

5 ways to boost your fleet performance by upskilling your drivers



LOGISTICS

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An efficient fleet is incomplete without its drivers. Drivers, thus, become the backbone of any fleet, ensuring everything from error-free pick up to delivery. Additionally, they are also responsible for their own safety along with the safety of the goods and others on the road. So many companies upskill their drivers by training them with the correct road sense and equipping them with the latest tools and technologies to guarantee faster and organised deliveries. Such safe and suitable practices ultimately result in improved fleet performance and productivity.

1. Onboarding Training

It is essential to educate and train drivers, so they perform better. Many companies conduct onboarding training for their drivers to provide first-aid training, tiredness and fatigue management, defense training, road-sense, and safety awareness. This training enables drivers to practice defensive driving, causing minimal damage to themselves, their surroundings and the goods. Drivers then become equipped to pick up and deliver goods safely in time by maximizing their route productivity, thereby improving fleet performance.

2. Utilising Technology

Introducing and integrating technology can improve fleet performance. Latest tools and technologies like GPS tracking, telematics, and cameras help drivers become aware of the speed limits in different areas and prevent and manage potential delays by choosing the route with minimum traffic and the estimated arrival time. With fewer delays in deliveries and efficient fuel consumption, fleet performance improves.

For example, **Varuna Group** uses polygon geo-fencing at driver houses for effective vehicle tracking and maximum visibility. Additionally, an android phone based Varuna Next App built by the company for their in-house operations offers training videos at identified milestones to reinforce the correct protocol. A video/voice message notifies the driver and the control tower in case of speeding, tailgating, etc.

3. Prioritising Preventive Maintenance

Drivers must be aware of the preventive measures needed to ensure the smooth functioning of their vehicles without any breakdown. Regular inspections and checks can ensure that the vehicles operate smoothly. This also increases the vehicle's longevity, making it less prone to future wear and tear.

Companies, like Varuna Group, conduct knowledge-sharing sessions for their drivers by inviting maintenance teams to

lead sessions on particular areas like tyres, suspensions, etc. The company's **fleet maintenance** portal ensures that its trucks are in their best condition by following a 27-point checklist after every trip. This helps identify any possible servicing or maintenance that the trucks might require. Varuna Group also has five leading-edge Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) hubs strategically located across the country. A team of skilled technical experts support these OEM-certified provisions to ensure that all vehicles used for consignments are in perfect condition at all times.

4. Fostering a Culture of Safety

Safe drivers guarantee not only their own safety but also the safety of others on the road. Companies should constantly upskill their drivers and create a culture of safety by organising safety seminars and workshops and ensuring that vehicles are up-to-date with insurance, registration and inspection. Companies can also go a step further and provide health checkups and insurances for their drivers to ensure their safety and well-being.

For instance, Varuna Group organises regular health checkups for its drivers and provides them with healthy food at subsidised rates. The company also trains its drivers with safety protocols and tips.

5. Rewarding Drivers

Companies can introduce reward programmes to reinforce safe and sound behaviour and practices amongst their drivers. To ensure that the programme works effectively, companies must first set achievable and measurable targets and then train and educate their drivers on fulfilling the goals. Drivers who practise safe driving habits, utilise technology efficiently and achieve their targets (timely deliveries, safe deliveries, etc.) can be rewarded with bonuses, gift cards, or other perks. This will provide drivers with the incentive to work better, resulting in improved fleet performance.

Timely deliveries are incentivised at Varuna Group. The company also appreciates drivers who overshoot their targets by rewarding them for every extra mile.

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Conclusion

Drivers play an integral role in any fleet. Drivers who are well-equipped and trained are likely to help companies reduce vehicle repair, improve performance and productivity. By investing and upskilling their driving teams, companies prepare their drivers to follow the appropriate driving rules and regulations, ensuring fewer accidents and more efficient deliveries. Upskilling drivers, thus, become a necessity more than an option for most companies.

According to studies, fleets that have implemented comprehensive driver safety training programs see a reduction in accident rates by up to 40%.

FAQ's

1. How do you monitor fleet performance?

2. What is fleet maintenance?

3. How do you plan fleet maintenance?