



**3011
CLOSE CALLS:
THE WAKE-UP CALL**

Leader's Guide

© 1995. AURORA PICTURES

Section 1

How to Use This Guidebook

This guidebook is designed to:

- Help you prepare for your presentation so your audience will relate to the program and get the most out of it.
- Help you introduce the video in a way that will encourage the audience to relate the theme to their own personal experiences.
- Help you stimulate a productive discussion following the video.
- Help your organization take next steps toward improving safety in their workplace.

Whether your organization is large or small, a private business, a government agency, a non-profit or educational organization, *The Wake Up Call* video and this guidebook can help you educate and motivate employees to **pay attention to close calls and learn how they can warn us of more serious incidents.**

Section 2

Theme of *The Wake Up Call*

In the accident scenarios, the interviews and the narration throughout the video, this message is repeated:

***Pay attention to close calls
and take steps to prevent them from becoming
more serious incidents.***

This important message is conveyed and reinforced by breaking it into three key elements:

- Accidents are often preceded by some kind of close call involving unsafe conditions, someone's unsafe actions, or a less severe injury.
- Close calls should serve as "wake up calls."
- We should pay attention to close calls and take action to prevent more serious incidents from happening.

Section 3

Introducing *The Wake Up Call*

Relating the Theme to Your Audience

The theme of *The Wake Up Call* can be applied to a wide variety of situations.

Here are some suggestions to help you relate the theme of the video to your specific audience during your introductory statements and follow-up discussion.

- Every specific hazard can generate its own specific types of close calls. Discussing the close calls that *have* or *could occur* in your workplace and the kinds of accidents that could result is a good method of relating the theme to your audience.

For example, an organization may have a lot of wet surfaces in the work areas. Have there been reports of people slipping, but not injuring themselves?

- Are there specific hazards or safety concerns employees need to be aware of, such as the equipment they work with, chemicals they handle, vehicles they operate, or maintenance and housekeeping conditions that need to be monitored?

What kind of close calls would most likely result from these conditions?

Techniques for Introducing the Video

Introductory Technique #1

Give a Brief Overview of *The Wake Up Call*

Here are some statements you can consider for your introduction:

- “We are going to view a short, 14 minute video designed to *get our attention, wake us up and raise awareness* about the importance of paying attention to and learning from close calls.”
- “*The Wake Up Call* is not a *how to* video. Rather, it is a motivational video with an important safety message we can all relate to.”

Ask the audience to watch the accidents and interviews in the video carefully. Here are some questions the viewers could keep in mind as they watch the video.

- Is anything familiar in the accidents?
- Have you ever seen or heard of similar things happening?
- Do the interviews bring to mind similar stories?

Ask the audience to be ready to talk about the accidents and interviews after the video is over.

Introductory Technique #2

Begin a Discussion About Close Calls

Another way to introduce the video is ask the members of the audience if they, or anyone they know, have been involved in a close call.

You can encourage discussion by asking questions such as these:

Will you describe the close call as best you can?

- What happened to the people involved?
- How could the close call have been worse?
- What factors (unsafe conditions, unsafe behavior, etc.) contributed to the close call?
- What steps were taken to correct the unsafe conditions or behavior?
- What can we learn from these close calls?

Section 4

Summary and Outline of *The Wake Up Call*

Summary of *The Wake Up Call*

The Wake Up Call is designed to grab our attention and make us take a serious look at the importance of close calls.

- *The Wake Up Call* includes reenactments of three accidents that could happen in a wide variety of work settings.
- After each accident, the close calls and unsafe actions that preceded the accidents are identified, examined and corrected.
- In addition, the video includes interviews with several people who have been injured, or have insights to share about close calls.

Outline of *The Wake Up Call*

This descriptive outline will help you discuss *The Wake Up Call* with your audience following its showing.

I. Auto Dealership Scenario

Larry, Patty and their son are approaching an auto dealership when a mechanic backs a car out of the service department without looking and hits a mop bucket, knocking it into their path. They avoid the bucket and continue inside to shop for a car.

Before long, their son is bored. Patty sends him off to play with a remote controlled toy car that he brought along. While Patty and Larry are talking to the salesman, their son chases his toy car out of the showroom and through an open door into the service area.

The mechanic who hit the mop bucket has finished work on another car. He starts backing the car out of the garage, again, without looking carefully behind him. The boy runs into the garage and is hit by the car as it backs up.

II. Host Reviews Auto Dealership Scenario

When the mechanic backed into the mop bucket, it seemed almost insignificant, like an irritation or an annoyance. In reality, it was an important wake up call, warning the mechanic that he was not working safely.

III. Interviews

Four people share their experiences with close calls and describe what they learned from them.

