Toolbox Talk - Independent Verification

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

What and why

Independent verification assigns someone separate from the original action to establish the actual condition against the governing requirement. A checker can miss a discrepancy when guided by the performer's expected answer. Preserve independent judgment and the as-found evidence.

Objective: Show how the task preserves independence, records the unchanged finding and handles a mismatch before reliance.

When and where

When the governing process requires an independent check of a condition, document or calculation. Across equipment, laboratory, engineering and administrative work with a defined independent-verification process.

How to use it

- Assign the required authorized verifier and apply the process's separation requirements. Confirm they did not perform the action being checked.
- Provide current requirements, identity, boundaries and hazard information. Preserve independent judgment without withholding safety information.
- Establish the as-found condition by the approved safe method without changing it. Compare, record and report discrepancies before any authorized correction.

Verify It in the Field

Use a paper instruction requiring document revision C and a mock result showing revision B. A verifier uninvolved in preparation checks without answer coaching.

Success means recording B as found, identifying the mismatch and holding acceptance. Do not erase B and sign a corrected result as originally acceptable.

For real work, record the criterion, approved method, as-found result, verifier and time. Confirm independence, required re-verification and release authority.

Failure points and stop triggers

Checker helped create the result; answer coaching; missing criteria; silent correction; signature treated as release. Hold for compromised independence, unclear identity, unsafe verification or a mismatch. Preserve evidence and the prescribed safe state; obtain authorized disposition before reliance.

Toolbox talk questions

1. What preserves independence for our task?

2. How will we check without changing the condition?

3. How do we retain a mismatch through correction and recheck?

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. 41, 46–48. 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/independent-verification-as-found-condition

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