

# **YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

Your Practical Guide



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## Contents

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- Introduction 4
- Training Assessment 4
- Specific Requirements 6

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## Introduction

*All employees need health and safety training whatever role they play within your organisation. Managers, supervisors, operatives, service personnel and other members of staff all need to be included in the training plan.*

## Training Assessment

*Health and safety training needs must be carefully assessed, and training plans must be devised which suit both the company and the individual. These needs relate to the responsibilities of individuals for their own health and safety, the health and safety of their colleagues, and also the health and safety of members of the public who may be affected by their work activities, such as passers-by. Assessing these training needs involves a systematic series of checks, the principles of which apply to all organisations, irrespective of their size.*

To assess your health and safety training needs, you will need to find out whether each employee, or category of employee, is competent in relevant subjects. If an employee is not found to be competent, a training need has been identified.

Health and safety training is not a replacement for 'hardware' items such as local exhaust ventilation or machinery guards or mechanical aids for lifting. Nor is it essential for everybody to become health and safety experts. Everyone does, however, need some awareness of health and safety. Health and safety training helps ensure employees are able to carry out their jobs in a safe and healthy way. It is, therefore, an essential aspect of managing your company.

Training needs should concentrate on the hazards present in your company's activities. These hazards should be identified by the various risk assessments you carry out. Some of the hazards will be common to all jobs in the company, such as those associated with the use of machinery, lifting heavy objects, handling dangerous or potentially dangerous substances, the risk of falling, tripping, etc., transport and fire. Others will be associated with particular jobs, and each of the main occupations should be analysed to determine the specific hazards that employees are likely to meet.

After assessing the risks and putting in physical controls, you should work out what scope there is for training to improve performance and so reduce any remaining risks. This should take into account individual abilities (or competences), i.e. what each person needs to do and to what standard. It will make monitoring of training easier, by giving a benchmark for judging employees' competence, and will also help in deciding what training to do first.

Analysing incidents causing damage or injury may identify other general factors which need attention. These could be highlighted in the continuing programme of safety education for staff and employees, but events may show that more specific individual training is required.

# Specific Requirements

## **Directors/Senior Managers**

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Your directors and senior managers need to determine the health and safety priorities and set these out in the health and safety policy statement. They should structure and operate the company to promote a management culture which supports control of risks and compliance with the law. Directors and senior managers have to assess the health and safety performance and training needs of middle managers and supervisors, and are responsible for ensuring a professional approach to safety. This is shown by committing the company to undertaking effective health and safety training at all levels, including the most senior.

## **Managers and Supervisors**

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Training for managers and supervisors is crucial as they have a key role to play in maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Managers and supervisors should clearly understand their legal obligations in respect of the health and safety of their staff.

They should also possess knowledge and experience of the hazards at the workplace and the means of controlling them, at a level at least equivalent to that held by the employees they supervise.

## **Charge Hands/Line Leaders**

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Charge hands and line leaders should clearly understand their legal obligations in respect to the health and safety of the people who report to them. They should possess sufficient safety awareness to ensure that people at all levels work safely and adhere to company health and safety requirements. Their training should be designed to enable them to lead by example.

## **Technical Staff**

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Technical staff have skills in their particular disciplines but it cannot be assumed that such skills, on their own, are sufficient for individuals to avoid risks to health and safety.

## **Administrative and clerical staff**

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Administrative and clerical staff tend to operate in a relatively low risk environment. Nevertheless, training needs can be identified, particularly in relation to good housekeeping, fire safety and the safe use of office machinery.

### **Operatives and Service Personnel**

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Operatives and service personnel should be aware of the need for their involvement in establishing and maintaining safe working procedures. Safety training should be incorporated into specific job training and, where unfamiliar equipment or processes are to be used, these employees should undergo sufficient familiarisation training to perform the work safely.

### **Safety Representatives**

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Where safety representatives have been appointed, it is important that they have a thorough grounding in key areas of health and safety, and can relate this to conditions in their own workplace.

Safety committee members need a sound technical understanding of the hazards in their workplace and the necessary control measures. Training may also be required in committee procedures, including how to chair meetings.

### **Fire Wardens and First Aiders**

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These people will require additional training, over and above that normally provided, to cover their responsibilities and the procedures and actions which need to be taken in emergency situations.

### **Recording Training Provided**

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You should ensure that detailed records are kept of all training provided to employees. The trainer and trainees should sign or date the training records as confirmation of the training having been provided.

This could be particularly beneficial for you if the employee is injured at work and you need to demonstrate that you had provided the necessary guidance on safe working practices.

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