



TIMCON Pallet & Case Industry Training Scheme

Guidance for Trainers

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INTRODUCTION

The following section of this manual has been written as an attempt to help those of you who are approaching training for the first time, perhaps with some trepidation, and not for readers who are experienced trainers. It is not intended as a definitive guide to training. You may already have, and certainly will develop, your own methods but the pitfalls and tried and tested methods of overcoming them described here could help you to develop them more quickly.

The provision of instruction, information and training is one of the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and this is amplified in the Management Regulations. There is also a civil duty to train employees implicit in the requirement, established by precedent, that employees should be competent to undertake their duties.

As far as safety law is concerned, the scheme is designed to provide workers with the opportunity to gain a reasonable degree of competence in their work and to make sure that they have accomplished this.

From the companies point of view a well-trained workforce is an efficient unit, which can make it more profitable. It has the following benefits:

- better motivation and involvement
- less absenteeism and lost work time
- less wastage from staff turnover
- improved use of equipment (less losses and breakdowns)
- greater working efficiency
- improved product quality
- less wastage of materials
- better compliance with regulatory standards
- greater standardisation
- meets requirements of insurers (potential reduction in premiums)
- improved service to customers

Training involves not just presenting information in words and pictures and hoping the workers will absorb it and improve their habits, a common practice in ill-conceived training schemes. Training to increase competence requires the guiding of improvements in work behaviour by promoting development in three distinct areas:

- knowledge
- skill
- attitude

and then continually evaluating the behaviour to ensure that the required improvements have been achieved and are maintained.

Area of Improvement	Delivery	Evaluation
Knowledge	Talks, training exercises, demonstrations	Written and oral tests, group discussions, assignments
Skill	Demonstrations, videos, guided practice	Observation, appraisal, product quality checks
Attitude	Individual discussion, counselling, peer pressure, team building	Supervision, behavioural assessment

A worker without adequate knowledge cannot apply his skills safely, but knowledge alone is not enough to produce good work and skill is needed. If he possesses both of these qualities he may still not apply them in a sensible manner and may take risks and cut corners if he doesn't have the right attitude; so all three are important and interlinked.

TRAINING DELIVERY

The trainer should possess as many of the following qualities as possible:

- a good working knowledge of pallet and case construction
- a good knowledge of and ideally practical experience of operating the equipment on which the training is taking place.
- an appreciation of the risks, their possible consequences and methods of reduction
- knowledge of the company policies, procedures and provisions
- familiarity with the scheme material
- an ability to present the material clearly and concisely
- a good knowledge of the individual trainees
- confidence and respect of the workers or the ability to gain it quickly
- the ability to hold the trainees attention

While not excluding company trainers and safety professionals, the employees who may possess these requirements will also include department managers, supervisors and team leaders.

TRAINING THE TRAINER

If you feel confident that you can hold the interest of a small group of people for about 20 minutes, you should be able to present the training without attending a special course. You will need to be able to keep the presentation on-course despite inevitable attempts to sidetrack it, to answer probing questions, inspire the disinterested and to keep accurate records of progress.

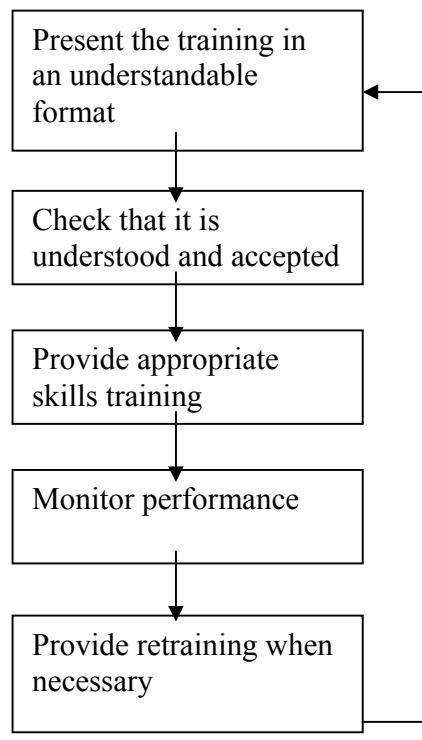
If you feel in need of prior training you will almost certainly find a suitable short course offered by your nearest college. These courses are controlled by various institutions for example City and Guilds. Remember that the course will be about training in general. Some professional associations offer training for trainers in their own fields, such as that offered by IOSH for safety training. **TIMCON** can provide a list of suitable organisations on request.

