Safety & Health Event
Best Practices

## Form a Planning Committee

The planning committee is responsible for planning and coordinating the safety and health event. It is recommended that the planning committee consist of at least 3 members but no more than 6 members. Members of the planning committee should represent stakeholder departments in the company or agency. For example, a furniture company’s safety and health event planning committee might have representatives from the safety, shipping, manufacturing, and human resources departments.

Planning should begin at least 6 months before the safety and health event.

The planning committee is responsible for coordinating:

* Site Logistics
* Budget
* Exhibitors
* Publicity
* Food/Refreshments

Forming a planning committee ensures that different departments in the organization have input during the planning phase.

Committee members and volunteers (if needed) should be on site before and during the event to assist exhibitors. Consider having committee members and volunteers wear identical bright-colored tee shirts the day of the event to make it easier for exhibitors to find them.

## Establish a Goal for the Event

The planning committee should review the company or organization’s on-the-job injury/fatality data to determine if there is a need to focus on one or more safety issues. Invite exhibitors who can address or raise awareness of the issue(s). Consider inviting a specialist in the field to give a safety presentation the day of the safety and health event.

In addition to addressing specific safety issues, the committee should also focus on promoting the overall health and off-the-job safety of employees.

## Set a Date & Time

The event should be scheduled for normal working hours. Do not expect or encourage employees to attend the event during their lunch or break periods or day off. The safety and health event is part of your organization’s training programs. Although the event should be fun for all participants, it has a serious purpose and should be considered an investment toward employee safety and wellbeing.

## Choose a Location

The location must be large enough to accommodate all the exhibitors and attendees. It should also be reasonably accessible for all employees.

Some things to consider when choosing a venue:

* Exhibitors will need access to the site at least 2 hours before the event begins.
* Privacy considerations for exhibitors conducting health screenings.
* The number of available (and easily accessible) electric outlets for exhibitors who require power.
* Safety and security measures – including occupancy limits, fire exits, and emergency muster location(s).
* Traffic flow and where lines should form if necessary.

## Invite Exhibitors

The planning committee should develop a list of potential exhibitors based on the established goal(s) of the safety and health event. When choosing exhibitors, be sure to include a representative of your company or organization’s health insurance provider, if possible. A representative of the company or organization’s human resources department should attend and exhibit at the event.

Some things to keep in mind when inviting exhibitors:

* Invite exhibitors several months before the event.
* Send out reminders about a month before the event.
* All email to exhibitors should be sent from one email address. Consider establishing an email address for the event planning committee.
* Establish a simple registration process. It should be clear to all parties that the exhibitor has agreed to participate. Registration should include the name of the exhibitor (company or group), the name of the person representing the exhibitor, any audio/video/electrical requirements, description of any space requirements outside the traditional 6-foot display table.

## Promote the Event

The best planned safety and health event is useless if no one knows about it.

Some tips for promoting your event:

* Signs and posters in lunch and break rooms
* Email newsletters
* Paycheck envelope stuffers
* Promote any giveaways to encourage attendance

## Keep Exhibitors Informed

As exhibitors register for the event, be sure to send an acknowledgement email. Include more details about the event (if possible).

2 – 4 weeks prior to the event, send a welcome email to registered exhibitors. Be sure to include a map of the venue indicating where each exhibitor will set up. Let the exhibitors know what you will provide. Give clear instructions as to what time exhibitors should arrive, where to enter, where to park, security badges, etc.

It is recommended that each exhibitor be provided a standard-size 6-foot table with two folding chairs. Assign a number to each table. Providing table cloths is a good practice. Print a sign for each exhibitor and, well before exhibitors are scheduled to arrive, place the signs on the tables assigned to each exhibitor.

## Encourage Participation

The most effective way to promote employee participation is to give away prizes. Tee Shirts with the company logo, coolers, first aid kits, flashlights, etc. make excellent giveaways. Print BINGO cards with the exhibitor table numbers. All BINGO cards should be the same and should include all vendor table numbers. As employees visit exhibitors, the exhibitors initial or stamp the appropriate space on the cards. Provide pens or stamps for this purpose.

As participants exit the event, they should write their names on their BINGO cards and turn them in. Provide a well-marked box for this purpose. After the event, or several times during the event, draw winners from the BINGO cards and award the prizes.

## Budget

The planning committee should consider the following when budgeting for a safety and health event:

* Table and chair rental
* Venue rental, if needed
* Decorations
* Promotion (posters, etc.)
* Refreshments

## Suggested Types of Exhibitors

In addition to any safety and health training goal established for the event, the planning committee should consider inviting exhibitors from the following fields:

* Local Police – Traffic Safety, Impaired Driving
* Local Fire Department – Fire Safety, Smoke Detectors
* Local EMS Service – CPR
* Chiropractor – Lower Back Safety and Health
* Dentist – Dental Hygiene
* Nutritionist – Healthy Diet
* Local Gym - Fitness

**DRIVE SMART Virginia participates in many safety and health events each year. If you are interested in having DRIVE SMART Virginia exhibit at your event, contact Rich Jacobs at** rich.jacobs@drivesmartva.org **or (804) 929-2988.**