

*Discussion  
Leader's Guide*

**Safety-Health and Working Conditions**

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# *Safety and health*

## *– human right*

This training package has been made available in the framework of the ILO's International Programme for the Improvement of Safety, Health and Working Conditions (PIACT). The package has been developed in co-operation with the Joint Industrial Safety Council in Sweden. It adopts the practical group work approach with a view to promoting real improvements at the level of the undertaking. Education and training is of key importance in improving safety, health and working conditions. Efforts to improve safety, health and welfare at work are often severely limited by a lack of awareness, a lack of technical expertise and a lack of know-how. It is therefore important to organise education and training in the specific fields of occupational safety, health and working conditions. This package is designed to enhance both awareness of existing problems and the ability to identify and solve these problems.

This training manual is designed for government officials, employers, supervisors, safety committee members, safety delegates, worker representatives and labour officials. The manual can be used effectively by trainers of these groups. The training package is suitable for group work taking into account the advantages of learning-by-doing. The trainees could also act as trainers for subsequent courses, thus multiplying the effects by "training the trainers".

In organising a training course keep in mind the following three points:

- *Use a comprehensive approach.* To enhance the well-being of workers we must try not only to remove occupational hazards but also to fit the work to individual needs, skill development, personal and group achievements, free time and mutual respect. This training therefore covers safety, health and working conditions ergonomics, work organisation and welfare.
- *Encourage small group work.* Training always has a greater effect when each participant is actively involved. Work in small groups makes the course practically oriented and lively.
- *Build on local experience.* Discussing realistic improvements helps the participants put their knowledge into practice after the course. What they think and what they add to their previous experience is important. Discussions should therefore centre around the participants' own experience and the local facts well known to them.

# *A WORD TO THE DISCUSSION LEADER*

This discussion leader's guide gives advice on how to conduct a training course using the Training Manual on Safety, Health and Working Conditions. The manual has been designed to provide information on the basic principles for improving safety, health and working conditions. It can be used as part of a training package for government officials, employers, supervisors, trade union representatives and workers.

In a training course using the manual, the participants should go through the following steps:



**1. Receive basic instruction on the main topics. This instruction should be given using overhead transparencies (or other audio visual aids).**

**2. Read and discuss the supporting literature in the manual.**

*The discussions can be supplemented by workplace visits using the checklist.*

**3. Make a presentation based on group work.**

This Guide contains nine sections which are designed following a normal course sequence, from preparation of the course to post-course action. The Guide is based on an integrated method of learning. Therefore go through all of these sections before starting your preparation:

- Preparing of the course.
- Opening the course.
- Course work for different sections:
  - lecture by an instructor;
  - reading the manual;
  - group discussion;
  - reporting group work results.
- Worksite visit and the use of the checklist.
- Discussion on training methods.
- Group presentations.

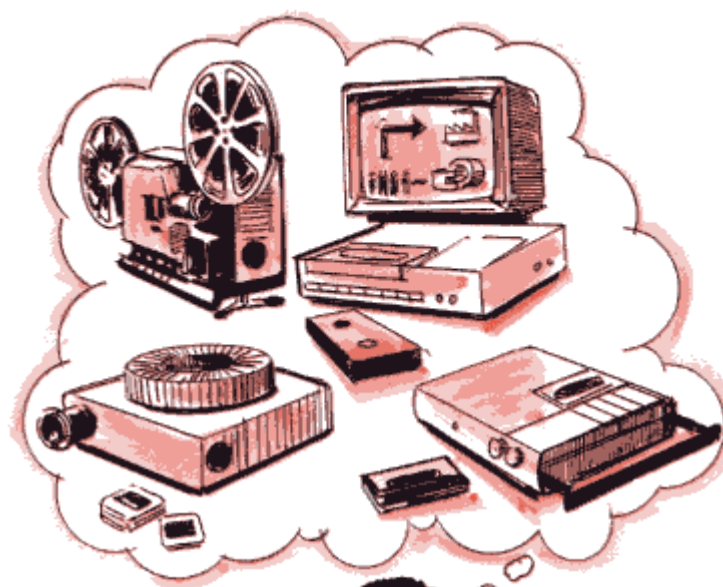
- Evaluation of the course and follow-up.
- Advice and hints:
  - what is your aim?
  - how can we awaken interest?
  - being clear and concise.
- An example of the course plan and timetable.