THE TRAINING PROCESS

In order to be able to satisfy the objectives of the training you must have a clear idea of what the trainees will be able to do at the end of each module that they were unable to do when they started it and how you will find out if they have reached that point. Only in this way will you be able to assess whether you have been successful or not and if you need to rethink your presentation. In order to achieve the objectives they must:

- understand the information that is presented to them
- accept that it is correct, relevant and of benefit to them
- apply their new understanding in their own work
- develop any new skills needed
- carry out the expected actions resulting from the training
- show an improvement in the performance of their work

The flow chart below illustrates the training process:



During the presentation and afterwards you should monitor the success of the training by listening to the feedback, assessing the workers input to discussions, asking questions both individually and to the group, checking the results of the exercises and assignments and observing them at work.

Assessment and the provision of feedback, both positive and critical, should occur regularly. Failure to respond to the efforts of the group will quickly result in the loss of their interest, which can be difficult to regain

Do not take the training information any further than is indicated in the module unless your trainees have additional responsibilities. Giving the trainees detailed information of procedures over which they have no control can de-motivate them and induce dissatisfaction and criticism of those who are responsible.

Trainees must have confidence in their trainer; they will expect their trainer to have a thorough practical understanding of the module. Expect your knowledge to be challenged by some in the group but use this as a starting point for discussions; if handled well it can lead to the greater involvement of everyone. If the group lose confidence the majority will switch off and cease learning and some may become disruptive.

To maintain their confidence:

- Don't attempt to guess the answers to questions or flannel - admit to not knowing and find out before the next session.
- Occasionally someone in the group may know something you don't; give them the opportunity to have their say and you will have won an ally.
- Don't be over friendly with one person or continually pick up on one person's deficiencies, however annoying they may be. Treat everyone as equal during training.
- Don't side with one person in a dispute within the group. Use this confrontation to start a discussion and guide them all to a sensible conclusion.
- Some trainees will be slower at understanding than others and will need extra help. Try to provide this outside the period allocated for the training to avoid the others becoming bored.
- Don't allow the more extrovert trainees to dominate the sessions or try to take over, direct your questions to the others.
- Use simple clear language and avoid irrelevant technical terms unless you know they will be understood. Above all don't try to show them how clever you are.

Some of the modules are interlinked so be careful that you do not extend the presentation of one into an area already covered or that will be covered. Too much repetition leads to boredom.

Be concise. Take 15 to 20 minutes for each presentation and don't go on any longer (you may need to extend this for walking tours or when using video). If you can't cover what you intended leave it until next time and learn.

PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION

Presentations should be informal and treated as tool-box talks. The scheme material is provided to show the extent of the coverage required and it is not expected to be read out or necessarily covered in the way or order shown. Use your own words and develop your own ways of presenting the information. A copy of the scheme module should be provided to each of the trainees and retained by them as a reminder of the information.

At this level people have become used to getting their information from visual sources rather than by reading. The material in each module is likely to be accepted more easily if presented, as far as possible, by demonstration rather than discussion. This will not be possible where the equipment is not available or where it would be too disruptive; then you will need to resort to pictures, models, videos or other visual aids. In particular this would apply to fire fighting, dangerous mechanical handling, injuries and occupational diseases.

Unfortunately most visual information is gained as entertainment (TV and films) and is quickly forgotten. If training is not to be treated in the same way any visual materials used must:

- relate directly to the trainees own work and not be too general
- be short and to the point (about 12 minutes maximum per video, if it is longer preview it and just use the more appropriate section)
- not attempt to entertain by using cartoons or ' jokey' presentation

People's attention span is short, often no more than 10 – 15 minutes, and only this long if they are personally engaged with the material. In addition we all have a limited capacity for remembering facts presented to us at one time. Each presentation should be short (about 15 minutes) and any additional time should be taken up by the trainees doing something, such as answering questions, looking at machinery or equipment, undertaking a walk-round inspection (individually or as a group) or being involved in a set task. It is this involvement that retains their interest and improves their confidence.

