Ten-Minute Lab Safety Talks is an opportunity to discuss specific health and safety topics that are relevant to your lab. It’s intended to be informal and participatory, encouraging questions, and drawing on your lab team’s experiences and observations. It’s not a lecture and there are no tests.

BEFORE THE MEETING

1. Pick a safety and health topic that is directly relevant to your lab’s needs and concerns. For example, if compressed gas cylinders are in your lab, a safety discussion about proper storage of them would be important to your team.

2. What are university policies, guidelines, and/or SOPs for this topic? Look up the USC policies, guidelines, and SOPs about this topic.

3. What has happened in the past? Find out about any injuries, safety incidents, or near misses at USC or elsewhere related to your chosen topic.

DURING THE MEETING

1. START WITH A SHORT STORY TO GIVE CONTEXT.
   Storytelling gives the information and discussion more meaning and makes it more memorable in your team’s minds. Tell your own near miss story, or one of the safety incidents that happened in relation to this safety topic.

2. ASK THREE QUESTIONS.
   Now that they have a larger context, bring the discussion home and make it relevant to your team and your lab. Allow them the time and space to chime in. Encourage discussion.
   • Take a moment to look around OUR lab. Do you see anything (food wrappers, dirty floor, the sharps bin might be getting close to overflowing, etc.) that could possibly lead to a safety incident?
   • In our lab behaviors, is there anything that we ARE doing or ARE NOT doing that could possibly lead to a safety incident like that here in OUR lab?
   • What can we do in OUR lab to prevent problems or safety incidents like that?

3. REVIEW SELECTED PARTS OF SOP(s).
   Review SOPs (also fact sheets, program safety manuals, and SDSs) that are relevant to the safety topic with your team.

4. FIELD COMMENTS FROM THE TEAM.
   Ask if there is anything else anyone wants to mention on this topic. Keep the discussion focused on the chosen topic.

ENDING THE MEETING

• Re-cap your team’s responses to Steps 2 through 4 and list any immediate actions that need to happen in order to make the work space safer.
• Display those actions prominently somewhere in the lab where everybody on the team can see them.
• Immediately complete one or two items on the To-Do list while the team is still together.

NOTES

REFERENCES
Adapted from The Maine Department of Labor SafetyWorks! Tool Box Talk
http://www.safetyworksmaine.gov/safe_workplace/safety_tips.shtml
Ten-Minute Lab Safety Talks Guide Sheet

Before the Meeting

1. **Pick a topic.**
2. **What are USC policies/SOPs/guidelines on this topic?**
3. **What has happened in the past?**

During the Meeting

1. **Start with a short story.**
   - Tell your own near miss story or an accident that happened that’s related to the safety topic.

2. **Ask three questions.**
   - Take a moment to look around OUR lab. Do you see anything that could lead to an accident?
   - Is there anything we’re doing or **NOT** doing that could lead to an accident?
   - What can we do to prevent problems or accidents like that?

3. **Review the SOP.**
   - Review the SOPs that are relevant to the safety topic with your team.

4. **Field comments.**
   - Ask if there’s anything else anyone wants to mention on this topic. Keep the discussion focused on the chosen topic.

Ending the Meeting

- **Recap the team’s responses.**
- **Display action items in the lab.**
- **Complete one or two items immediately.**