## *Preparation of the course*

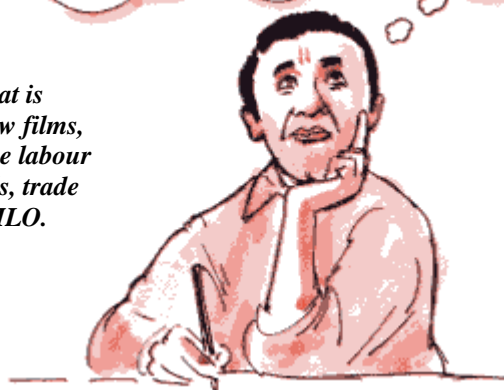
Each course must be carefully prepared. Make sure that you have enough copies of the manual and the accompanying materials before the course begins. You should have:

- The Training Manual on Safety, Health and Working Conditions.
- An overhead projector or other suitable audio visual aids which can be used in introducing the different sections of the manual.
- Transparencies for overhead projection.
- Note pads for the participants.

These audio-visual aids are important in getting information across to the participants when you present the main points in the manual. Do not rely only on an "oral" presentation. Various studies have shown that even the clearest oral presentation will be rapidly forgotten.



*Use any other AV material that is available. You can also borrow films, slides and video films from the labour inspectorate, libraries, schools, trade unions, the employers or the ILO.*



## Evaluation of the course and follow-up

An evaluation of the course should be incorporated into the course activities when you plan them. It is also essential to allocate a brief session for this purpose. If you and the participants feel it appropriate, a questionnaire form can be used for evaluating the course. In that case, the brief evaluation session can be used by the participants to fill in the evaluation questionnaire and to exchange opinions.

The evaluation should include all the course activities; it is especially important to know which part of the course requires more emphasis, more careful preparation or longer periods of time. Encourage the participants to express their frank opinions. They should be told that the results of the evaluation will be useful for their own future work.

A follow-up of the course is another important aspect. The best way would be to organise a follow-up meeting of the participants after a certain period of time. Different meetings of the people concerned with the course topics also provide a good opportunity to follow-up the course results. Try to get feedback from the participants taking advantage of every possible opportunity. If you can collect information about the training activities or the safety, health and welfare programmes in which some of the participants are involved, it will help you follow up the course results. Every effort should be made to improve your own training activities and promote the organisation of training in this field.

## Discussion on training methods

During the course programme, a brief session should be arranged to discuss the participant's future training activities. An instructor can help initiate the discussion by explaining the training methods of the course using this discussion leader's guide.

This discussion can include the practical role of education and training in improving occupational safety and health and working conditions, effective training methods and how to organise training activities by the participants themselves.

## Layout of a lesson

### **I Lecture by the instructor (or a discussion leader)**

*(20 to 40 minutes)*

The purpose of this presentation is to give a clear understanding of the section to be discussed and to motivate the participants. The presentation depends on the nature of the subject. If a slide presentation is used it can be shown at the beginning and the instructor can make his points afterwards. Combine oral presentations with transparencies or other technical aids.

Participants must feel that they can influence the running of the course from the start. This will be done in part by group work. The instructor must make it clear in the course of his introductory remarks that participants can raise questions, make brief comments and add information from their own experience.

### **II Reading the manual**

*(30-60 minutes depending on the length of the section.)*

Immediately after the presentation by the instructor, the participants should have time to read. This reading period can be spent in groups. All the participants should read the pages corresponding to the section before starting group discussions. This will not be achieved by merely asking them to read beforehand (at home, for instance). A certain time period for reading must be allocated in the course timetable.

### III Group discussion

*(1-2 hours)*

The participants are divided into groups of 4 to 6 persons. Each group deals with the discussion topics given in the manual.

