Nonprofit Safety Hero

How to Use the "Tools Decision Tree"

Hi, I'm Meps with Nonprofit Safety Hero. We work with the Washington Food Coalition to keep folks at food banks and food pantries across Washington safe and healthy. When it comes to tools, staying safe is about recognizing the hazards of using a tool, whether it's big or small. So when we talk about tools, we mean anything from a box cutter or a screwdriver to a stepladder or a cart or even a forklift.

The tools decision tree is a structured approach to using any tool of any size with a safety mindset. It goes like this. So I'm going to ask you a series of yes or no questions. First question, am I using a tool? So if the answer to that is no, then should I be using a tool? Here's an example of that one.

Say I'm getting ready to move a heavy box. And I'm not using a cart. Well, should I be using a cart to protect my back? That might help me avoid injury in the future. So if the answer to the question was yes, then you go to the next question. Do I know how to use and transport it? And if the answer to that is no, then I can ask for training.

But if the answer to that one is yes, then I move to the next question. Is it the right tool? Like, Maybe I'm, the answer's no, I'm actually using a screwdriver as a pry bar. Well, I should go and get a pry bar. But if the answer's yes, then we move to the next question. Is it in good condition? And if the answer to that is no, well, fix it.

Or maybe you're not the right person to fix it. Maybe you need to find a different one or ask somebody for help. If the answer is yes, then do I have the correct PPE to use it? Like, the answer is no. I forgot my gloves today, so either I should borrow some gloves, or maybe I should do it tomorrow, or ask someone who brought their gloves.

to do this task because they have the right PPE for this tool. But if the answer is yes, then do I know how to store and maintain it? And if the answer is no to that one, well, there we can ask for training again. But if you've answered yes to all the questions in the tools decision tree, then you should use the tool because you can use it safely.

You can find a lot more of this, including this handout itself, at NonprofitSafetyHero. com. You can also take the full Tools and Equipment course online. Thanks for watching.