

A Worker-Centered Approach: Core Occupational Safety and Health Competencies

UC Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program and UC Berkeley Labor Center
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High road health and safety training should ensure workers and trainees learn to recognize potential health and safety hazards, identify effective solutions, know their rights, and communicate effectively to problem-solve on the job. This is key to a [high road health and safety approach](#).

All workers should be able to:

1. Recognize the impact of workplace illness and injury, and value prevention efforts.

Recognize that all workers can be injured, become sick, or even be killed on the job and be able to explain that, while work has benefits, the impact of work-related injuries and illnesses on workers, their families, co-workers, and employers can be significant. Recognize that effective occupational safety and health (OSH) programs are essential to preventing these workplace injuries and illnesses.

2. Identify underlying factors that contribute to workplace injury and illness.

Identify the underlying factors that contribute to workplace injuries and illnesses, including how the work environment and job tasks are organized, management commitment to safety and communication, and workforce factors like experience, training, stress and fatigue.

3. Identify hazards in any workplace.

Identify the types of health and safety hazards that can cause injuries and illnesses in the workplace and specific hazards in the particular industry or type of job for which the worker is being trained. Recognize the legal responsibilities employers have for identifying hazards as well as the role workers can play in identifying and speaking up about the hazards they face on the job.

4. Describe how hazards can be controlled.

Describe the different ways hazards can be controlled, recognizing that some solutions to workplace hazards are more protective than others. Explain that the best way to address a hazard is to eliminate it, if at all possible. Recognize the legal responsibilities employers have for addressing workplace hazards as well as the role workers can play in creating safer workplaces, by identifying solutions to the hazards they face on the job and speaking up about them.

5. Explain workers' rights and employer responsibilities.

Explain the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers to provide a safe and healthful workplace under Cal/OSHA regulations. Identify relevant Cal/OSHA standards that relate to the work for which the worker is being trained and demonstrate the ability to find relevant standards and other helpful occupational safety and health information and resources.

6. Describe appropriate emergency preparedness in the workplace.

Identify emergencies that could happen in the workplace and appropriate emergency preparedness and response procedures, as well as employer responsibilities regarding emergency preparedness and employee training.

7. Speak up effectively when a problem arises.

Demonstrate the ability to recognize when there is a problem at work that should be addressed and effectively communicate with supervisors, co-workers and other individuals to resolve the problem. Express confidence in advocating for oneself and others regarding health and safety issues and workers' rights on the job. Identify and demonstrate specific strategies for solving on-the-job problems, using effective communication skills and available resources, including unions, community organizations and government agencies.

<https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/high-road-health-and-safety/>