



Funded by the European Union

► The role and importance of occupational safety and health (OSH) training in workers' attitudes and behaviors

Labour Inspection and Guidance
Handbook Series
June 2026



**DIRECTORATE OF GUIDANCE
AND INSPECTION**



**International
Labour
Organization**

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► What is occupational safety and health culture?

Occupational safety and health (OSH) culture is the set of shared values and practices encompassing the importance that employers and workers attach to health and safety in a workplace, as well as their attitudes, behaviors, and practices in this regard. A strong occupational safety and health culture ensures not only compliance with legislation but also the adoption of occupational safety and health as a way of life.



For the establishment of an occupational safety and health culture, training shall be provided on a regular basis and all workers shall be involved in the process. Training shall be regarded not only as a requirement but also as a fundamental element in creating a safe way of life in the workplace.

► How is an occupational safety and health and safety culture established?

Occupational safety and health training plays a significant role in preventing work accidents and occupational diseases. Raising workers' awareness is fundamental to creating a safe working environment. Ensuring safety in workplaces requires not only the implementation of physical measures but also the awareness of workers.

► What are the objectives of occupational safety and health training?

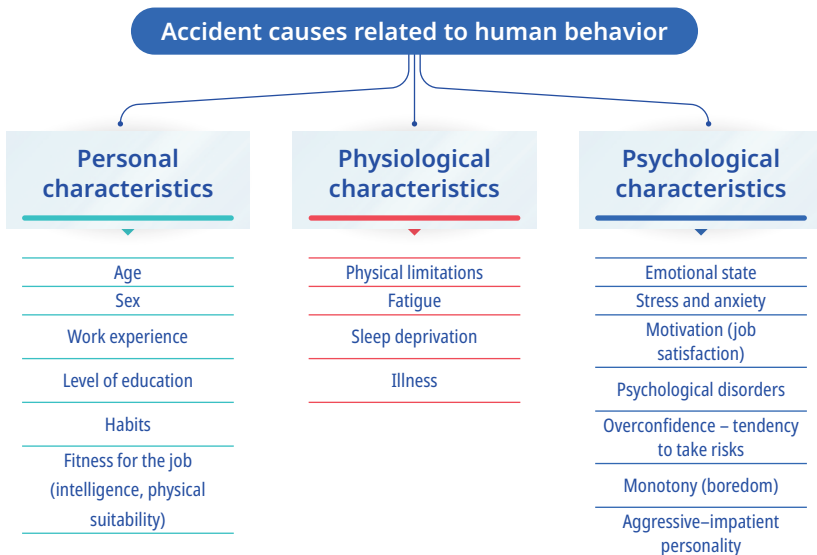
- To inform workers about their legal rights and obligations,
- To inform workers about the occupational risks they face and the measures that must be taken against these risks,
- To contribute to ensuring a healthy and safe environment in workplaces by increasing the level of knowledge and awareness,
- To ensure behavioral change toward occupational safety and health and the adoption of safe behavior habits by establishing awareness of occupational safety and health,
- To contribute to the reduction of work accidents and occupational diseases by increasing the level of awareness and knowledge related to occupational safety and health.



► What is the relationship between occupational safety and health training, worker behaviors, and work accidents?

Occupational safety and health can be effectively ensured not only through technical measures but also through workers' understanding and ownership of these measures. Occupational safety and health training aims to raise workers' awareness on occupational safety and health issues and to develop a safe workplace culture. Informed workers become more sensitive to potential hazards that may be encountered in the workplace. In this way, they play a more effective role in preventing work accidents and occupational diseases.

► What are the causes of work accidents?



Most work accidents occur due to unsafe behaviors. The interaction between the worker's personal, physiological, and psychological characteristics and the environmental conditions in which he or she is present is a determining factor in the emergence of unsafe behaviors. Unsafe conditions arise from a wide range of factors such as inadequacies in the technological equipment and tools used in production and service processes, irregularities in work organization, deficiencies in maintenance and control mechanisms, lack of internal oversight, and shortcomings in managerial practices. Human error emerges as a determining factor in the occurrence of unsafe behaviors and unsafe working environments.

► What are unsafe behaviors of workers?

