

# Health and Safety Training

## Why do I need to Provide Health and Safety Training?

### The Law

Many specific pieces of health and safety legislation contain requirements to provide training for employees engaged in certain tasks.

- A general duty for all employees to be trained as necessary to ensure their health and safety so far as reasonably practicable is contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Specific requirements are contained in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

### The Benefits

Effective training also provides a number of other benefits including:

- helping ensure that employees are competent
- helping reduce accidents thus avoiding much of the distress that both the business and the employee can suffer following accidents and ill health
- reducing the additional costs that result from accidents and ill health
- trained staff will be more efficient and effective and can contribute to the economic success of a business

Training in any subject requires the presence of three necessary conditions before it commences:

- **commitment**, support and interest of management
- finance and organisation to provide the **opportunity** for learning to take place
- availability of suitable **expertise** in the subject.

It is also important that the management team demonstrates support by setting a good example: it is pointless to train workers to obey safety rules if supervisors are known to ignore them.

### Training Needs

Training needs are related to the organisation, the job and the individual. It is not only about formal courses with exams. Training needs can be identified by looking explicitly at the health and safety elements in specific jobs or tasks, and can be enhanced by examination of accident and ill-health

records, observation of and discussion with employees, and review of risk assessments. Training must also take place when job conditions change and result in exposure to new or increased risks.

It must be repeated periodically where appropriate, and be adapted to any new circumstances. Health and safety training should not take place outside working hours. For management positions the analysis also needs to ~~consider~~ the health and safety supervisory elements.

The organisation needs to take into account the requirements of any contractors, agency staff, and young persons in its assessment of job-specific training needs.

### **Competence of Trainers**

Trainers may be used from within the organisation, or from an external source. They must not only be knowledgeable in their subject, but also be able to answer questions on the practical application of the working environment, which includes a familiarity with organisational work practices, procedures and rules.

When training has been delivered, there needs to be a system of evaluation and feedback to see if it has led to the desired improvement in work performance, and to help in targeting future training.

### **Training Delivery**

There are five types of health and safety training:

- New employee induction
- Job-specific for new starters
- Supervision and management
- Specialised
- Reinforcement or refresher

### **New Employees**

New employees are known to be more likely to have accidents than those who have had time to recognise the hazards of the workplace. Formal health and safety training is now required to form part of the **induction** programme. Training must also take place when job conditions change and result in exposure to new or increased risks. It must be repeated periodically where appropriate, and be adapted to any new circumstances. Health and safety training should not take place outside working hours.

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The key points that should be covered in induction training are:

- discussion of the organisation's overall health and safety policy or programme
- safety philosophy; safety is as important as production or any other organisational activity, cause and prevention of accidents, responsibilities of management and employees
- local, national and organisational health and safety rules or regulations, and how those violating them may be subject to disciplinary action
- the health and safety role of supervisors and other members of the management team includes taking action on and giving advice on potential problems, and how they are to be consulted if there are any questions on health and safety

- where required, the wearing or use of personal protective equipment is not a matter for individual choice or decision – its use is a condition of employment
- in the event of any injury, no matter how trivial, employees must seek first aid or medical treatment and notify their supervisor immediately. They must report any adverse physical symptoms immediately.
- fire and emergency procedures
- welfare and amenity provision
- location of first aiders and first aid materials
- arrangements for consultation with employees on health and safety issues

An example of an induction training checklist is contained in the document library.

## **Job Specific Training**

**Job-specific** training should include skills training, explanations of applicable safety regulations and organisational rules, and a demonstration of the use of any personal protective equipment that may be required including correct fit and cleaning. There should be a review of applicable emergency and evacuation procedures. The use of risk assessment findings is a valuable training aid. This training may be carried out by a supervisor or designated trainer. It should be properly planned and organised by the use of appropriate checklists. Documenting a record of training is considered good practice and may be required to demonstrate compliance should an enforcement officer visit.

An example of an individual training record is available in the document library.

## **Management Training**

**Supervisory and general management** training at all levels is necessary to ensure that responsibilities are known and the organisation's policy is carried out. It is not sufficient to simply tell them that they are responsible for health and safety; they must be told the extent of their responsibilities and how they can discharge them. Key points to cover in the training of supervisors and managers are:

- the organisation's safety policy or programme
- legal framework and duties of the organisation, its management and the workforce
- specific laws and rules applicable to the workplace
- safety inspection techniques and requirements
- causation and consequences of accidents and their reporting, recording and investigation
- basic accident prevention techniques
- disciplinary procedure and application
- control of hazards in the workplace and use of personal protective equipment
- techniques for motivating employees to recognise and respond to organisational goals in health and safety

Supervisors and managers should attend external health and safety courses as appropriate to their position. These may be on a specific topic, such as Risk Assessment, or of a more general nature such as Managing Safely. Selected staff may need to attend professional training courses leading to a formal qualification, such as those administered by the National Examinations Board

in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH). This is of particular relevance for the person(s) designated as health and safety adviser(s) in the organisation.

## **Specialised Training**

**Specialised** health and safety training will be required to cover both legal requirements and others necessary for the safe running of the organisation, for example:

- first aid, taking into account the nature of the work and the size of the organisation
- driver certification for a particular class of vehicle, e.g. tankers carrying hazardous substances
- use of fire-fighting appliances such as extinguishers
- use and maintenance of forklift trucks

## **Reinforcement or Refresher Training**

**Reinforcement or refresher** training will be required at appropriate intervals. These requirements will depend on the outcome of observation of the workforce, i.e. during a training needs assessment.

Factors to be taken into account are the complexity of the information to be held by the employee, and the amount of practice required and the opportunity for practice in the normal working requirement.

Assessment will also be required of the likely severity of the consequences of behaviour that does not match training objectives. Refresher training is vital in areas such as response to plant emergencies.

## **OVERVIEW:**

- . Identify training needs (i.e. what)
- . Decide upon a training strategy
- . Set training priorities (i.e. when)
- . Choose training methods and resources(i.e. how and who)
- . Deliver the training
- . Record the training
- . Check/evaluate the training to ensure it has been effective
- . Deliver refresher training when and where necessary

## **FURTHER GUIDANCE**

*Effective Health and Safety Training: A Trainer's Resource Pack (HSG 222)*  
HSG222 ISBN9780717621095 £21.95

*Health and Safety Training: What You Need to Know*INDG345  
Free on request, also at link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg345.pdf>

Available from HSE Books on 01787 881165.