

7 Top Tips for getting the Most out of Workplace Safety Posters

If anyone thinks Workplace Safety Posters are the answer to safety issues in their workplace, they are seriously mistaken, and could even be part of the problem.

Generally, Safety Posters best support an already proactive workplace safety programme which includes careful and thorough inductions, ongoing safety training, engaging and relevant safety meetings (toolbox talks etc), and a switched on safety team. Of course, none of this is possible without enlightened management who recognise the value of all of the above. If your managers aren't highly proactive about the safety of workers, find people who are, such as safety reps, safety committee members, and even union reps.

But, if you do have safety focussed management, and are using or considering using Workplace Safety Posters, here are 7 TIPS to achieve the most with them.

TIP 1 - Don't let them stand alone.

It is important that Safety Posters do not stand alone; they are at their best when they reinforce other safety communications. When done well, Safety Posters act synergistically with all other aspects of a safety programme – together they achieve more.

For example, if you are doing a "drive safe" campaign, the Safety Posters would be part of an overall approach with tool box talks, email footers, notices with pay slips, stickers to go in vehicles or on hard hats, displaying a crashed car in the parking lot, and maybe even giving workers the chance to win a ride in a race car.

TIP 2 - Purtenance.

Don't use a Safety Poster simply because you have a spot on the wall you want to fill, or because you have been told to get Safety Posters. If it's not directly related to issues you have at the workplace that you want to reinforce, it's not going to get past the noise filter we all have for dealing with unwanted or unnecessary messages such as the thousands of advertising messages that bombard us every day.

TIP 3 - Position.

Think about where people are most likely to see it and have time to read it. If it as Information Safety Poster workers will need a few minutes to go through it, so it could be best placed in elevators, or lunch rooms, or smoking areas, or even the back of toilet doors – anywhere they queue or wait.

Creative approaches to positioning include placing them on the ceiling (if it is pertinent such as working at heights or looking all around for hazards), and to put one upside down (as if it was a mistake). It doesn't have to be pertinent to put one upside down, but it will at least get attention for a day or so.

TIP 4 - Size.

Make sure the size of the Safety Poster is appropriate for the location. Consider where workers will be standing when they see it.

The job of a Safety Poster is to communicate a crucial message which could be life saving. It can't do that from a wall so far away that it's not easy to read from where the worker is likely to be. Not many people will go out of their way to read a Safety Poster that's far away and hard to read. (That is one reason Promote Safety Posters come in different sizes.) Remember too that not everyone has perfect eye sight.

TIP 5 - Frequency.

We are each bombarded with thousands of messages a day, so it is in our best interest to block out the ones that are not relevant or no longer new. This is why workers can quickly become 'blind' to Safety Posters. One approach which resolves this is to change them regularly – even if they are communicating the same message – just in a different way. "Look, that's new." Another approach is to move the their location. "That wasn't there yesterday."

Frequency can also refer to how many places the posters appears throughout the workplace. There is an adage in advertising that often people need to see the same message at least 11 times before it registers with them to take action.

Finally, frequency can refer to how long it is before the issue is promoted again. If posters are still in good condition after one campaign, they can be stored until the same time next year for example.

TIP 6 - Learn from graffiti.

Don't stress if workers deface Safety Posters, they are relatively cheap to replace, and you could learn a lot about issues in your safety culture by what people write.

If the graffiti is funny, don't come down on it too hard. If you do, workers may remember the negative emotions rather than the safety message. And, if it's funny, it might get others to look again at the poster – and that's a good thing. Even incorporate a brief reference to the humour in safety talks.

TIP 7 - Quality.

Your Safety Posters are much more likely to be seen, read and remembered if they are well designed. Not only should they get attention with strong colours and easy to read type faces, but they should express the idea that you care enough about safety to do it well.

Promote Safety Posters are created with the AIDA principle of communication in mind: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action.

ATTENTION. Promote Safety Posters are designed specifically to grab attention. This is done with interesting images, strong colours, and engaging headings. Even with Information Safety Posters containing a lot of text, clever design draws people closer for more information.

INTEREST. Whether it's an Information Safety Poster or a Reminder Safety Poster, the text is written and laid out with the graphics to lead the eye in a logical order and to make it easy and interesting to read.

DESIRE. Words used on Safety Posters are carefully chosen so that by the time the person has taken in the content of the poster, they should be in agreement with the content and are influenced to act on it.

ACTION. Most Promote Safety Posters leave little doubt what action should be taken, including a Call to Action - "This is what you should do."

Another benefit of Promote Safety Posters is that the text can be slightly altered to suit rules and policies specific to your workplace, and for a fee, can even include your company logo without compromising the integrity of design.

Now, **with over 150 Workplace Safety Posters designs to choose from**, you are sure to find plenty to suit your workplace and compliment your existing safety programme. Plus, if you also want a poster for a safety issue that's not there, let us know because we are always on the look out for important issues we can cover. If it's an issue in your workplace, it's probably an issue in others.

For more information about Promote Safety Posters and free resources, go to www.promotesafety.com.au or email promotesafety@inet.net.au