The Jobsite Language Brief

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Why this brief exists

Every month you will get one idea to keep your crew safe and your site on track. Some months it will be a risk to check. Some months it will be a conversation to have. Each one is short enough to read on a break.

Attendance is not understanding

Signed is not understood.
A full sign-in sheet proves your crew was in the room. It does not prove every worker understood the instruction.

On a multilingual crew, a room full of signatures can hide a missed safety step. The worker who nodded along may have understood half the words, and no one will know until the task is done wrong.

Where the gap usually hides

Routine tasks. Everyone nods because they have done the work before, and the one change nobody mentioned goes unheard.

Mid-shift changes. A new instruction arrives fast, and the bilingual worker quietly becomes the interpreter.

Lead-to-crew hand-offs. The message is clear to the supervisor and unclear to the person holding the tool.

This month's action

Before your next safety talk, choose the three words a worker must understand to act safely. Write them in English and Spanish, using the words your crew uses on site. After the talk, ask a worker to show the step, not just describe it.

Try this on Monday

1. Pick the one hazard on your site that changes most often.
2. Write the three must-understand terms for that hazard in English and Spanish, using your crew's words.
3. After the talk, have two people demonstrate the step, not just repeat it.
4. Note what was missed and fix that one thing before the next shift.

What's coming next month

December's brief looks at two numbers that show why language risk matters on construction sites: the share of construction workers in the United States who are Hispanic, and what poor communication costs projects in rework.

Want help with your crew?

Monique Lewis works with commercial construction leaders on language risk. Start with the free two-minute **Risk Check** at next2native.com/risk-check, or go straight to **Request a Consultation** at next2native.com/consultation.

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