Unsafe behaviors of workers are one of the most significant causes of work accidents and are generally associated with risks related to human factors. These behaviors are actions that violate safety in the workplace and lead to accidents. These actions may be exemplified as follows:

1 Failure to comply with procedures and instructions

Examples: Removing machine guards, bypassing safety steps to complete the work quickly, working in unauthorized areas, overloading lifting equipment such as forklifts and cranes.

Causes: Time pressure, the mindset of experienced workers that "this is how we have always done it," and lack of training.

2 Working at unsafe speed

Examples: Operating machines at excessive speed, performing high-risk actions in haste, disabling machine safety devices in order to increase output.

Causes: Pressure to meet production targets, psychological stress, the workplace's inability to keep up with advancing technology, and lack of training.

3 Physical and mental inattention

Examples: Making errors due to distraction or fatigue, engaging in actions that divert attention, working under the influence of alcohol or drugs, using a mobile phone during work.

Causes: Long working hours, lack of sleep, personal problems, and lack of training.

4 Improper use of equipment

Examples: Using equipment for purposes other than those for which it was designed, operating defective equipment without repair, using equipment without having received the necessary training.

Causes: Lack of training, production pressure, or the habit of relying on “workarounds”

5 Psychological and social factors

Examples: Taking risks to gain recognition, efforts to prove oneself within the team.

Causes: Social pressures, lack of training, mobbing, excessive confidence arising from experience.

6 Organizational and environmental factors

Examples: Leaving the work area cluttered and disorganized (e.g., leaving cables or materials on the floor), working under inadequate lighting conditions, failing to carry out maintenance and repair activities regularly.

Causes: The workplace's inability to keep pace with advancing technology, organizational blindness, lack of training, and insufficient research by enterprises on safe working practices

7 Ergonomic factors

Examples: Incorrect working posture, lifting heavy loads, repetitive movements.

Causes: Inadequate design, improper work habits, and lack of training.

8 Failure to use personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to the nature of the work

Examples: Not wearing a helmet, not using a safety harness, neglecting protective equipment such as work gloves or safety goggles, using personal protective equipment incorrectly or incompletely, using worn or damaged personal protective equipment.

Causes: Discomfort caused when PPE is not properly selected for the worker, overconfidence (“nothing will happen to me”), insufficient understanding of the importance of the equipment, and lack of training.



► What are the positive effects of occupational safety and health training on workers' behaviors?

1 Increase in workers' awareness

Workers can identify hazardous situations and unsafe behaviors more quickly and take preventive action.

Workers act more safely by becoming aware of emergency procedures.

2 Strengthening of workplace culture and institutionalization

A shared awareness of occupational safety and health is established among workers.

It promotes teamwork and ensures a working environment in which workers value occupational safety and health.

3 Reduction in work accidents and near-miss incidents

Workers learn how to identify hazards and how to take preventive measures.

4 Increase in productivity and motivation

Through the indirect effect provided by training, workers operating in a safe environment experience less stress and focus better on their work.

With increased levels of awareness and knowledge, work accidents decrease, which in turn enhances business continuity and reduces worker absenteeism.

5 Ensuring legal compliance

Employers meet the legal requirements in this regard and fulfill their legal obligations through OSH training provided to workers.

Workers also act in an informed manner by learning their own rights and obligations.

6 Prevention of health problems arising from the work performed by workers

With increased awareness and knowledge, occupational diseases (hearing loss, skin diseases, respiratory system diseases, etc.) are prevented.

It also contributes to arranging the ergonomic conditions of the working environment in accordance with workers' health.



Through occupational safety and health training, workers ensure not only their own safety but also the safety of their co-workers and the workplace. Repeating these trainings at regular intervals contributes to making the OSH culture permanent.

► What are the legislative provisions regarding occupational safety and health training?



Occupational safety and health training, which is included among the employer's general obligations toward the worker in Article 4 of the Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 6331, is set out in detail under the heading "Training of Workers" in Article 17 of the same Law. Pursuant to the relevant legislative provision, the employer shall ensure that workers receive occupational safety and health training.

This training shall, in particular, be provided;

- Before starting work,
- In the event of a change in workplace or job,
- In the event of a change in work equipment or the introduction of new technology.

