

The SLAM technique

Information sheet from Seven steps > Step 6 > Further tools



What is SLAM?

The **SLAM (Stop...Look...Assess...Manage)** technique reminds workers to stop work if they think their health and safety is at risk.

Why should I encourage my workers to use SLAM?

By using the SLAM technique workers will value the importance of health and safety and so help create a healthy and safe site. By remembering SLAM, workers are more likely to stop work if a task appears unsafe or risky to their health, or to stop their colleagues behaving in an unsafe or unhealthy way.

How to use the SLAM technique?

There are four stages to SLAM. Workers should:

Stop

- Stop the task and think. Look at each step. Ask:
 - Is this a new task?
 - Has the task changed?
 - When was the last time I did this task?
 - Do I feel comfortable doing this task?
 - If not, do I need training?

Look

- Look before, during and after completion of the task. Always:
 - inspect the work area for potential hazards, eg unsecured ladders, untidiness;
 - identify the hazards for each step of the job/task; and
 - evaluate what to do about them.

Assess

- Are workers equipped to perform the task safely? Check they have the correct:
 - knowledge;
 - skills;
 - training; and
 - tools.
- What else do they need to perform the task safely?
 - Help? (Workers should be encouraged to ask for help.)
 - More training? (Workers should not perform the task until they have been trained.)

Manage

- Managers should take appropriate action to eliminate or minimise any hazards on site by:
 - ensuring the proper equipment is used and is well maintained; and
 - thinking about the task just completed and ask, "What went well? What did not go well?"
- Ask yourself:
 - Did anything unexpected happen?
 - How can I be better prepared and plan for this in future?



What next?

- Share this information with other workers and management.
- Use this information to encourage safe working practices.
- Use safety briefings and toolbox talks to teach your workers about the SLAM technique (see Step 4 > Further tools > Training pack 2 and Step 5 > Further tools > Training Pack 3 *Motivating your Workforce to Behave Safely*).
- Refer to the SLAM prompt card for workers, below.
- Consider printing this out as a poster to display in your workplace or giving workers individual pocket-sized versions of the prompt card.

Before starting a task:

REMEMBER

Stop and engage your mind before your hands.
Look at the task in hand.

Look at your workplace and find the hazards.
Report these immediately to your supervisor.

Assess the effects the hazards have on you, the people you work with, equipment, procedures, pressures and the environment. Ask yourself if you have the knowledge, training and tools to do the task safely. Do this with your supervisor.

Manage and apply the correct controls and wear the correct PPE. If you feel unsafe, stop working. Tell your supervisor and team mates. Tell your supervisor what actions you think are necessary to make the situation safe.

Before starting a task:

THINK ABOUT

Any changes throughout the day: where you are, what time it is, what the weather is like, what changes or reorganisation have taken place?

People around you: their level of experience, how many hours they are working, their attitudes to health and safety, and any personal/home problems or work pressures including working to a deadline or cost.

Plant you use: when it was last maintained and is it the right tool to use?

Procedures you adopt: are they correct and do you take short cuts?

The Leadership and Worker Involvement toolkit is aimed particularly at small and medium sized businesses and is designed to help improve your health and safety and bring additional benefits to your business performance and productivity.