

Individual “Training and Competence”



Training helps people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to make them competent in their routine and non-routine work, especially the health and safety aspects. It includes internal and external training for the job or task, instruction to individuals and groups, training and counselling at the workplace or job site.

Competence is the demonstrated ability to undertake responsibilities and to perform activities to a recognised standard. Competence is a combination of practical and thinking skills, experience and knowledge. Training and competence are equally important to new employees, contractors and experienced employees.

Learning more about training and competence

If the answer to any of the questions below is ‘no’, then you need to take action.

1. Does the company assess training needs, based upon the hazards in the tasks, when staff are first recruited or redeployed and does it continually assess these needs? ☐
2. Can your company demonstrate that the hazards which could arise from everyday tasks (normal operational, maintenance) and from emergency tasks, have been identified and are documented? ☐
3. Are the consequences of human failure taken into account when determining task training requirements? (Tasks with potentially severe consequences from operator error may require more detailed training or practical assessment). ☐
4. Is the training material designed or validated by persons knowledgeable in the work activities, hazards and safeguards? ☐
5. Does your company have a selection and assessment process to identify suitable personnel to carry out the tasks? ☐
6. Does your company identify gaps in a person’s skill or knowledge or experience? ☐
7. Does your company follow up on the training and assessment that has been done to close these gaps? ☐
8. Does your company provide additional supervision or support for employees who are new to a role, until they are authorised or competent to work alone? ☐
9. Does your company identify the best way of providing the necessary skills and knowledge that people require for each task? (For example, classroom training, practical or on the job training). ☐
10. Is enough time allowed for training and for implementing afterwards what was learned in the training? ☐
11. Are trainees tested after training to establish that the training has been successful? ☐
12. Are individuals re-assessed on a periodic basis to ensure they have maintained the required competence? ☐

13. Does the company keep training records showing what training everyone has completed and their current level of competence? ☐
14. Does the training cover rare, unusual and emergency events? ☐
15. Does your company include contractors and temporary workers in its training plans, where legislation allows? ☐
16. Does your company hold safety briefings or meetings periodically? ☐
17. Is training material regularly reviewed and improved, including lessons learned from safety incidents? ☐
18. Does your company have a culture where an employee is encouraged to tell management that they do not yet feel competent to perform a task? ☐
19. Does your company culture allow employees to request additional training at any time when they perceive a need or benefit? ☐

Never expect a person to do a task that they are not competent to do.

What can a manager or supervisor do about it?

Having well trained and competent staff and management is a key part of running a safe operation. This contributes to an effective safety culture.

- Ask employees whether they have concerns regarding training or competence (possibly using some of the questions above).
- Find out if there are particular problems with
 - training or competence of new recruits, including contractors,
 - obtaining approval to go on training courses,
 - how training is delivered,
 - training facilities and resources (for example for practical training),
 - the effectiveness of training and competence assessments.
- Bring any issues to the attention of company management.

What should my company do about it?

All EIGA member companies should have an internal system to manage competence that includes these five key components:

1. **Competence requirements.**

Develop these by identifying activities, assessing their risks and selecting appropriate skill levels.

2. **Design of Competence Management System (CMS)**

- Develop procedures to be used in the implementation of the CMS. Ensure the respective responsibilities of all stakeholders (line managers, human resources, safety department, employees) are clearly defined and understood.
- Decide what methods to use to ensure that individuals meet the company's training and assessment standard (how to select, train and assess employees and contractors).
- Ensure that training delivery methods (self-study, classroom face to face or virtual, and/or e-learning) are appropriate to the topic being taught and are effective. Consider updating delivery methods as technology evolves, for example interactive micro-learning on smart devices or vehicle / driver simulation devices, use of virtual or augmented reality for remote competence assessment).
- Monitor managers' competence in using the CMS.

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