

Safety *focus*

KMEA SAFETY BULLETIN

Training for Compliance

Preventing accidents, injuries and illness in the workplace should be a priority for everyone, but it is also a legal requirement as mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). Not only are there copious rules for keeping a workplace safe, many rules are constantly changing, and so is the political landscape in which these rules are enforced. So how do we keep up? Compliance training.

Safety Compliance Training

No matter how many safety products and materials you have on the job, none will matter without the proper training. Safety training is immensely important when it comes to:

- ensuring workers are not injured or made ill by their work;
- developing a positive health and safety culture, where safe and healthy working becomes second nature to everyone;
- discovering the best ways to manage health and safety in your worksite;
- and remaining safety compliant. **Safety compliance** refers to the state of being in accordance with established safety standards and regulations, or the process of becoming so. Businesses or companies in all industries must comply with safety regulations that are relevant to their industry and these regulations must be clarified to workers in some means.

Professional Development vs. Compliance Training in Workplace Safety

Professional development is learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, trade shows, or industry expo fairs, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice.

Compliance training is employee training mandated by legislation, regulation or policy. It formally educates your employees on the laws or regulations applicable to their job function or industry. Compliance training is the most important responsibility of an organization, both in terms of legal responsibility as well as operational efficiency. Training employees is vital to identifying many of the major OSHA requirements and guidance materials that may apply to the worker's specific duties and workplace.

Obstacles to Overcome

Even if workers are given the opportunity to train for safety, we will still face obstacles to ensuring a safe and compliant workplace. Leaders and workers most overcome:

APATHY. Workers with considerable field experience often feel they know everything there is to know, and there's nothing new to be learned. If they've worked for many years and been lucky enough not to have an accident in spite of unsafe behavior, they may be convinced their "common sense" way is the right way. It is the employer's legal responsibility to educate employees on all workplace safety standards and the hazards that their

employees may face while on the job. Your employees need training. Your employees need to know how to work safely and without risks to health.

TIME. Shortcuts are called shortcuts for a reason. Working safely will require a greater time investment than doing things the "easy" way. This obstacle can be removed with a top-down approach; supervisors must make it clear to the crews that it is imperative to do equipment walk-arounds, installation of trench boxes, wearing the proper personal protection equipment (PPE) safety barriers, etc., and other time-consuming safety measures.

VALUE. If you only act like safety matters to you during training and toolbox talks, it won't matter much to workers when they're working. Don't merely pay lip service where safety is concerned; workers will see through it in a second. A consistent commitment must be demonstrated from all levels — requiring the same of supervisors — and the abstract ideas in the safety meetings will become a reality on the jobsites.

Sources: https://www.osha.gov/employers/https://coreaxis.com/how-safety-and-compliance-training-can-empower-your-team/https://www.osha.gov/dte/training_policy.html

SAFETY WATCH

