

Commercial Risk Advisor

September 2020

Workplace health and safety incidents are defined as either:

- *A workplace condition or event that resulted in an illness, injury, fatality or property damage to an employee or member of the public.*
- *A workplace condition or event that resulted in a “near miss”—which means that no illness, injury, fatality or property damage took place, but likely could have.*

Provided by:
Acumen Solutions Group



Conducting Workplace Health and Safety Incident Investigations

When workplace health and safety incidents happen, it's important to respond appropriately. Investigating allows employers to identify potential health and safety failings that led to the incident and make necessary workplace adjustments to help prevent future incidents.

THE PROCESS

Regardless of severity or circumstance, it's vital to investigate every workplace health and safety incident. Consider this five-step process:

1. **Preserve and document the scene.** Preserving the scene of the incident might require halting production or temporarily relocating any employees near the incident area. Take photos and document relevant information regarding the incident—including witnesses, workplace equipment involved and environmental conditions.
2. **Collect important information.** Next, you will want to collect the following valuable information:
 - Witness accounts of what happened
 - Equipment manuals and maintenance records
 - Employee training documentation
 - Workplace inspections
 - Workplace health and safety policies and procedures
3. **Determine the root cause(s).** Root causes are the underlying issues or failures that lead to workplace incidents, such as management concerns, poor workplace designs or operational failings.
4. **Implement corrective measures.** These measures should be specific, realistic and clearly communicated, as well as help reduce overall workplace risks.
5. **Conduct routine follow-ups.** Review with supervisors and employees to evaluate the measures' effectiveness.

An investigation policy should encourage collaboration between employees, management and various departments. Routinely review it for effectiveness and make workplace updates as needed.

Contact Acumen Solutions Group for additional workplace health and safety resources.

Reputational risk often strikes without warning. Be proactive by monitoring these common online channels:

Business review websites



Social media



News releases and articles



Blog posts



Forums



Competitor websites



Managing Your Post-coronavirus Reputation

Many companies focus on handling reputational threats that have already happened. That is not reputation management. That is crisis management, a reactive approach to limit the damage that's already been done. It's important to focus on a proactive approach to mitigate reputational risks.

How your business has previously responded to the coronavirus and how you move forward can play a big role in public perception and employee recruitment. As much as a good reputation is vital in driving business, it can also reinforce employees' commitment to the company. That commitment leads to confidence and trust in the company.

BEST PRACTICES

Your brand reputation is how the general public—including customers and employees—sees you, thinks of you and talks about you. It's word of mouth. Consider the following ways to keep your reputation unharmed:

- **Put employees first**—Keep in mind the health, safety and well-being of employees when making business decisions. Current employees can be the main drivers of your reputation.
- **Follow government advice**—Lean on local health departments and government for guidance on return-to-work plans and procedures.
- **Prioritize safety**—You can provide a safe workplace by integrating testing, social distancing, personal protective equipment, sick leave policies and business travel guidelines.
- **Keep communication open and honest**—Internal communications can help keep employees calm and reduce stress levels. The same goes for external audiences like customers and partners. Keep communication accurate by leaning on credible sources—and be transparent.
- **Ask for feedback, and answer questions**—Create an open channel or a way for stakeholders to submit questions. Answer them as soon as you can, and provide the responses to everyone.
- **Reach out to industry partners**—Chances are your industry partners are in similar situations. Share information, and work together with your industry regulators and influencers to move forward.
- **Be a thought leader**—If it's appropriate and authentic for your company, identify a business leader who can publicly address impacts of COVID-19 on your industry or customers.
- **Give back**—On a similar note, give back to your community if you're able to. A little bit of kindness can go a long way during these times.

Businesses seen responding positively to the pandemic are more likely to survive and thrive. If an issue or crisis does arise, the quicker you respond to and fix any problems within your control, the better off you'll be. Speak with Acumen Solutions Group for more about reputation management.