

Preventing Hero Culture: When Good Intentions Create Risk Meeting Kit



WHAT'S AT STAKE

Nobody comes to work wanting to cause an accident. But sometimes the urge to push through, step up, or help no matter what is exactly what gets people hurt. Good intentions don't cancel out bad outcomes.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

Hero culture is when workers feel pressure from others or from themselves to go beyond safe limits to get the job done. It feels like dedication. But it's one of the most overlooked causes of workplace injury.

Working Through Pain or Injury

Ignoring a sore back, a swollen joint, or a headache to finish the shift turns a small problem into a serious one. What could have been a quick fix becomes weeks off work.

Skiping Steps to Save Time

- Cutting corners on lockout/tagout or PPE to move faster
- Rushing to cover for a short-staffed shift
- Skipping checklists because 'nothing bad has happened yet'

Not Reporting Near Misses

- Thinking 'it's not a big deal, nobody got hurt'
- Worrying about looking careless in front of the team
- Missing the chance to fix a hazard before someone does get hurt

Covering for Others

Taking on someone else's risky task to protect them or seem like a team player can put both of you in danger. If they shouldn't be doing it, neither should you.

Taking On Too Much

Volunteering for extra physical tasks, staying late when you're already exhausted, or lifting loads alone to avoid bothering a coworker these habits stack up into real risk over time.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Being a good worker means being a safe worker not a silent one.

Report Pain and Injuries Early

If something hurts, say so the same day. Don't wait to see if it gets better on its own. Small injuries that get reported early almost always have better outcomes than ones that get pushed through for days. Telling your supervisor isn't complaining it's how the system is supposed to work. You deserve proper care, and your team deserves to know if a task is causing harm.

Report Near Misses Every Time

- A near miss is a free warning, use it
- Report it to your supervisor the same day it happens, even if nothing broke and nobody got hurt
- Near miss reports are how workplaces fix hazards before someone pays the real price
- You won't get in trouble for reporting you might save someone's life

Follow the Procedure – Always

The rules exist because someone got hurt before they were written. Skipping a step to save five minutes isn't efficiency, it's a gamble. If a procedure feels too slow or doesn't make sense for the situation, raise it with your supervisor. The answer is never to quietly skip it and hope for the best.

Don't Take on Someone Else's Risk

- If a task isn't safe for one person, it isn't safe for you either
- True teamwork means redirecting unsafe work to a supervisor, not putting it on your own shoulders
- Helping a coworker avoid a near miss is not the same as taking on their danger yourself

Check In with Each Other

If you notice a coworker pushing too hard wincing, rushing, doing things alone that should take two people saying something is one of the most helpful things you can do that day. It doesn't have to be a big conversation. A quick 'are you doing okay, do you need a hand?' can be the difference between a close call and an incident.

FINAL WORD

Showing up every day and doing your job safely is the real act of dedication. Your team needs you healthy, not heroic. Leave the cape at home.

