

Accident, Incident, Near Miss

Understanding the Difference

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Introduction!



Knowledge is Key!

There must be clear understanding of key safety terms. Which enable us to identify, report, and, most importantly, learn from each event to create a safer environment.





Understanding of the Discussion

- The importance of understanding the difference between incidents, accidents, and near misses.
- Define the difference between.
- Reporting and documenting workplace events.
- Corrective action plan.
- Closing.

Understanding the Difference!



What exactly constitutes an incident, accident, or a near miss?



Incidents



INCIDENT

- The first rule of thumb is to remember that all unexpected workplace events are incidents.
- However, not all incidents are accidents or near-misses.
- Can you see where some may handle a situation incorrectly?

Incident

- The definition of an incident describes it as an event that disrupts regular work activity and operations and potentially causes significant risk for everyone involved or damage.





Incident

- Caused by unsafe conditions or careless behavior, incidents may not cause harm to people or damage.
- Incidents can be warning signs that something more serious could happen if the situation is not addressed.

Incident

Examples of incidents include:

- Slipping and falling because of oil on the floor, did not get hurt.
- Dropping an object while working from heights.
- Working under a suspended load.
- A worker entering a hazardous area without proper safety gear.





**EVERY
NEAR MISS**

IS A WARNING!

Near Miss

- Near-misses are a subset of incidents. A near miss is an incident that nearly caused or could have caused injury or damage but did not due to timely intervention or simply being in the right place at the right time.



Near Miss

- Near misses are often less noticeable because there was no immediate harm or damage, though the potential was present.
- Near misses could be due to assorted reasons, from minor misjudgments to process flaws or luck.



Near Miss

If you are having trouble determining a near-miss, think of the following:

- Was this an unexpected or adverse incident?
- Did anyone get hurt?
- Was there property damage?
- If the conditions were slightly different—say, if a person or equipment were closer to something—could anyone have gotten hurt, or property damaged?



Near Miss

Examples of a near miss include:

- Tripping over a box and catching yourself before you fall.
- A forklift nearly hit another forklift, but braking was done before impact.
- Finding a damaged chain sling and removing it from service before it gets used.
- Unsafe working or job site conditions.
- Unsafe employee work habits or improper behavior.



Near Miss

One of the most important forms of safety improvements can come from not obvious events, near misses.

- It is important to be trained on how to recognize near misses. Usually, no one has trouble identifying incidents and accidents.
- But near-misses may be more difficult to distinguish, and they are crucial to pinpointing health and safety risks people may not have been aware of.





Near Miss

Near misses can be an indicator and opportunity to enhance safety practices.

- Why should you report near misses and have a near miss reporting system?



Near Miss



A near miss reporting system:



Establishes safe practices in the workplace

Reduces risk

Allows information to be shared easily

Collects valuable data

Provides opportunity to improve safety operations

Avoids complacency

Provides useful tool to identify workplace hazards

Involves employees

Demonstrates management's commitment to safety

Allows identification of trends



Accident

- Accidents are incidents that created an unexpected workplace event that resulted in injury or damage.
- Someone might have failed to follow safety procedures, or someone else may have failed to assess the severity of a workplace hazard.
- It is vital to recognize exactly how and why the accident took place.



Accident

An important thing to remember is that if an operator hits or runs over a product or equipment, even though there may not be clear damage, damage could have occurred that could affect the integrity or quality of the material.

All accidents must be reported whether there is visible damage to material or a person.



Accident



Examples of accidents include:

- Equipment accident caused by an operator not paying attention or operating recklessly.
- A fall from a ladder due to a lack of safety equipment or improper use.
- Suspended load falling due to failed rigging equipment.
- An eye injury caused from not wearing the appropriate PPE.

Breakdown

Why Does Incident vs Accident vs near miss Matter?

To take the required precautions to prevent accidents, it is imperative to understand the distinction between incidents, near misses, and accidents.

Accidents are distinguished by their outcome, which includes damage or injury.

Incidents are characterized by their potential to cause harm or damage. Though an incident may not result in immediate harm or damage, the potential for serious repercussions is inherent.

Near misses are situations that almost result in harm or damage, narrowly avoided due to timely intervention or sheer luck.



