



Foundations for Safety Leadership

Frequently Asked Questions

The Foundations for Safety Leadership (FSL) training module is designed to introduce construction workers, particularly those with supervisory responsibilities such as foremen, to safety leadership principles and give them the skills to be a safety leader who can help create and sustain safe and productive jobsites.

Everyone, from the company owner to the experienced crew leader and new trainee/apprentice, needs to own safety and be a safety leader. Effective safety leadership can help a company implement its safety program and safety policies, improve safety culture and safety climate, and reduce incidents that lead to injury and illness.

Who developed the FSL course?

A research team (RT), a curriculum development team (CDT), and instructional design specialists worked collaboratively for 1½ years to develop the FSL course. The RT includes researchers from CPWR-The Center for Construction Research and Training, the University of Colorado Boulder, and the University of Colorado Denver with expertise in leadership and safety climate. The 17-member CDT was made up of construction industry experts, including experienced OSHA 10- and 30-hour outreach trainers, construction workers, and safety and health professionals.

Who funded the development of the FSL?

The funding came from CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training, as part of its 5-year cooperative agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. To learn more about CPWR, visit <http://www.cpwr.com>.

How is safety leader defined in the FSL?

A safety leader has the courage to demonstrate that s/he values safety by working and communicating with team members to identify and limit hazardous situations even in the presence of other job pressures, such as scheduling and costs.

What leadership skills are covered in the FSL?

Students learn how to:

- Lead by example
- Engage and empower team members
- Actively listen
- Practice 3-way communication
- Develop team members through coaching and feedback
- Recognize team members for going above and beyond for safety

What teaching materials are available to instructors?

There is a comprehensive set of teaching materials including a power point presentation with embedded videos (PC or Mac), an instructor guide and student handout. Additional resources include a pdf of a wallet card and hardhat sticker that can be sent to an on-line printer, short refresher videos, skill sheets, and many more.

Is the FSL module only for construction?

While the current version of the FSL was designed for construction, other industries may want to use it as a starting point or template. For example, they may want to use the foundational material contained in Section 1 about the costs of ineffective leadership and the benefits of effective leadership, and revise the 10 real-world scenarios to realistically reflect situations in their own industry. Check out and download the Create Your Own Scenario worksheet from the FSL website.

Is the FSL training module only for supervisors and lead workers, or can anybody take it?

The module was designed specifically for construction supervisors, superintendents, forepersons, stewards, lead persons, because they are often responsible for implementing safety on the construction site. However, every construction worker and manager would benefit from learning the leadership skills and applying them on the jobsite.

Will all 30-hour training classes include the training?

No. The FSL is a 2.5-hour elective. The OSHA 30-hour outreach instructor should be familiar with it but may or may not choose to include in their training course. You can request that s/he include it.

When will I be able to take the FSL training?

The FSL became an official elective in the OSHA 30-hour outreach course on January 1, 2017.

Can the FSL training be taken as a separate class or seminar?

Yes. Anyone can [download all the FSL materials](#) at the CPWR website and use them as part of their own safety and health training program.

Who will provide the FSL training? Where?

Different types of trainers can teach the FSL, including authorized OSHA outreach trainers, company and union safety and health trainers, and consultants who focus on construction safety and health.

The training is available through [OSHA Training Institute \(OTI\) Education Centers](#) as part of their 30-hour outreach course (if the instructor chooses) and can also be taught in company or union training programs.

Will the FSL training be available as an on-line course?

There is not an on-line version of the FSL because an important part of the training involves student-student and student-instructor interactions.

If I take a 30-hour outreach course that includes the FSL training, will my card show that I've taken the FSL module?

The OSHA 30-hour Construction Outreach student course completion card will not list the FSL training on the card. There is a sample Certificate of Completion available on the FSL website.

Do instructors need special training before they can teach the FSL material?

There is no special training needed to teach the FSL course. Of course, if possible, the instructor would benefit from taking the course first. And we strongly encourage all instructors to spend time becoming very familiar with the content of the instructor guide and learning about their audience before teaching the course. The guide contains teaching tips as well as lots of questions and ideas for activities designed to engage the students in classroom discussion. [Click here to see a set of videos showing an actual FSL course being presented.](#)

How do I learn more about the 10- and 30-hour OSHA Construction Outreach Training Program class?

Visit the [OSHA DTE Outreach Training Program webpage](#).

Can the FSL program be broken up into smaller modules?

OSHA's Directorate of Training and Education has said that authorized Outreach trainers should plan to spend 2.5 hours teaching the FSL in their course. We believe that a minimum of 2 hours is required to develop participation, create a period for self-reflection, and to absorb and exercise new skills. If the training takes less than 2.5 hours, the Outreach trainer must train for an additional 30 minutes on another elective topic to meet the 30 hours of training requirement.

Can I add other leadership material to the FSL module?

A number of trainers have added PowerPoint slides that make additional leadership-related points or provide examples that resonate with their audience. We want trainers to "make the training their own" but would hope they do not change it in a way where it loses its powerful and proven message.

Impact of the FSL to date

To assess the effectiveness of the FSL training, we conducted a year-long evaluation with frontline leaders working for 20 different subcontracting companies, which we randomized into a training or no-training control group. The data showed that compared to leaders in the control group, those who received the training showed statistically significant increases in outcome variables such as understanding and use of the leadership skills. [Read more about the evaluation study.](#)

We also carried out many dissemination activities to get the word out about the availability of the FSL. In early 2019, we followed up with folks we'd reached via these activities to determine if they had used the FSL and if they had, how many people had they trained either as part of an OSHA 30-hour course or a company's stand-alone training. The final tally, which is likely an under-count, was **63,339** frontline leaders trained between December 2016 and January 2019. [Read more about our dissemination activities.](#)

Here are a few examples of user feedback. [Read more at the bottom of this page.](#)

"A large carpentry contractor holds a daily mass (+100 workers) huddle each morning. The contractor was experiencing large safety outcome variation in the field. The FSL training supported the contractor's decision to reduce daily huddles into smaller teams each lead by an FSL trained worker. Almost immediately, the contractor noticed increased participation and less variation."

"I think they're more aware when they do their morning safety meetings, their morning huddle. They do more each day. I also see them take a little more time when they're talking about the work that they also cover the safety implications of that work and try to get more input from the employees on their crew instead of just giving instructions. I see them more likely to ask for input."

"The foreman is doing more to develop individual employees and the lead guys on those crews to be able to take over a crew if they leave the site to give them more responsibility and allow them, encourage them to ask more questions about the work to be able to take over more safety responsibilities for that group."

Who to contact for additional information?

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