



SKILLSIGNAL

TOOLBOX TALK

Mental Rehearsal: Run the Job Before the Job Runs You

TOPIC NO.
TBT 04

DURATION
10 to 15 min

AUDIENCE
All Crew

PROJECT / JOBSITE

DATE

PRESENTED BY

01 THE HOOK

START HERE

Pro athletes don't just show up and swing. Before the big play, they see it in their head first. The shot, the footwork, the exact moment the ball leaves their hand. Surgeons do it before they cut. Pilots do it before they land. But on the jobsite, we grab our tools, jump into a high-risk task, and figure it out as we go. That's how you get surprised. And on a jobsite, surprises hurt.

02 WHAT IS MENTAL REHEARSAL?

Mental Rehearsal is walking through a task in your head, *step by step*, before you actually do it. And here's the part that matters: brain scans show your neurons fire in almost the exact same pattern whether you're physically doing the task or **vividly imagining** doing it. You're building the skill and the safety response before you ever touch a tool.

This isn't daydreaming. It's **pre-loading your brain** so when the real thing happens, your body already knows what to do.

03 THE 3-STEP REHEARSAL

STEP

1

SEE THE SETUP

Close your eyes for 30 seconds. Picture the task exactly as it will happen. What tools are in your hand? Where are you standing? Who else is in the zone? What does the area *look like* right before you start?

STEP

2

RUN THE SEQUENCE

Walk through every step in order. Feel the weight of the load. Hear the radio call. See your footwork. Go slow in your head. The more detail, the better. If you can smell the diesel, you're doing it right.

STEP

3

REHEARSE THE SAVE

Now picture one thing going wrong. The load shifts. The coworker moves into your zone. A tool slips. What do you do? **Rehearse the correct response before the mistake ever happens.** That's the save.

04 WHY IT MATTERS

[JOBSITE]

FOR THE CREW

A crew that mentally rehearses catches hazards before they exist. Rigging, confined space entries, first climbs of the day. The rehearsal is free. The mistake is not.

[INDIVIDUAL]

FOR YOU

Your reaction time gets faster because your brain has already "seen" the problem. When something goes sideways, you don't freeze. You respond because you already practiced.

[HOME]

FOR LIFE OFF-SITE

Job interviews, tough conversations with your kid, driving in a storm. Rehearsing the moment before it happens is the difference between reacting and leading.

05 TODAY'S DRILL

TODAY'S DRILL 60-SECOND RUN-THROUGH

Before your next high-risk task today, stop. Close your eyes for 60 seconds. Walk through it beginning to end. Then rehearse one thing going wrong and how you'll handle it. When you open your eyes, the job is already half done in your head.

06 CREW DISCUSSION

Take 2 minutes. Pick one.

1. Think of the last near-miss you saw. Could mental rehearsal have caught it before it happened?
2. What's the highest-risk task on today's schedule? Walk the crew through how you'd rehearse it.

