



## 9 Tips for Staying Focused on the Road

Distracted driving can impair your reaction time and awareness.

## Avoid Heated Office Debates

Co-workers can get offended if you take conversations too far.

A monthly safety newsletter from

## 9 Tips for Staying Focused on the Road

Focusing on your cellphone and other distractions while driving can lead to impairments such as a decreased awareness of surrounding traffic, a sense of tunnel vision and increased reaction times. These can have dangerous consequences for you and other drivers.

While there isn't much you can do to control how other people drive, limiting your own distractions can help you better react to any dangers you may encounter. Use the following tips to minimize distractions while driving:

1. Make sure that you are well-rested before you drive. If you feel fatigued or drowsy on the road, pull over immediately.
2. Don't use your cellphone to call or send messages. If you absolutely need to talk with someone, pull over somewhere first.
3. Store any loose items that could roll around in the vehicle so that you aren't tempted to reach for them while driving.
4. Limit your conversations with any passengers and ask them to keep their voices down to help you concentrate.
5. Avoid looking at a map or other written directions while driving. Instead, use a voice navigation system or pull into a parking lot to get your bearings.
6. Only adjust the radio or other music players when your vehicle is at a complete stop.
7. Don't eat or drink while driving.
8. Never try to touch up your appearance using the rearview mirror. You should do this once you reach your destination.
9. Never use a cellphone or hands-free device in heavy traffic, inclement weather or in work zones.

Be a responsible driver, and make paying attention to the road and traffic around you your top priority. For more safe driving tips, contact us today at 813-984-3200.

**According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than nine people in the United States are killed in crashes involving distracted drivers every day.**



## Avoid Heated Office Debates

Discussions are a part of every office environment, but things can quickly get out of hand if a sensitive topic arises or if a co-worker becomes offended. Informal break room chatter about a political comedy sketch could quickly escalate into a debate; and if you don't know when or how to walk away from a situation like this, it could negatively impact your reputation and career.

In order to respect your co-workers' opinions and to safeguard your reputation, you need to know how to stay calm and collected during conversations. Here are some simple ways to avoid heated office debates:

- Remember that you are always in control of your own actions.
- Be open to disagreements. You should always respect the opinions of your co-workers, even if they don't share your views.
- Try to avoid topics in the news or popular media that your co-workers could consider sensitive. This includes political news, natural disasters, armed conflicts and more.
- Establish some limits for yourself before you get involved in a discussion. The stricter these limits are, the less likely it will be that a debate will arise.
- Avoid expressing your views on sensitive topics, even when you're asked to.
- Avoid making subtle or sarcastic remarks. These could be misinterpreted by your co-workers and negatively affect your working relationships.
- Be sure to immediately apologize to a co-worker if he or she seems offended by something you said.
- Talk to a manager or supervisor if a discussion with a co-worker becomes an issue.



## Safety in NUMBERS 123

### Common causes of distracted driving:



Texting



Talking to passengers



Eating and drinking



Fatigue



Navigation Systems

Source: NHTSA

## Real-life Case Study

Jane was recently hired as a personal trainer in a popular gym. Before leaving one night, she overheard the other two trainers at the gym discussing a political debate that had occurred the day before. Since she was still new, Jane decided to join the conversation in order to get to know her co-workers better.

Although the conversation went well at first, one of the trainers took offense when Jane made a joke about one of the debaters. From there, the discussion escalated into a heated argument, and Jane eventually left the gym in anger.

The next day, Jane noticed that the other trainers looked uncomfortable around her and avoided talking with her. Since she wanted to establish good working relationships, Jane decided to immediately approach her co-workers and apologize for her remarks.

After Jane apologized, her co-workers seemed much more comfortable around her. Since then, she has been careful not to bring up sensitive topics.