Current and Future Safety and Health Training Expectations Under 21st Century Workplace and Socioeconomic Conditions

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Health and safety education for worker empowerment
Purpose of H&S Training

- Occupational H&S practice and theory prioritize removing hazards to prevent injuries, illnesses, and fatalities
- If we can’t remove the hazards, can we maximally prevent exposures?
- Worker H&S training is not a control
  - A measure to inform
  - A way to bring workers knowledge of work processes into decision-making about creating H&S workplaces
Training is but one component of an overall safety and health program and is not a substitute for other preventive strategies such as the application of engineering and administrative controls.

Michael Colligan and Raymond Sinclair, 1994
Potential of Training When Hazards Remain in the Workplace

- Learn to recognize hazards and associated risks
- Change attitudes
- Adopt safe work practices

- Help workers to build power to get the hazards removed
  - Move employers, government, unions and allies to remove or maximally control workplace hazards
  - Activity to end dangerous working conditions –
    - To prevent injuries, illnesses, fatalities
Political Context of HAZWOPER Training

• Citizens United
  – Corporate Personhood - - free speech rights
  – Reflects trends toward reinforcing privacy rights
  – Contrast with workers’ rights and power
• Current Union Membership - US

• 11.8 % of wage and salary workers (14.8 M)

• 37.0 % of public-sector workers (7.6 M)

• ~7 % of private sector workers (7.2 M)
Protective Role of Government

• Deregulation and decreased enforcement capacity
• DOL – OSHA
  – Cost-benefit analysis
  – Acceptable Risk
• EPA and Environmental Protection
• Climate Change, disasters, waiving government and corporate responsibility

Technical Help
Reducing OSHA Risks
Other Trends in Free-Market Restructuring

- Doing more with less
  - Incidents due to insufficient maintenance and staffing
- Increasing use of temp corporations and outsourcing labor
Job Blackmail

• “The epidemic of unemployment”
  – About 15.2% of the US workforce is either unemployed or chronically underemployed.
  – That’s 23M current workers.
  – Job blackmail is a fine tool for convincing the working class that safe and healthy jobs and communities just aren’t worth demanding.
New Solutions Special Issue

• 3 articles on immigrant worker H&S
• 2 articles about systems of safety, mapping
• Trust
• The dynamics of social power – influencing workers and educators
  – “build collective power by inviting people to learn together”
Evolving Models

• Peer education –
  – Worker trainers in USW and UWUA
  – Mapping, Worker involvement in systems of safety
  – Safety liaisons from workers’ center

• Connecting work with life outside of work
  – Heat Illness Prevention Standard – connecting work protection with improving communities
  – Integrate with public health and workers’ rights organizing
    – promotores
Evaluation

• Evaluation can be most effective if considered when developing new programs and program goals

• What do we expect to accomplish?

• What processes do we believe are needed for our effectiveness?

• Can training reduce injury, illness, and fatality?
Training and Hazard Elimination

• What kind of training is needed to establish strong hazard and risk prevention approaches and outcomes?
• Can we integrate safe work practice training with learning about advancing hazard prevention?
  – If not, what are the barriers?
The Point of Production

• Who controls the work environment?
  – Do those receiving the training have the power to use it to create healthy and safe workplaces?
  – What can increase workers’ power to control the work environment?

• Can exposures and risks be prevented if the hazards remain in the workplace?
  – Can we engineer and organize the workplace to prevent exposure to hazards that cannot be removed yet?
  – What strategies do workers need to discover in order to apply the “substitute/remove” step of the hierarchy of controls?
Beliefs About Health and Safety

• Workers get injured, ill, and die because they don’t have safe work behaviors.

• Workers get injured, ill, and die because they are required to work with hazards that can result in those outcomes – and they are not provided with sufficient measures and support to prevent those outcomes under those conditions.
Beliefs About Responsibility

• Workers choose to work in dangerous conditions for personal reasons and therefore must assume responsibility for protecting themselves in those jobs.

• The employer, having control of the workplace, employees, and finances, has the obligation to provide a healthy and safe workplace.
Evaluation

• Our evaluation must make clear the goals our programs were designed to accomplish as well as how we frame those goals

• Our evaluation needs to articulate the obstacles encountered when attempting to achieve our goals

• Our evaluation will reflect our understanding of the setting for the training
  – locally in the work environment
  – the larger social, political, and economic context
Please rate your level of agreement on whether the learning outcomes for the training were attained.

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<tbody>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Training content was valuable.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>I can use the information in my work.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Training format was effective (small group, lecture, etc.)</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Training materials were helpful.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Instructor was knowledgeable about topic.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Instructor presentation style was effective.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Instructor involved participants in learning activities.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>The room and amenities were conducive to learning (if applicable).</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>The training delivery method (in the classroom, via the Internet etc.) was appropriate</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>The training was cost effective (good value for money)</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>What was the most valuable thing you learned and why?</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>What was of least value to you and why?</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Additional Comments:</td>
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