

Training is an important part of any system and, in the most general sense, is required whenever it is important to have people performing actions in a particular way.

Training is necessary for many different reasons, including...

- Maintaining productivity where methods are required to achieve production rates
- Ensuring safety when an employee is learning a new job or function
- Achieving consistent quality standards when working with a customer or product
- Protecting the environment, personnel and public safety when working with hazardous chemicals that could spill
- Maintaining compliance with legal requirements when training is specified such as certain parts of the occupational health & safety act (OHSA), first aid regulations, or CSA standard for lift truck usage.



All businesses require a certain degree of training. However, the amount of training necessary is highly variable depending on the nature of the work, the hazard potential, and level of trainee skill. A balance must be struck between the need for training, the resources necessary, and the regulatory and due diligence requirements. This balance is sometimes tricky to achieve, so here are some helpful strategies to try.



### How much training is required?

Sometimes, training requirements are specified or already established by the organization, such as fall protection for construction sites. However, a growing trend among safety standards and recent Ontario regulations involves the use of written risk assessments to determine the particular training needs for each function. This approach is easily applied to a training needs assessment with a simple structure and participation by a few experienced team members. Often, the team discovers that many training topics can be combined together for greater efficiency. The training needs assessment for an employee performing lawn care maintenance might look like this:

	Orientation	WHMIS General	WHMIS Gasoline use	Ear/Eye protection	Hand /foot protection	John Deere manual	Riding mower practical use	Stihl trimmer manual	Trimmer practical use	Customer care
Riding Mower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>									
Trimmer						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



### How is training linked to competence?

Competence is the key result of an effective training and development program, but it is not normally achievable with training alone. Competence combines knowledge gained in training sessions with skill gained from hands-on instruction and experience gained with practice and supervision on the job. To meet the high standard of due diligence an employer must include all components. A new equipment operator can learn the safety hazards and protective requirements of the equipment from the instruction manual, but will require explanation and demonstration from a competent operator when learning the hands-on skills. Then, the trainee can attempt it with observation and guidance from the competent operator until he or she is performing safely and properly. Over time, the trainee will gain expertise and achieve competence. Documented verification is often overlooked but is a clincher in the quest for competence. Verification comes in various forms such as quizzes after training and skill evaluations by a qualified assessor.



### How should I document training?

Software is available to help record and manage training. Some of these are very sophisticated and helpful but can be expensive. They also still require the user to assess and document training needs for each category or job. For those on tighter budgets, training documentation can be managed with simple training tables. Whether in spreadsheet or hardcopy format, these training and verification records are indispensable for due diligence and are also helpful for planning purposes.

Name: John Murphy		Supervisor: Dave Lambert		
Training Item	Training By	Date	Results/Initial	
Warehouse Orientation	D. Lambert	03/01/07	Pass - 85% quiz	DL
Storage system index	IT Dept	03/08/07	Pass - 80% quiz	MT
Storage system practical	D. Lambert	03/15/07	Pass - Demonstrates good understanding	DL
Lift truck training	ABC Lift	04/08/07	Pass - 82% quiz	TA
Lift truck evaluation	R. Carr	04/10/07	Fail - Practice with turns required	BC
Lift truck evaluation	R. Carr	04/24/07	Pass - skills are much improved	BC
Lift truck review training	J Strader	03/15/09	Pass - 90% quiz	JS



### How can a limited training budget help to achieve due diligence?

Training represents a large investment, especially once the costs of internal or external resources are added to the wages for training time and job coverage. If generic or web-based training does not “hit the mark” as it relates to the needs of the job, then additional training sessions will be required or personnel may be put at undue risk. Training programs can be designed to pull in specific content of the various tasks or jobs, thereby maximizing the due diligence benefit and value of the training investment.

PandRS has experience with many facets of due diligence and training, and provides a wide variety of expertise and assistance with practical training subject and methods.