Sufficient time must be given for group work. One to two hours are usually needed. As an instructor, participate in the group work, but try to be a listener and talk only when questions are raised to you by the participants.

Dealing with the discussion topics within a limited period of time is up to the group members. Clearly tell each group to arrange for efficiently going through all of the topics, find suitable answers, and assign one or two persons from among them to present these answers afterwards.

Working in small groups has several "built-in" advantages:

- it makes it easier for the group members to establish contact with one another;
- the experience of working together creates a sense of common action. It gives the group's work a more realistic character and helps the members make more practical and concrete suggestions;
- a sense of "social" learning is promoted; the participants learn to value co-operation and get some important hints for similar training situations.

### IV Reporting group results

*(about 30 minutes to one hour)*

After the group period, you should have a session to discuss the group results. All the participants should take part in this session. One or two persons from each group should present the results. Make sure that during the course, all of the group members are given at least one chance to present the results.

In this presentation, you can arrange it so that some discussion topics are allocated to one group, others to another group, etc. It is important to hear from all groups. The participants can discuss these answers.

Our study technique is to build on local experience and to learn by producing new knowledge as part of our own experience. The small group work is essential in this technique. This technique is to encourage "learning by doing". It is quite logical that the more you reinforce different ways, the stronger and more effective it becomes. There is an old Chinese saying that states:

*"If I hear it, I forget it"*

*"If I see it, I remember"*

*"If I do it, I know".*

Remember that the managers, supervisors and workers have much practical experience. This experience needs to be used as a basis for learning. Thus it is useful to have group work right from the start. The instructor should suggest questions and discussion topics which go deeper than the given topics or the group results.

Questions that touch on personal interests as well as those subjects which the participants wish to work on themselves are all valuable means of stirring up involvement.

## An example of the course timetable

A course using the manual usually takes about five working days. The course can be shorter or longer according to the local situations. This example is for a five-day course. Whatever the length of the course, it is important to secure enough time for group discussions of all the chapters and to settle the final timetable by agreement between the participants.

The afternoon of Day 4 may be alternatively used for a worksite visit of a nearby factory combined with the application of the checklist.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
9.00	Opening Session	Lecture + Slides, film, video	Lecture + Slides, film, video	Lecture	Preparation of Group Presentation
10.00	B	Reading	Reading	Reading	Group I
11.00	Introduction to course	B	B	B	B
12.00	Lecture: Legal aspects on Safety and Health	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Groups II and III
	Orientation to Group work	Plenary	Plenary	Plenary	
13.00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14.00	Lecture + Slides, film, video	Lecture + Slides, film, video	Lecture	Use of checklist/workplace visit	Evaluation
15.00	Reading	Reading	Reading		Summary Discussion
	B	B	B		B
16.00	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Group Discussion		
16.30	Plenary	Plenary	Plenary		Closing Session

B: Break.

## *Opening of the course*

The opening statements should state clearly the objectives of the course and an explanation of the way in which the participants are expected to work. Involve the participants in active discussion as early as possible. In the opening session, bring out the participants' background knowledge. By doing so, you can expect a greater degree of mutual friendship and co-operation.

Opening statements should be brief and concrete. Mention the reasons for this course, including the general movement for the improvement of safety, health and working conditions nationally and internationally. Refer to the examples of occupational risks known to the participants and the potential for improvements. The positive effects of improving safety, health and well-being, including the increase in productivity, should be mentioned. Point out how it is useful to gain enough knowledge to understand risks and change existing conditions. Joint co-operation and active participation of all people concerned needs to be emphasised. But remember to present these opening statements in your own words and in the way that suits you best.

Keep in mind:

1. Everybody must have a feeling of belonging to the group and being accepted by the group.
2. Different ideas and opinions must be respected.
3. As course/group leader, you must be a part of the group. Common problems must be settled by agreement between the participants, and not by you alone. You should motivate the participants to form study groups and actively participate in group discussions.
4. As a leader, you are also responsible for the evaluation of your work. This evaluation is made on the planning, the preparatory work, the information provided, the success of group discussions and the effects of the course such as actual changes in working conditions.