IV. Forklift Scenario

Larry is driving a forklift in a warehouse. He's carrying a load of boxes too high, obstructing his vision. Ahead of him in the aisle is a pallet of boxes that Larry doesn't see. Larry runs into the boxes, knocking them to the ground. Larry, (always willing to blame someone else...) grumbles to himself about the person who left the boxes in the aisle and continues on.

Larry is approaching two of his coworkers near the end of the aisle. As he turns the corner, Larry gives a friendly honk to a woman who is loading boxes and forges on. Directly in front of Larry, a maintenance man is on a ladder repairing a mirror. Larry's view is still blocked by his load and he crashes into the maintenance man, sending him flying into a pile of boxes.

V. Host Reviews Forklift Scenario

Larry's wake up call occurred when he hit the pile of boxes. At that point, he should have realized that he was operating the forklift in an unsafe manner. If he had taken the corrective action of lowering the load, he would have seen the maintenance man on the ladder.

VI. High-Lift Scenario

Larry is in a high-lift, changing fluorescent ceiling lamps in a warehouse. Leaning over the railing of the lift, he strains to reach a lamp. Below Larry, Bill is approaching the base of the lift. As Larry struggles to remove the lamp, it comes loose from the fixture, slips from Larry's hand and crashes to the floor, missing Bill by inches.

VII. The Host Reviews Close Call

The host points out how the incidents in the program are typical of the close calls and accidents that can happen in almost any kind of work setting. We then rejoin Larry to see if he learned from his close call.

VIII. High-Lift Scenario, part 2

Larry is back in the high-lift, working on an overhead hoist motor. Larry's wrench slips and the motor slides out of his reach. Below, two coworkers notice Larry struggling to reach the motor. Larry declines their offer for help and finally reaches the motor. Within minutes, the motor slides out of his reach again. Trying to reach the assembly, Larry steps onto the railing of the lift. As he struggles to reach the motor, he loses his balance and falls to the floor, landing on a bin of scrap metal.

IX. Host Describes Right-Way Safety Procedures for the Three Accident Scenarios

High-lift Scenario - When Larry was working with the high lift, the right way involved

1. Clearly marking the area around the base of his lift before using it.
2. Working directly under the lift rather than over-reaching.
3. Asking for help when he needed it.

Forklift Scenario - In the warehouse, the right way involved:

1. Larry driving the forklift with the load lower to the ground.
2. Larry not wearing headphones.
3. Keeping the aisles clear of boxes.
4. Standing inside the pedestrian line, away from forklift traffic.
5. Using a stable ladder system while repairing the mirror.

Auto Dealership Scenario - For the mechanic, the right way meant:

1. Looking carefully before backing up.
2. Making sure the door to the service area was closed.

X. Concluding Comments by Host

In his closing statements, the host emphasizes the following points:

- It is important to pay attention to close calls at work, at home and on the highway. ***They should not be ignored.***
- It is equally important to learn from the close call and take corrective actions to prevent an accident.
- It is our responsibility to ourselves, our families and our coworkers to take the steps to prevent accidents.

Section 5

Discussion Following the Video

After viewing the video, consider leading a discussion about the theme of *The Wake Up Call* as it applies to your work setting. Here are some suggested approaches to help stimulate discussion.

- Ask the audience to describe what they think are some of the most common close calls in their work settings. Ask for specific incidents.
- In a worst case scenario, what kinds of accidents could these close calls result in?
- What can we learn from these close calls? What are the unsafe conditions, or unsafe actions and behavior that contributed to the close call?
- What specific steps can be taken to correct the conditions that led to the close call?

You may also want to focus your discussion of close calls on a specific issue your audience is involved with, such as lockout procedures, correct lifting techniques, safe driving, ergonomics, housekeeping, horseplay, or other issues.

Section 6

Next Steps

In *The Wake Up Call*, the narrator says,

***“Every close call carries an important safety message:
Wake up, pay attention and take action.”***

Taking action is a particularly important part of the message because the specific steps you take *can actually improve the safety in your workplace.*

Here are some Next Steps for organizations and individuals.

A. Organizational Next Steps:

⇒ *Next Step Option 1 - Close Call Reporting*

Make it a policy to document all close calls. Forms may be available from your insurance carrier, or you may design one for your own work setting. At a minimum, the form should record the following information:

- ◇ **Date, time and specific location of the incident.**
- ◇ **Detailed description of the close call.**
- ◇ **Description of the factors that contributed to the close call (unsafe conditions, unsafe actions or a combination of the two?)**

In addition, the following information may be important for your organization to record, possibly in a follow-up report:

- ◇ **Names of all people involved in and witnessing the close call**
- ◇ **Are these people employees or not?**
- ◇ **Name of the supervisor in charge at the time of the incident.**
- ◇ **Is new or refresher training is needed?**
- ◇ **Corrective actions needed (Maintenance, housekeeping, repairs, redesign, training, etc.).**
- ◇ **Specific individual or teams responsible for each corrective action.**
- ◇ **Specific completion date expected for each corrective action.**
- ◇ **A place for the supervisor or other manager to sign off, indicating the corrective actions have been satisfactorily completed.**

Close call reports can be filled out by the people involved in, or observing the close call and then given to a supervisor, the safety director, or a safety committee.

