

# Alcohol and drug education

**Employees that are well informed about the impacts of alcohol and other drug use on the workplace are more aware of the risks and are better able to help maintain effective health and safety practices at work.**

Alcohol and other drug awareness and education programs can contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of employees. The provision of regular, ongoing and adaptable employee education plays a central role in supporting change.

## Awareness versus education

Before implementing any form of education or awareness program in the workplace, you need to be clear about what your objectives are. For example, do you want to:

- make employees aware of alcohol and its effects;
- educate them about alcohol and the potential risks involved; or
- do you want your employees to be trained in how to respond when they identify someone who is impaired at work?

It's important that you understand your workplace's needs before implementing any training or awareness program.

## Location, location, location

When considering implementing alcohol and other drug training in your workplace you should consider if the training is appropriate to deliver across the whole organisation.

Does the training need to be tailored differently for workers on the factory floor compared to the office environment? It's important that the delivery is suitable for the location—for example, a PowerPoint presentation is not ideally suited to a construction site. What is the best way to educate your employees?

Whether you're conducting the session in house or engaging another organisation to present it for you, the presentation has to be engaging and interactive to be effective.

Dispel the myths around alcohol & drugs in the workplace.

### Suggested training topics

Once you've determined your workplace needs and the objectives of the training, decide who needs to undergo training (i.e. all employers, supervisors only etc.) and the best location to hold it, you can then decide on the topics to cover. Some suggested topics include:

- Understanding the impact of alcohol on the workplace.
- Why your workplace has an alcohol and other drugs policy.
- Why organisations conduct workplace alcohol testing.
- Understanding how alcohol is processed by the body.
  - Why some people feel the effects quicker than others.
  - Sobering up—there is no magical cure
  - Hangovers and impairment—How drinking the night before can affect you the next day.
- Identifying risks in the workplace
- What you can do to prevent alcohol related harm in your workplace.
- What can happen if there is an incident where alcohol is involved.
- How to reduce the risk of alcohol and other drug related harms occurring at workplace functions.
- Understanding the legal ramifications of alcohol and other drug related incidents in the workplace.
- How to respond if you suspect someone is under the influence and unfit for work.

The most important aspect of your training should be to communicate your own organisation's alcohol and other drugs policy, employee expectations and consequences for violating the policy. This is your chance to ensure that all employees are aware of what is expected of them.

### Further information



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