

Training at All Levels

Construction management, in partnership with their employees, is responsible for ensuring that jobsite hazards are eliminated, or at least minimized. These partnerships are most effective when they exist within a positive safety climate.

The **safety climate** on a construction jobsite refers to managements' and employees' shared perceptions about the extent to which safety is rewarded, expected, valued and reinforced. It may be influenced by things such as project scheduling and planning methods and norms of the trades working on-site.

The best way to ensure that all employees know and understand how they improve jobsite safety climate is to provide ongoing, effective training for specific roles and responsibilities in the company. Which best describes your company?

| INATTENTIVE | → REACTIVE | → COMPLIANT | → PROACTIVE | → EXEMPLARY |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Company does not conduct ongoing employee training. It assumes employees are trained properly when they come on-site. Fraudulent training cards may even be accepted. | Only the OSHA 10-hour certificate is required for workers, foremen, and supervisors. Training is aimed almost exclusively at individual employee behavior. Training is only implemented after an incident, and the commitment to training is reduced over time. | Off-the-shelf curriculum is used to meet OSHA and management system training requirements. Most training is provided via monthly or weekly toolbox talks. Trainers meet minimal qualifications. Training records are kept but not reviewed. Employees are provided OSHA 10 training. | Supervisors and foremen are required to obtain an OSHA 30-hour certificate. Management provides adequate resources to ensure high quality training. Knowledge and skills testing is conducted. Safety training is conducted by highly qualified trainers. Employees are encouraged to request needed training. | Training programs are ongoing and qualified trainers use adult learning principles. Supervisor and foreman-specific training and peer-to-peer training are conducted. Company implements a Safety Trained Supervisor (STS) certification program. Employees are integral to identifying training needs. Management is trained on safety skills, as well as OSHA standards. |

How to become exemplary

Review the ideas below and check the short-term (1-2 months), mid-term (6-12 months), or long-term (1-2 years) circle to indicate which you will commit to adopt and by when. Congratulations, if you've already adopted the idea!

Supervisors and foremen – Front-line supervisors and foremen are the linchpin for safety on the jobsite. Therefore, how they lead, act as role models, and communicate are important factors in determining strong positive safety climate on a jobsite.

Idea #1 - Safety and Health Training

Supervisors and foremen should be OSHA 30-hour trained at the very least and receive additional specialized training as appropriate for assigned tasks (i.e., Permit Required Confined Space, Excavation and Trenching, Fall Protection, etc.). Ideally, supervisors should obtain a safety-trained supervisor (STS) certification.

- Already Adopted
- Short-term
- Mid-term
- Long-term

Idea #2 - Leadership and Communication Skills

Supervisors and foremen should participate in leadership training/education to learn how to effectively communicate their safety vision and expectations, how to listen effectively, coach workers on how to create a strong jobsite safety climate, and provide both positive and negative constructive feedback. Supervisors and foremen should also receive training in effective safety management to better understand processes and expectations.

- Already Adopted
- Short-term
- Mid-term
- Long-term





Idea #3 - Root Cause Analysis

Train supervisors and foremen on how to conduct root cause analyses to examine environmental, organizational, and human factors that contribute to jobsite incidents and close calls. They should help develop processes to easily share findings from these investigations across the organization.

- Already Adopted
- Short-term
- Mid-term
- Long-term

Idea #4 - Role Modeling


Educate supervisors and foremen on the importance of being good safety role models. For example, they should always use proper personal protective equipment (PPE), insist workers (and managers who come on site) do so as well, and maintain accountability expectations. When addressing worker complaints, supervisors and foremen need to keep in mind that their risk perceptions may be different than the workers.

-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term

Workers – Provide ongoing worker training to promote a consistent message that safety is as important as productivity. This message should be reinforced (at least) at daily and/or weekly safety meetings (huddles), daily tool-box talks (tailgate meetings, or pre-shift safety meetings), and by posted visual reminders.

Idea #1 - Safety and Health Training

All workers should be at least OSHA 10-hour trained and preferably have an OSHA 30-hour certificate plus additional specialized training as appropriate for assigned tasks (i.e. Permit Required confined Space, Excavation and Trenching, Fall Protection etc.)

-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term





Idea #2 - Empowerment

Training should include methods for empowering workers to actively recognize potential hazards on the jobsite and understand their obligation to stop work when a hazard is identified that is serious or presents an imminent danger.

-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term


Idea #3 - Communication Skills

Workers would benefit from learning how to communicate effectively with co-workers, supervisors, and foremen, including how to listen and provide constructive feedback.




-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term

Idea #4 - Self-protection Skills

Workers should be able to demonstrate safe work practices, including the ability to use proper PPE. If the worker is unable to do so, they should receive training, and their skills evaluated prior to going onto the jobsite.

-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term

Management – Provide management with safety leadership training so they understand the critical role they play in creating and maintaining a positive safety climate. The training should include how best to communicate, provide feedback, and be a good role model for employees, particularly when visiting jobsites. Management should also have a comprehensive understanding of how safety complements quality, production, marketing, and the financial aspects of their organization.

-  Already Adopted
-  Short-term
-  Mid-term
-  Long-term