In addition;

- Additional training shall be provided to a worker who has suffered a work accident or contracted an occupational disease before resuming work,
- Refresher training shall be provided to those who have been away from work for more than six months for any reason before they resume work.

Occupational safety and health training shall be updated in accordance with changing and emerging risks and shall be repeated when necessary and at regular intervals.

In certain regulations issued pursuant to Article 30 of [the Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 6331](#), it is also stipulated that occupational safety and health training shall be provided to workers.



The relevant regulations can be listed as follows:

- [Regulation on the Use of Personal Protective Equipment in the Workplace](#)
- [Regulation on Occupational Safety and Health Committees](#)
- [Regulation on Health and Safety Conditions in the Use of Work Equipment](#)
- [Regulation on the Protection of Employees from Noise-Related Risks](#)
- [Regulation on Health and Safety Measures to be taken when Working with Chemicals](#)
- [Regulation on Dust Control](#)
- [Regulation on the Prevention of Risks of Exposure to Biological Agents](#)
- [Regulation on Health and Safety Measures to be taken During Work with Carcinogenic and Mutagenic Substances](#)
- [Regulation on Health and Safety Measures for Work with Asbestos](#)
- [Regulation on Emergency Situations in Workplaces](#)
- [Regulation on Occupational Safety and Health in Construction Works](#)
- [Regulation on Occupational Safety and Health in Mines](#)
- [Regulation on the Vocational Training of Those to Be Employed in Hazardous and Very Hazardous Classes of Work](#)

In the relevant articles of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles of Occupational Safety and Health Training of Workers, issued pursuant to Article 30 of the Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 6331, the persons and institutions authorized to provide training, training topics, training durations determined according to the hazard class of the workplace, and training intervals are briefly set out in the table below.

Hazard Class	Training Durations	Training Periods	Persons and institutions authorized to provide training	Training Topics ¹
Low Hazard	8 hours	3 years	Occupational safety specialists and workplace physicians providing occupational safety and health services in the workplace, LSSTRC, Universities, Training units of public institutions and organizations, Professional organizations with public institution status, Training institutions authorized by the Ministry, etc.	General Topics Health Topics Technical Topics Other Topics
Hazardous	12 hours	2 years		
High Hazard	16 hours	1 year		

Participation in the training is mandatory. Participants who score 70 points or above in the examinations conducted at the end of the training shall be issued a certificate.

The cost of occupational safety and health training shall not be charged to workers. The time spent in training shall be counted as working time.

Receiving occupational safety and health training at intervals compliant with the legislation reduces the risk of accidents by 75.6%².

1 Details of the training topics are set out in Annex-1 of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles of Occupational Safety and Health Training of Workers.

2 Başat İLTER, The Effect of Mandatory Occupational Safety and Health Training on Work Accidents: A Case-Control Study in the Manufacturing Sector, Doctoral Thesis, 2019

► Conclusion

Occupational safety and health training is one of the main factors that ensure the establishment of an occupational safety and health culture in workplaces. The development of workers' ability to work safely, the adoption of safe working habits, the performance of their tasks in a careful and safe manner, and at the same time their positive influence on other workers around them are made possible by the significant contributions provided by occupational safety and health training. Although the general framework of occupational safety and health training is defined by regulations, these regulations set out only the basic principles. The content and frequency of the training may vary depending on workers' needs, workplace-specific conditions, and similar factors.

There is a strong relationship between occupational safety and health culture and occupational safety and health training. It has been established that occupational safety and health training positively influences the formation of an occupational safety and health culture, reduces work accident rates, and lowers operating costs.

The information contained in this booklet provides a basic framework regarding occupational safety and health training; these methods and equipment may vary and be expanded according to workplace-specific conditions, workers' needs, and similar factors.



ilo.org
International Labour Organization
Route des Morillons 4
1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland

This publication has been prepared within the scope of the project titled “Strengthening Workplace Compliance through Labour Inspection Guidance and Social Dialogue,” implemented in cooperation between the International Labour Organization’s Türkiye Office and the Directorate of Guidance and Inspection (DoGI) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

This publication is funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the ILO and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.