

Start Safe to End Safe: A moment's pause can prevent a lifetime of impact

Toolbox Talk

Every job can look routine - until it isn't.

Most serious incidents don't happen because people ignore safety. They happen because something small is missed - a change in conditions, an assumption, or pressure to just "get on with it".

The video linked below reinforces the importance of: pausing before you start work, taking 5 and asking yourself: "Is everything in place for this to be done safely?"

- Is the job what we expected?
- Are the controls in place?
- Do the conditions feel right?

That pause before you start matters - It's often the difference between a job done safely and a serious incident.

Take 5 - What the pause means in practice

Take 5 means stopping for a few minutes before you start work, to switch on to safety and think about the job, the risks, and the controls.



Pause – To think through the task steps before starting. Don't rely on habit or routine.



Look – Look at the work location, plant/equipment, materials and weather conditions.



Identify hazards – Ask what could go wrong? What could hurt me or someone else? What has changed since the job was planned?



Assess and Control the Risks – Check that the right controls are in place for the task and conditions.



Proceed or Stop? – If something doesn't feel right, listen to that instinct and stop.

Trust your Judgement and Speak Up

If something doesn't look right: Stop the task, raise the concern and reassess before continuing.

Stopping work is not a failure or over-reacting - it shows good judgement and care for yourself and your workmates.

- Speaking up is a strength
- Pausing work is responsible
- Asking questions is professional

You will always be supported for choosing safety.



Discussion Questions

- What are common distractions that stop us from switching on before starting work?
- How can we remind each other that no job is so urgent that we need to skip the "pause"?
- If something is unsafe, how do we make sure people feel comfortable speaking up?
- What is one thing you can do today to help achieve zero harm?

Safety. Think about it.