Pre Job Briefing

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v2.0 | October 13, 2026 | 5–10 minutes plus field checks

What and why

A pre-job briefing is a task-specific conversation before work. People establish the scope, important steps, responsibilities, controls, handoffs and response when the plan no longer fits. People can leave the same meeting with different ideas about who checks, who acts and who authorizes the next step. A short verbal rehearsal reveals those differences before action.

Objective: Explain a consequential step's sequence, responsible roles, required evidence and hold response.

When and where

Before the task and when changes or interruptions require another briefing. Match the detail to the work's hazards, complexity and people's familiarity; follow applicable requirements. Where everyone involved can hear, understand and contribute. Include affected teams and provide needed language or communication support without exposing anyone to the work.

How to use it

- Use the current task plan. Discuss purpose, prerequisites and relevant experience; focus the conversation on the important controls and interfaces.
- Name who performs, verifies, communicates and authorizes. Have each person explain what must happen before their action and what follows it.
- Talk through a missing result or changed condition. Agree the safe hold, help route and restart authority. Keep open items visible until resolved.

Verify It in the Field

Ask the designated checker to show the governing criterion and safe method. Record the actual result and time; discussing a check does not complete it.

Paper practice: before a mock notice is released, a reviewer must confirm its date. Assign preparer, reviewer and release owner; each explains the handoff.

Withhold the review result. Success means the release owner holds the paper notice and seeks resolution. No actual notice is sent or equipment operated.

Failure points and stop triggers

Unassigned checks; conflicting sequence; one-way lecture; missing participants; rushed questions; attendance mistaken for readiness. Hold for an unassigned role, conflicting sequence, missing prerequisite or changed scope. Resolve the gap, recheck required controls and rebrief affected people before authorized restart.

Toolbox talk questions

1. Who acts next, and what must happen first?

2. How will the required result reach that person?

3. What change means we need to brief again?

Use the separate supervisor field check and attendance sheet. Practice is not qualification or work authorization.

Source: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2, printed pp. 34–37. References and task-specific limits on the webpage.

Next step: Apply this skill to one step on the free JHA/JSA field-verification worksheet.

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/pre-job-briefing-critical-step-rehearsal

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