Human Nature and Close Call Reporting

Resistance to reporting close calls can occur for a number of reasons.

- ◆ People don't want to be blamed for problems or mistakes.
- ◆ Perception that you're "rocking the boat" or a "trouble maker" when you report close calls.
- ◆ Concern that reporting a close call will result in more work.

Safety conscious organizations effectively deal with these issues in a number of ways.

Stay Positive - The overall approach is to make the process of reporting close calls a positive experience that everyone in the organization benefits from.

View close call reports as opportunities to prevent accidents rather than opportunities to point out someone's mistakes.

Incentives - Some organizations provide incentives to employees who report close calls.

Anonymous Reporting - Other organizations choose to have close calls reported anonymously.

Employee Involvement - Most organizations involve the employees in the investigation of the close calls and the implementation of the corrective actions.

Next Step Option 2 - Prioritizing the Close Calls

As you review the close call reports, run a worst case scenario for each close call.

- ◆ How could the close call have been worse?
- ◆ Who else could have been involved?
- ◆ How easily could it happen again?
- ◆ Where else in your work setting could it happen?

After reviewing each close call with the previous questions, be sure you've identified the root causes of the close call. This will help you determine which incidents deserve the most immediate corrective actions.

⇒ ***Next Step Option 3 - Correcting Unsafe Actions or Conditions***

Identifying the factors that contributed to the close call helps you pinpoint where changes need to be made and corrective actions should be taken.

For instance, specific corrective tasks, such as repairs, maintenance, redesign or training can be assigned to the appropriate personnel.

Projected completion dates can be set and the outcomes can be measured and evaluated as to their effectiveness.

This allows your organization to take a proactive approach to accident prevention by eliminating the **causes** of accidents, rather than reacting to accidents after they have happened.

⇒ *Next Step Option 4 - Employee Communication*

Organizations may choose to issue bulletins advising employees of the close call reporting policy. Supervisors may also explain and reinforce the policy on a systematic basis. In addition, all new employees could receive training that emphasizes the policies and philosophy regarding close call reporting.

⇒ *Next Step Option 5 - Data Collection and Analysis*

Enter the close call information into a database to see if patterns emerge, such as time of day, specific locations, specific kinds of training needed, or the kinds of equipment involved.

This can be a valuable source of information as you seek to reduce or eliminate the root causes of close calls and accidents in your work setting.

⇒ *Next Step Option 6 - Additional Safety Training*

It may become clear from your analysis of the close call that new or refresher training would be beneficial. The training could range from

a review of specific equipment operations to more general safety awareness training.

The training could involve more than the individuals involved in the near miss. The entire department or the entire organization may benefit from the training.

B. Next Steps for Individuals

⇒ *Next Step Option 1 - Inspect Equipment*

Inspect all equipment that you work with. Make sure the equipment is in good operating condition, all guards are in place, and all wires, hoses and pipes are secure and in good condition.

⇒ *Next Step Option 2 - Correct Unsafe Conditions*

Think of any close calls that have happened recently in your work place. Try to recall any specific hazards that may have contributed to the close call, such as poor housekeeping, equipment that needed maintenance, lack of guards or protective devices. Correct the unsafe condition, or notify the supervisor or safety director of the condition so the appropriate personnel can correct it.

⇒ *Next Step Option 3 - Additional Training*

Individuals may realize that they would benefit from new or refresher training. Perhaps they haven't used a specific piece of equipment in a long time, or working conditions have changed and presented new hazards the employee identified.

Whatever the situation, requests for training are a positive sign of active employee involvement in accident prevention.

⇒ *Next Step Option 4 - Close Calls Away From Work*

In the discussion following the video, consider discussing close calls *at home, on the highway and on vacation*. These are all settings where people often “let down their guards” when it comes to safety. Ask members of the audience to describe close calls they have experienced away from work.

- ◆ What can we learn from these close calls?
- ◆ What corrective actions can be taken to improve safety at home, on the highway and on vacation?

Section 7

Conclusion

Perhaps the most appropriate conclusion is reflected in the closing comments by the host in *The Wake Up Call*:

*“Whether we’re at work, at home, on the highway, even on vacation... If we have a close call...if we **see** a close call, we need to stop and take the time to do something about it.*

It may mean changing our own, or another person’s unsafe behavior. It may also mean reporting on or correcting unsafe conditions.

*The point is, a close call is something **we do not ignore.***

It’s our responsibility to ourselves, our families and to our coworkers to take the necessary steps to prevent an accident.

And when we talk about preventing accidents, we are really talking about protecting some of the most precious things there are: Our health, our lives...and the health and lives of our coworkers.”