Some of the modules can easily be covered in 10 – 15 minutes but others will have to be split into two or more presentations, depending on your requirements. At the start of each module briefly tell the group what you intend to cover and give a quick summary at the end. When starting a further part of a split module call their attention to what was covered during the previous session.

Decide well in advance what equipment you will need and ensure that you have it to hand or, if it is not portable, that you can gain access close enough to it to point out the relevant parts. Look at any videos yourself before you use them to make sure they are appropriate and ensure that the equipment to show them is available and working. Do not leave setting it up until the group is sitting around getting restless.

GROUP WORK

Working in a group encourages trainees to take a more active part in their own training and helps them to question their beliefs and accept alternative ideas. In a company with a highly developed safety culture everyone will be motivated to manage their own safe working practices and work as an integrated group. Group work can be used to foster the ability of workers to automatically carry out appraisals of their local working environment and formulate improvements.

Educationalists have fancy words for different types of group work but these definitions can be confusing and trainers should try to invent their own ways of getting the trainees to work together. You must make an effort to get everyone involved and not allow some to sit back and leave it to the more vocal.

Group work could involve:

- open discussions following videos
- asking how the required procedures differ from those presently adopted
- discussion of reported legal cases and their results (recent safety cases can be found on the HSE website)
- discussion of practical problems and methods of their resolution
- splitting the group into two and getting each to investigate the same problem or different aspects of it and report back

SKILL

For new employees training in the skills needed should be integrated into the scheme. You will need to organise both statutory training (saw use and forklift handling) and on the job training (the use of nail guns, manual handling, pallet and case making and machine operations), whether these are undertaken within the company or by an external agency.

For existing employees discussions held during the scheme modules and ensuing observations will give you the opportunity to assess whether any skill retraining is needed.

ATTITUDE

The most difficult area in which to influence change is that of attitude, which is often driven by group pressures and cultural perceptions. Increasing the levels of knowledge and skill will help but any improvements will need constant monitoring, supervision, reinforcement and correction. Improvements will only be temporary unless reinforced by good supporting administration, arrangements and occasional refresher and updating courses, preferably within a strong company safety culture.

Most people want to work safely and can see a value in doing so but they accept this more readily if there is local control rather than one imposed by senior management. Emphasis should be placed throughout the training and during subsequent supervision on the workers identifying current and potential future problems in their own workplace and in finding ways to solve these problems.

Finally remember that in accordance with the Management Regulations all training must take place during company time.

RESOURCES AND SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

HSE Publications

A catalogue of HSE books can be obtained from your nearest bookshop stocking these publications or from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury Suffolk CO10 2WA, who also supply the materials by post. Note that HSE publications change frequently and soon become out of print.

They have a large number of useful leaflets that can be used to support the training. One copy of each of these up to a maximum of 25 different titles will be supplied free on request. Packs of these leaflets can be obtained some of which are supplied free of charge and others are available at a small cost. Some of these publications are aimed at managers and would be more suitable as background information.

Other associations producing useful materials are:

- The Fire Protection Association (videos, interactive CDs and booklets related to fire prevention and protection).
- British Woodworking Federation (codes of safety practice in the woodworking industry).

Some useful addresses:

HSE 0845 345 0055 (www.hse.gov.uk) - a telephone safety advice service is available, but the web site is invaluable and provides an enormous amount of information covering most areas of their work.

IOSH 0116 257 3100 (www.iosh.co.uk) - professional safety association and short course providers.

NEBOSH 0116 236 4700 (www.nebosh.org.uk) - professional safety course administrators.

HSE Books 01787 881165 (for orders) (www.hsebooks.co.uk).

SCHEME CONTACTS

Applications for approval to use the scheme, all general enquiries and those relating to the administration of the scheme should be directed to the TIMCON secretariat.

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