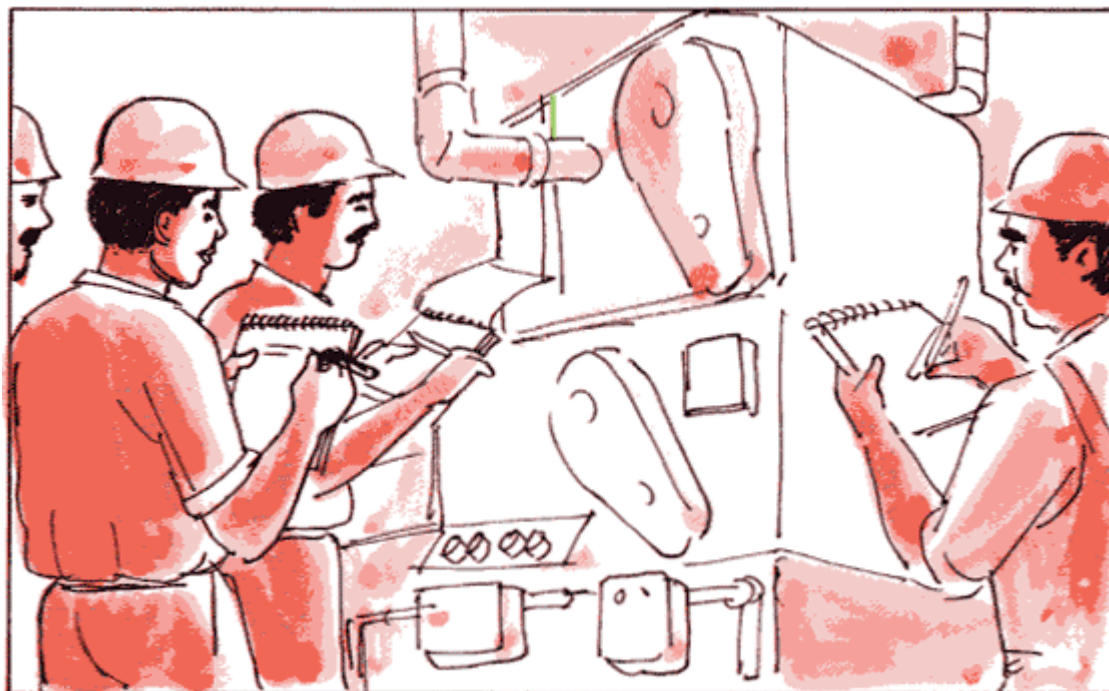
## **Course work for the different sections**

Each section of the manual should be presented in the following way:

- presentation by an instructor (or a discussion leader) using audiovisual aids;
- reading the corresponding text;
- group discussion;
- presentation of the results of group discussions.

The manual can be divided into several sections. Normally, one section would correspond to one chapter, or six sections. If you have more time for the course, divide the same chapters into two or three parts (e.g. chapter 4 into three parts dealing with heat, lighting or noise; chapter 5 into two parts dealing with work organisation and working time, etc.). You can change the order of different sections if you think this might be advantageous.

## Worksite visit and the use of the checklist



*When visiting workplaces, both good and bad conditions should be noted on the checklist.*

*Discuss possible proposals for improving the work environment. Make sure that good use is made of the personal experience of the participants. If possible, invite staff from the company who are responsible for the work environment to the report on measures put forward by the work group.*

Wherever possible, visits to actual worksites should be organised as part of the course work. Depending on the time available, the number of establishments to be visited can be fixed and appropriate establishments will be chosen. Visits to one or two establishments can be quite useful. Schedule the visits after finishing each section.

Before the visits, you should brief the participant on the worksites to be visited. You should also explain the composition of the checklist and how to use it. You need to stress that these worksite visits are an important part of the course and that the participants should learn how to propose improvements rather than merely evaluate the worksite conditions.

