

How to conduct an accident investigation in the workplace



This two page paper gives a brief outline on how to conduct an accident investigation in the workplace. The paper discusses who information would be gathered from what questions should be asked, the paper also looks at taking evidence such as photographs and details from emergency service officers.

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When investigating an accident, first visit the building itself and identify the specific locality of the accident, gaining a thorough understanding of the layout of the building. Ask to be escorted to the actual site of the accident, making enquiries and notes of any comments made by the escorting person or persons concerning the accident.

Once at the scene take photographs and examine the site thoroughly for any possible causes of the accident or underlying causes that may have attributed to the event. For example if the site itself is an open plan work-room, describe the layout of the room with the position of all furniture, noting whether it was fixed or movable and in what condition it is in.

Take a note of all, if any, cables and wiring and their location in regards to the accident, also note the type of lighting in the room, and if there are any bulbs or lights not working in case the room dimmed enough to cause an accident. Note what type of flooring the room has, if it carpeted or tiled and if there are any frayed or loose edges, or if the floor is made of polished wood or linoleum, if so is it polished enough to cause a person to slip. Is there any possibility of spilt liquids or leakages from over head pipes or under floor pipes.

At this point photographs of the scene should be taken from all possible angles so as to give a clear and precise view of the accident scene and as an

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aide for further investigation.

Once the site has been investigated and thoroughly examined the next stage is to interview the injured person or persons and any witnesses present or involved in the accident, including those who had a role after the event.

Keep a copy of the report to hand, but as the injured party to describe the event prior to and leading up to their having the accident. Enquire if anything the person had done prior to the accident could have attributed to it or if another person present could have caused the accident.

Furthermore, ask what the injured party what clothes and footwear they were wearing when the accident occurred, if they wear glasses or contact lenses, were they or do they suffer from any pre-existing medical condition.

Once statements from the injured party are taken, start to interview any witnesses. During this stage of the process ask what emergency action was taken after the accident to prevent any further harm to the injured party and also other members of the building, such as switching off any electrical currents.

Also, was any relief or first aid, such as CPR recovery position, given to the injured party and witnesses who might have gone into shock by qualified personnel, before any emergency services arrived If so gain the contact details of this person.

Enquire if and when any emergency services were called to the scene, such as police, fire or ambulance, and if so who called them and was their any one qualified and suitably experienced enough who was not suffering from any shock and also who new the quickest route to the accident site available to escort them. If police were called to the site was an officers name and badge number taken

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Finally, once all the data has been collected, check the details and briefly go over any other information concerning the event. Analyse the data and statements to cross reference the details, by doing this any discrepancies or anomalies will stand out and for further investigation, if there are no discrepancies and all data matches then the investigation is over, in any event write up your findings and make a report.