced.
 - What hazards should you have looked out for?
 - How could the incident have been prevented?

Credits

Content source: "Leadership and worker involvement toolkit. The SLAM technique." *Leadership and Worker Engagement Forum*. Accessed January 29, 2021. <https://hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/assets/downloads/slam.pdf>.