During each visit, time should be secured to interview the management. Questions related to the main features of the establishment, working time, safety and health organisations and welfare programmes should be asked.

In a small establishment, all the production area may be defined. In a larger establishment, a workplace within a building or a part of it where you can see almost everyone in the workplace at a time may be chosen. The participants should be instructed to observe the work processes and then start filling in the checklist. A certain period of time (at least one hour) should be given for the checklist. They should be encouraged to write in any additional remarks, including good examples they find.

On the day following the worksite visits, discuss impressions of these visits. The results of the checklist should be used in the discussion. In particular, priority problems, good examples and suggestions for improvements are useful to discuss.

If factory visits cannot be organised, the use of the checklist should be explained. If some slides are available which show existing conditions of the local factories, they can be shown while explaining the main items of the checklist. You should stress that when using the checklist, good examples must also be checked, and that the results of the checklist application must be discussed with the management and worker representatives.

## Group presentations



*In general, work groups with well-motivated participants who are familiar with the material do not need so much help from the discussion leader. However, you should always make sure that the discussions in the group do not stray off the subject. If necessary, guide the group's work so that the summary and report is easy-to-grasp.*

At the end of the course, at least one half-day session should be planned for group presentations. This session is to hear and discuss presentations from all the groups. Usually, 30 to 40 minutes will be sufficient for presentation from a group followed by time to discuss each presentation.

The topics of these group presentations should be decided during the course by the discussion leaders and the participants. Each group will be given sufficient time to prepare their presentations. This should be included in the original timetable. The use of transparencies or other technical aids is encouraged. The following are some examples of topics for such group presentations:

- Make a complete plan for a short training course on the improvement of safety, health and working conditions for a particular target group (including detailed timetables, materials, preparatory work and equipment plans).
- Conduct a lecture on a specific topic chosen by the group (including oral talk and the use of transparencies or other aids).
- Propose to management (the discussion leaders can take up the role of the management in the group presentation) suggestions for practical improvements on specific aspects (e.g. based on the application of the checklist at one of the worksite visits).

These group presentations may well become the high-point of the course. Concrete points must be the focus of these presentations. Concrete questions from members of the other groups will be welcome. Much depends on the participants' own experience and the knowledge gained during the course. The preparation of the presentations can build up a better relationship with one another and help create a more positive and open feeling of co-operation. Through these presentations, the participants learn how important it is to get themselves involved and feel co-responsible for the success of a training course.

## *Advice and hints*

The common goals of this course can be stated as follows:

- (1) Give the participants a clear idea of what they should achieve by attending the course.
- (2) Present the objective of the course (the promotion of real improvements in safety, health and working conditions with long-lasting effects) and motivate participation in discussions.
- (3) Make the participants feel that they are "partners" in the learning process (not merely "receivers of information" or "pupils in a classroom situation").
- (4) Give the participants a real opportunity to co-operate in running the course and studying the training techniques.
- (5) Bring out knowledge and information from the participants themselves, by making it clear that they make up an important source of relevant knowledge and information.
- (6) Give the participants the opportunity to get to know each other and start building up contacts for any possible future co-operation.

To achieve these goals, it is important to work in such a way that you engage all the participants from the very start of the course. Make sure that they feel they have a responsibility for the success of the course.

## **How can we awaken interest?**

A very basic question is: how do we catch the interest of the participants and create a sense of involvement? This may not be achieved by merely emphasising what they must do. The method of this course will help you "awaken" the interest, but you need to use your own personal efforts to the greatest extent possible. Following are some useful suggestions:

