

# How to Communicate OHS Policy Changes to Teleworkers, Part-Time Staff, and Contractors (Without Losing Their Attention)



Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies are only as effective as the people who follow them. But getting employees to pay attention—especially those who work remotely, part-time, or as independent contractors—can be a challenge. These workers are often left out of the loop, whether due to their schedules, lack of direct oversight, or simple communication gaps. So how do you make sure everyone, no matter where or how they work, gets the message?

The key is clear, targeted, and engaging communication. Here's how OHS leaders can ensure policy updates reach every corner of their workforce.

## The Communication Challenge

Think about the last time you rolled out an OHS policy update. Chances are, full-time, in-office employees got a memo, attended a meeting, or completed a training session. But what about remote workers? Part-time staff? Contractors who aren't plugged into your internal systems?

These groups require different approaches because they

experience different challenges.

- **Teleworkers** aren't physically present, so they miss out on in-person safety briefings and updates.
- **Part-time employees** may not be around when policy updates are shared, meaning they could easily fall through the cracks.
- **Contractors** often operate on the fringes of an organization, with limited access to company communication channels.

If OHS policies aren't communicated properly, misunderstandings can lead to non-compliance, increased risks, and even legal liabilities. That's why a "one-size-fits-all" approach won't cut it.

## **Make It Easy for Everyone to Get the Message**

### **1. Meet Workers Where They Are**

A remote employee won't check the bulletin board in the breakroom, and a contractor may not have access to your intranet. Instead of expecting workers to find policy updates, bring the information to them.

For teleworkers, use company-wide emails, virtual meetings, or online learning portals to distribute updates. Short video messages or interactive e-learning modules can be especially effective.

For part-time staff, send updates via mobile-friendly platforms so they can catch up on their own time. Make it easy for them to review policies without requiring them to be on-site.

For contractors, integrate safety communication into their onboarding and contract agreements. Require acknowledgment of new OHS policies and ensure they have access to relevant training.

## **2. Use Plain Language and Engaging Formats**

People tune out dense legalese and jargon. Instead, use clear, straightforward language that quickly conveys what's changing and why it matters. Visual aids like infographics, short videos, and real-world examples help drive the point home.

For example, instead of saying:

*"All employees must adhere to ergonomic best practices as outlined in the OHS policy amendment dated February 2025."*

Try:

*"If you're working from home, make sure your chair and desk setup don't leave you with back pain! Check out our updated ergonomic tips to keep your workspace comfortable and injury-free."*

The more engaging and relatable the message, the more likely people will absorb it.

## **3. Create Two-Way Communication Channels**

OHS policies aren't just about compliance—they're about keeping people safe. That's why employees need the chance to ask questions, provide feedback, and clarify concerns.

Encourage open discussion through virtual Q&A sessions, chat forums, or anonymous surveys. Make it clear that you value their input and that policy updates aren't just top-down mandates but part of an ongoing conversation about workplace safety.

## **4. Leverage Technology for Seamless Updates**

A company intranet or learning management system (LMS) can house all policy updates, training materials, and FAQs in one place. Automated notifications can alert employees when updates are available. Even better, some platforms allow you to track who has read and acknowledged the new policies, ensuring compliance.

For contractors, consider a vendor management system that includes OHS compliance tracking, making it easy to share updates with all external workers.

## **5. Follow Up and Reinforce the Message**

It's not enough to send out one email or hold a single training session. Policy changes need to be reinforced over time.

For teleworkers, schedule periodic check-ins or refresher courses to ensure continued compliance. For part-time staff, integrate policy updates into existing team meetings. And for contractors, require acknowledgment of key safety policies before starting new projects.

Regular reminders and reinforcement help prevent knowledge gaps and ensure that safety remains top of mind.

## **Why This Matters More Than Ever**

With remote work, flexible schedules, and gig-based employment on the rise, OHS communication strategies need to evolve. A failure to communicate policy updates effectively can lead to compliance risks, safety incidents, and costly legal consequences.

By using the right tools, language, and engagement strategies, OHS leaders can ensure that every worker—regardless of their job type—stays informed, safe, and accountable.

At the end of the day, good communication isn't just about sharing information. It's about making sure people actually understand and apply it. So next time you roll out an OHS policy change, ask yourself: **Is my message reaching everyone?**