Aspects	Accident	Incident	Near Miss
Result	Injury or damage	Potential harm or damage	Nearly causes harm or damage
Cause	Carelessness, negligence, lack of knowledge/training	Unsafe conditions or careless behavior	Variety of reasons, often overlooked
Response	Address the situation to prevent escalation	Report & Document, identify risks	Report & Document, identify risks
Timing	Often sudden and without warning	May present warning signs	Due to timely intervention or luck
Outcome	Serious, requires immediate attention	May escalate if not addressed	No harm done, but valuable for learning and prevention

Aspects	Accident	Incident	Near Miss
Severity	Usually severe, tangible impacts	Could range from minor to major impacts	No immediate impacts, but potential severity is high
Reaction time	Reaction occurs post-event	Reaction could potentially prevent escalation	Reaction or luck prevents impact
Learning potential	Learning is from retrospective analysis	Learning is from analyzing potential escalation	Learning is from what could have happened
Reporting tendency	High tendency to report due to tangible impacts	May not always be reported if impacts are minor	Often under-reported as there are no immediate impacts
Prevention	Focuses on preventing recurrence	Focuses on preventing escalation	Focuses on recognizing and managing potential hazards

Not Understanding
and Not Reporting.
What can it lead
to?

Examples:



Understanding WHY!





WHY?

So, why is it important that all personnel, even those that are not in safety management, know and understand the difference between incidents, accidents, and near misses?



The Answer is Simple!

If we do not understand the difference:

- How can we make improvements?
- How can we learn?
- How can we prevent situations from happening again?





- **These safety terms are frequently used interchangeably. This can lead to confusion, blurring the true significance of the event.**
- **It is crucial to realize that these safety terms have distinct meanings, each with a different level of risk and consequence.**



**IF THE PATH TO
CORRECTION IS
NOT UNDERSTOOD,
HOW DOES ONE
GET OUT OF THE
LOOP?**



Understanding Reporting & Documentation!



Reporting & Documentation



Why is reporting & documenting all workplace incidents important?!



Reporting & Documentation

OSHA Yes, we must report & document recordable injuries.

OSHA may also come in for an inspection and want to see more.



Reporting and Documentation

- Who is documenting their accidents?
- Why do you do it?
- Why is it important to also document all incidents on an incident form?

When personnel report and document incidents, they are directly contributing to potentially preventing a future incident from happening again, getting them involved in the improvement process.



Reporting and documenting	Reporting and documenting incidents is important for ensuring safety and building culture. Allowing for:
Identifying	Identifying patterns and trends
Improving	Improving safety culture, and;
Enhancing	Enhancing risk management.

Reporting & Documentation

Understanding Corrective Action Plans!





(CAP) Corrective Action Plan

- We have an understanding of the differences between accidents, incidents, and near misses.
- We understand the importance of reporting and documentation.
- Now what do we do with the information we collect from the investigations and conversations?
- Develop a corrective action plan!

What does a corrective action plan do?

Corrective Action Plan

- A corrective action plan (CAP) helps prevent the same issues from happening again.
- It strengthens processes, products, and employee performance.
- An effective corrective action plan identifies the root cause of problems and prevents their recurrence with documentation and developing a correction process.
- The CAP aims to resolve the root cause of the issue rather than just address the surface signs.

Corrective Action Plan

- **Step 1: Define the Problem.**
- **Step 2: Establish the Scope of the Problem.**
- **Step 3: Take Containment Actions.**
- **Step 4: Find the Root Cause of the Problem.**
- **Step 5: Plan Corrective Actions to Fix the Root Cause.**
- **Step 6: Implement the Corrective Action Plan.**
- **Step 7: Follow Up to Ensure That Your Plan Worked.**

Understanding the Difference! Closing





Recap!