- (1) *Refer back to the participants:* refer as frequently as possible to the problems and experience of the participants. This helps them feel "this is important for us, we are at the centre of this discussion".
- (2) *Give concrete examples:* where some general or theoretical points have to be made, refer to concrete and easily grasped examples. The more concrete examples are taken from everyday working life, the better.
- (3) *Start now:* take up things that have just happened in the group, on the participants' own jobs or in the local area which everybody has witnessed or is familiar with. A short article in a local newspaper, a TV programme, a new event, or what your comrades have just said.
- (4) *Be natural:* by talking in a natural, informal and lively manner, you can show that you yourself are personally "involved". Be yourself, be natural; and you can more easily get others involved in the subject.
- (5) *Ask questions:* do not give a complete answer to the subject you are talking about. This "snap" answer kills conversation. A question with an open answer spurs others to think about the subject. They should be given a problem, such as how to improve in a particular case or select from alternative means of running the course. The participants should not be treated as "receivers of information". They should be given a challenge to make a search for a solution or an answer.
- (6) *Be attentive to reactions:* always be attentive to the reactions you get from the participants. These reactions may show that you must elaborate a little more or change the rate of work, style of presentation or pattern of dialogue. If you are attentive, it makes the participants feel that their contribution is important and worth-while.

## Being clear and concise

How can you make yourself clear? There are some basic rules you can follow!

- (1) *Don't take up too much in your talk:* never have the ambition to pack too much in what you say. Rather, reduce the number of important points you want to make; explain these points in a concise manner by trying to skip many things.
- (2) *Take it easy, don't rush:* your listeners cannot return to a point as with a tape recorder or a book. Make your points clearly, take a pause here and there.
- (3) *Speak simply:* try to use simple and short sentences only. Use everyday words. Never use complicated sentences or difficult words to show you are an important person.
- (4) *Pause – give people the chance to ask questions:* it's much easier for people to ask questions on the spot or after a few minutes than to ask after 45 minutes. Encourage questions and meet them in a positive manner.
- (5) *Build on audiovisual senses:* write up the main points, key words, numbers or names on the board, overhead sheets, etc. Seeing and hearing together help understanding, and encourage note taking, too.
- (6) *Use examples:* examples always help clarify a point or make it familiar. They bridge the gap between "theory" and "practice". They are helpful for people who are not necessarily used to formal training.
- (7) *Clear structure:* divide the subject into clear and distinct main areas. Describe these areas one by one. Make sure that the participants know that the subject is gradually explained from one area to another. This is better done with the help of a blackboard or an overhead projector.
- (8) *Summarise:* give a summary of the essential points you have covered. Do this regularly. By repeating these essentials, it becomes easier for the participants to remember these points. By doing so, you also know the points you want to be clear about.
- (9) *Audibility-visibility:* make sure that everybody can see and hear clearly. Study rooms are often inadequate as regards spacing, lighting and technical aids. Likewise, don't rush through the overhead transparencies too quickly. Unfortunately, there are still many course leaders who do not pay due attention to these "obvious considerations". This easily leads to lack of interest.
- (10) *Make your answers concise:* if you take too much time in answering questions, you are discouraging further contributions from the participants. Give time to other questions. Treat all contributions equally seriously.

## *Overhead projectors and transparencies*

An excellent way of explaining something to a group of people is to use transparencies. These sheets can be projected on a screen by an overhead projector (OHP). They can reinforce the various points you make.

Transparencies must be prepared in advance. Illustrations on transparencies should be clear, simple and easily understood. You will need to darken the room and make sure that the projected picture can be clearly seen from any point in the lecture room. It is equally important to remember the following points:

- Do not overload the transparency.
- Make drawings and figures clear and simple.
- The size of letters and number should be at least 4-5 mm.
- Keep a uniform layout.

Do not start by showing the complete text at once. Show first only the part of the transparency you are talking about by covering the other parts with a sheet of paper. In this way, the text appears bit by bit as if you were writing it on a blackboard. You can also add additional transparencies so as to build up a text or diagram step by step.

## **Blackboards**

Used in the right way, the blackboard is an excellent aid to learning. When using a blackboard, systematise what you write. Do not "overload" the board with writing. Write only key phrases, important key words or key sentences. The size of the text written on the board should be large and clear enough to be seen by all participants.

## **Flipcharts**

Flipcharts can be prepared in advance and be used as an alternative to blackboards.

After these preparations, a course agenda must be drawn up. Starting and finishing times of each section and the necessary breaks should be clearly specified. An example of such a timetable is given at the end of this Guide.

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