



Building Employee Buy-In

Tips

Employers will be more successful in reducing cell phone distracted driving crashes if employees actively support a cell phone policy – not simply understand and accept it.

NSC members who responded to a 2009 survey about cell phone policies recognize this importance of employee buy-in. Companies currently without policies reported that “lack of employee support” was the #1 barrier. “Competing job priorities” and “lack of management commitment” were the #2 and #3 barriers.

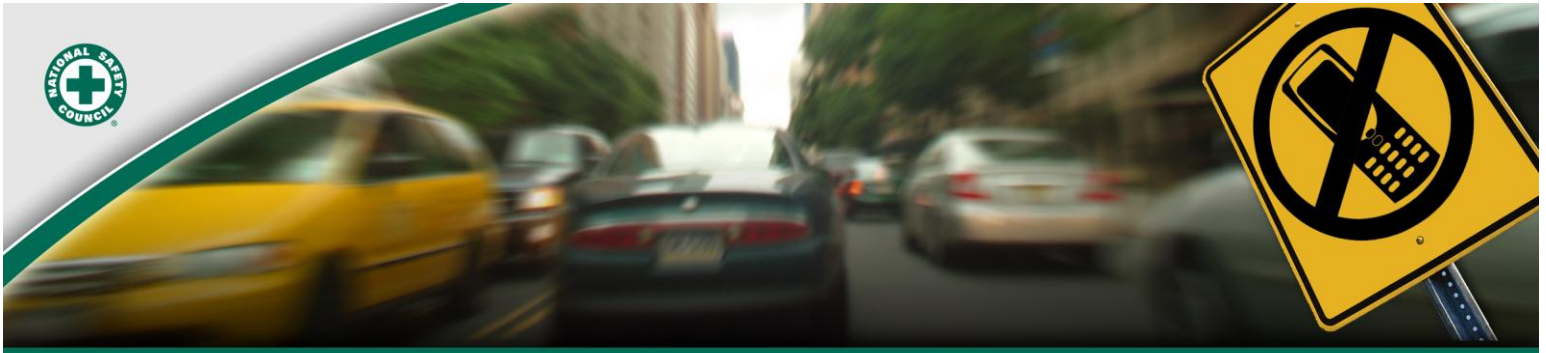
Evidence of Public Support

Numerous public opinion polls show the public recognizes the dangers of distracted driving and supports bans:

- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in 2011 found 3 in 5 drivers consider a driver talking on his or her cell phone to be a serious threat to personal safety.
- A 2010 survey by Nationwide Insurance Co. found that 79 percent of responders reported a decrease in cell phone use while driving because of increased awareness.
- A Harris Poll found 98 percent of people believe using cell phones while driving is somewhat to very dangerous.
- A New York Times/CBS News poll found 97 percent support banning texting while driving, and 80 percent support banning handheld cell phones while driving.

Tips to Build Employee Support

- Before policy implementation, hold open meetings to discuss the need for a policy with employees. Many materials in this Kit will help you communicate. Request feedback from employees, anonymously if that’s helpful. Don’t spring a policy on employees as a surprise. This could result in long-term negativity and lack of respect for the policy. When unions are involved, the union steward is a key stakeholder. Hold a pre-meeting with union reps to get them on board.
- Recognize that for some employees, this policy will change deeply ingrained habits. Any change can bring initial stress. Give employees the opportunity to discuss potential barriers, conflicts with their beliefs and their doubts. These are “objections,” which in the sales profession, are good to hear because there’s now a chance to address and overcome them.
- Ask employees to offer solutions to these objections. This makes employees part of the decision-making and the solutions become things they choose to do.
- Employees must see and hear that top management supports the policy. Employees will sense the level of commitment. If you don’t have leadership commitment, consider delaying employee rollout until you do have management buy-in. After all, management is part of the employee population.



- Employees may be concerned about job productivity — especially staff who frequently drive on the job and the supervisors responsible for their performance. Invite discussion about these concerns. Be clear about management's priority for employee and public safety, and challenge employees to find solutions to productivity issues.
- Ask employees to share ideas to maintain productivity. Employees will then have a plan to meet job goals without temptation to use the phone while driving.
- Invite cross-department employee teams to solve barriers to implementation. Have teams share the solutions with all employees. While working together, they build and reinforce the social support for a policy.
- Have a mix of senior management, front-line supervisors, union representatives, and other employees serve as spokespeople for the new policy process.
- Tell compelling, vivid stories and testimonials about the risk of crashes. Use video and public education resources at <http://distracteddriving.nsc.org>. If someone in your company has a personal story, invite him/her to share it. Then ask employees to help prevent this from happening to other people.
- Because many people still incorrectly believe that hands-free phones are safer, it's useful to share stories about hands-free phone crashes.
- Involve employee stakeholders in deciding how to monitor compliance, and consequences of non-compliance.
- After policy implementation, communicate positive results to employees. Consider surveying impact on productivity and share the results. The results are likely to be more positive than people expect. In a 2009 membership survey, 99% of NSC member respondents with cell phone policies did not find a decrease in productivity.