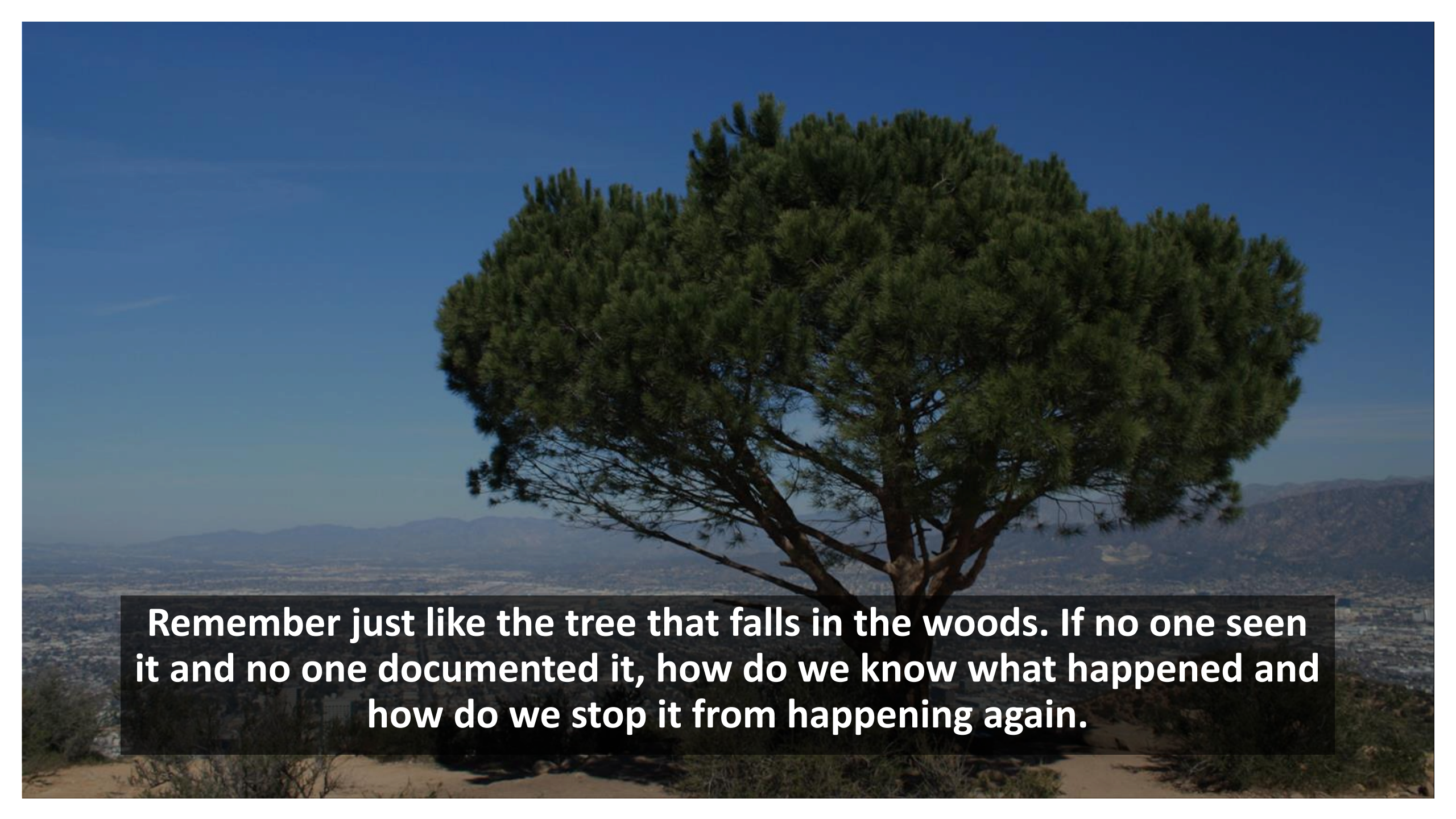
- The difference between incidents, accidents, and near misses.
- Why it important to handle a workplace event properly.
- How to use workplace incidents as tool for improvement.
- How to use a functioning corrective action plan.
- An understanding of reporting and documentation, and why it is vitally important.

Understanding characteristics of accidents, incidents, and near misses plays a pivotal role in managing safety in our daily lives and work environments. Each term carries its weight and importance, providing different perspectives of safety events that can occur.

