

Improving involvement and influence: Having a say in your work

After this huddle, staff should be able to:

- **Explain** what involvement and influence mean for their daily work routines.
 - **Recognize** how feeling involved (or not involved) impacts their personal stress levels.
 - **Identify** specific opportunities where they can have more input or control over their work.
- Before the huddle, review the huddle content and huddle leader notes.
 - Have resources ready, such as policies, employee assistance programs, or SafeCare BC resources.
 - Choose a scenario that fits your workplace and read it aloud.
 - Use the guiding questions to lead the discussion.
 - Use huddle leader notes as support while leading the discussion.
 - Keep the discussion short to about 5-10 minutes.

How to run the safety huddle

As the huddle leader, do the following:



Definitions

Involvement and influence refer to a work environment where you feel included in discussions and decisions about your work. This is about more than just major company changes; it is about having input on your daily tasks, knowing how your team works together, and feeling that your opinions matter. When you feel involved, you typically feel more in control of your tasks and more satisfied with your job.

Scenario for long-term care

Mei is a care aide on the evening shift at a local care home. She notices that the new resident activity schedule often clashes with the residents' preferred time to wind down.

This conflict leads several residents to become agitated and restless right before bed. Mei believes that shifting to a quieter activity, such as soft music, would help residents settle in more easily and make the transition safer for everyone. She wants to mention this to her team lead, Paul, but she is worried he will say management has already set the schedule. She knows that if she stays quiet, the residents will continue to struggle, and her team's stress will stay high. She stands by the nursing station, deciding whether to bring it up during the next huddle.

Guiding questions for long-term care

- What is the best way for staff like Mei to share observations about resident schedules?
- How can we ensure that ideas from frontline staff are heard, even if they can't be changed immediately?
- Have you ever felt you had little or no influence over a work process? How did that impact you?

Facilitation tip: Watch for staff who may feel “powerless” against schedules or processes that are set by management.

Gently guide the talk toward small changes the team can control, like how tasks are divided during a shift.

Scenario for home care

Liam is a community health worker whose visits are scheduled in an order that doesn't make geographic sense — he's often driving back and forth across neighbourhoods instead of working through them one at a time. This eats into the time he can spend with clients like Mr. Abara.

Liam has figured out that grouping his visits by neighbourhood would significantly reduce his drive time. He has a one-on-one with his supervisor, Carlos, today. He wants to bring up the scheduling issue, but the last time he raised it, he was told the system handles scheduling automatically and that he just needs to manage his time better. That response left him feeling dismissed, and the inefficiency has been weighing on him — it feels like it's getting in the way of doing his job well. Carlos asks, “How is everything going with your schedule lately?” Liam pauses, deciding how to respond.

Guiding questions for home care

- How comfortable do you feel providing feedback on tools like scheduling software or reporting systems?
- What could leadership do to make it easier to give input on work efficiency and client care?
- What makes it easy or difficult to share suggestions about our work processes here?

Facilitation tip: If the conversation turns into a complaint session, redirect it by asking what specific examples or “workarounds” the team has found that could be shared.

Huddle leader notes

1. Create a safe space:
 - Listen, respect all views, and be mindful of others' challenges.
 - Guide the discussion to focus on what participants can control.
 - Move the conversation from complaints to solutions, strengths, and helpful actions.
 - Invite anyone with specific concerns to talk with you after the huddle.
2. Key discussion points: Use the objectives and key discussion points below to guide the huddle if needed.
 - Closing the loop: Explain that even if a “no” is the answer, staff deserve to know their idea was heard and the reasons why.
 - Direct vs. indirect influence: Be clear about what staff can influence directly (e.g., team meeting topics) versus what requires input to higher management (e.g., policy changes).
 - Constructive feedback: Reiterate that the goal is to improve the workplace for everyone, not to blame individuals.

Additional resources

SafeCare BC | *Skills to Engage and Support People (workshop)*: Using the fundamentals of motivational interviewing, this workshop will help you have conversations with respect and curiosity that make others feel heard, supported, and valued.

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health | *Evidence-based activities for involvement and influence*: In a work environment with positive involvement and influence, employees are included in discussions and have input into decisions that impact their respective jobs.

Have That Talk | *Learn about the national standard – Involvement and influence*: Create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace using these tips from the National Standard

Safety huddle | Improving involvement and influence

Huddle leader: _____

Date: _____

Attendance:

Name:

Initial

Notes