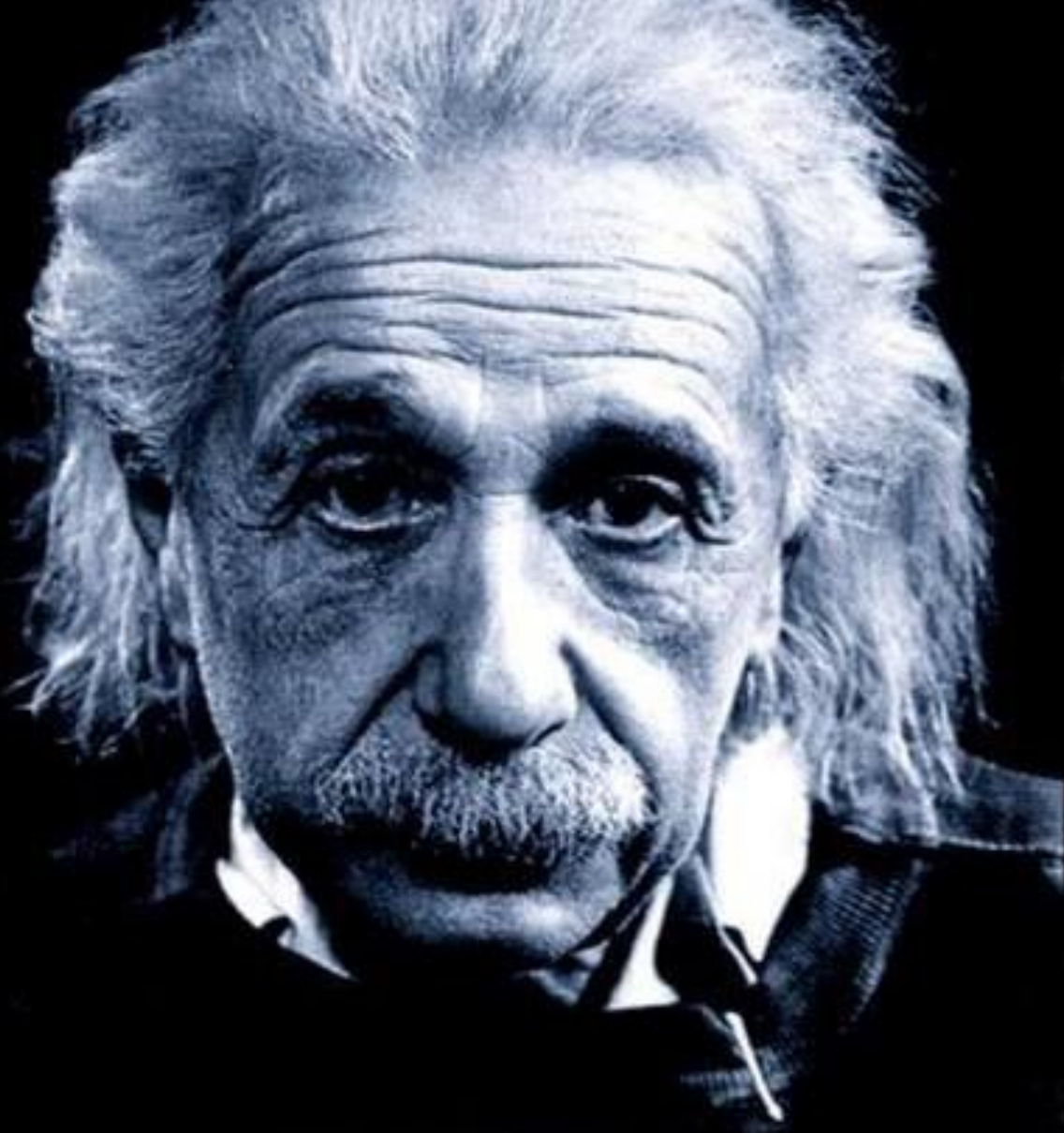


- **Accidents, with their immediate and tangible impact, remind us of the consequences of negligence, carelessness, or lack of knowledge.**
- **Incidents are a stark warning of what could happen if certain conditions or behaviors persist.**
- **Near misses, often underreported and overlooked, are invaluable teachers, offering us foresight into potential dangers without the harsh consequences.**





Remember just like the tree that falls in the woods. If no one seen it and no one documented it, how do we know what happened and how do we stop it from happening again.



"Any fool
can know.

The point
is to
understand."

- Albert Einstein -

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