

Conducting Effective Employee Training

Madina Ghafar-Porschett

May 2026



Madina Ghafar-Porschett

LOSS CONTROL TECHNICAL SPECIALIST



B.S in Occupational Health and Safety



Nearly a decade of experience in risk management



Started my career with a heavy civil GC

AGENDA

1. How to ensure that you are keeping training Relevant
2. How to keep your audience engaged
3. Confirming that the training stuck

The Problem with “Check the Box” Training



The real cost of ineffective training: incidents, confusion, rework



What your crew is thinking when training misses the mark



The goal: training that sticks- not just training that happened

Make Training Relevant to the
Job

The Cost of Ineffective Training

- Looks like training happened
- But actually results in:
 - Incidents or near misses
 - Rework or mistakes
 - Frustration on the crew
 - Loss of credibility

Why Relevance is Everything

People pay attention when they see “this applies to me”

Irrelevant training = tuned-out crew

Adults learn best when content connects to **real** experience

Start with the Job, Not the Rulebook

- Ask yourself before every training: “What does my crew actually DO?”
- Build training around
 - Real tasks they perform
 - Actual hazards on your site
 - Equipment they touch every day

Avoid: Generic slides, corporate videos that don't match your workplace

Weak Training Planning

- Cover PPE Policy
- Multiple Topics at once
- Generic Examples

Effective Training Planning

- Fix improper eye protection while grinding
- One clear hazard
- Real Job examples

Before you Train, answer:

1. What do they need to DO differently or safely?
2. What hazard or risk are we addressing?
3. What does “good” look like on the job?

Keep it simple- one topic per session

Training – Know the Difference

Match the Format to the Need

Toolbox Talk

- 5-10 min
- one topic
- one hazard
- one takeaway

Onboarding Training

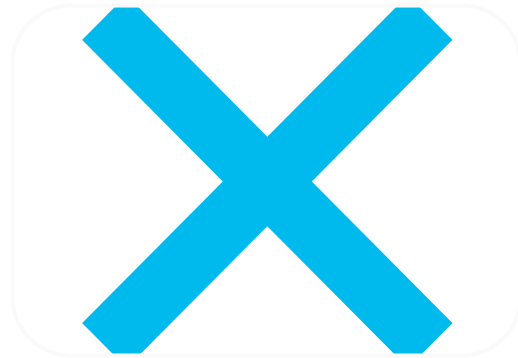
- Broader
- Task-by-task
- Hands-on

Refresher Training

- Quick
- Targeted
- Triggered by an incident or near-miss

Example

Scenario: “You need to train your crew on proper lifting technique”



20-slide
PowerPoint on
ergonomics



5-minute demo
at the worksite
using the actual
boxes they lift

Short + Specific + Real = Effective

Key Takeaway

Connect every training to a real task, real hazard or real equipment.

A group of people are sitting in a circle, engaged in conversation. The image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter. The text "Keep People Engaged and Involved" is centered over the image in a white, sans-serif font.

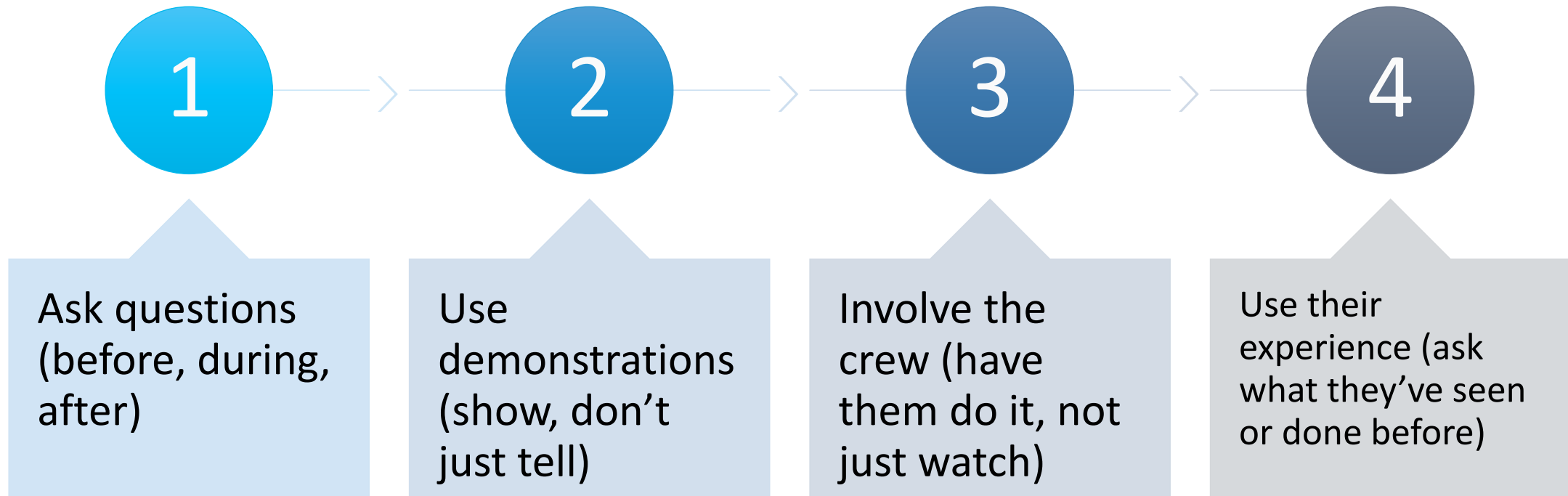
Keep People Engaged and
Involved

The Lecture Trap

- If you are the one doing all the talking, they are not learning
- Attention Span reality: Most adults check out after 8-10 minutes of passive listening
- Your job as a supervisor: Facilitate, **don't lecture**

How to Garner Engagement

4 Simple Tools EVERY Supervisor Can Use:



When You Can't Do a Demo

If a demonstration isn't possible:

- Walk through the steps out loud
- Use real scenarios
- Ask “what would you do if...”
- Reference recent incidents or near misses

Asking Better Questions

Move from yes/no to open-ended:



“Does everyone understand?” → no one raises their hand



What would you do first if you saw this hazard?



Has anyone dealt with this before? What happened?

Questions create buy-in and surface real knowledge gaps

The Power of Demonstration

Demo Steps:

1. Do it (you demonstrate)
2. We do it together (guided practice)
3. You do it (they try, you observe)

Works for: Equipment use, PPE donning, Emergency procedures, lifting, LOTO

Plain Language Matters

- Avoid jargon, acronyms, and regulatory language in training delivery
- Translate: “Comply with 29 CFR 1910.147” → “Before you start work on that machine, lock it out- here’s how”
- Speak the way your crew speaks

Handling a Tough Crowd

- What to do when people are disengaged, resistant, or distracted:
 - Call on people by name (respectfully)
 - Acknowledge their experience: “You’ve been doing this longer than me – what do you think?”
 - Keep it concise- end before you lose them
 - Humor and real stories go a long way

Key Takeaway

Involvement=Understanding. If they're not doing something, they're probably not learning

A person's hands are shown holding a pen over a laptop keyboard. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "Check if Training Worked address the Gaps" is centered in white.

Check if Training Worked
address the Gaps

Training isn't Done When You Stop Talking



The real test: Can they do it safely on the job?

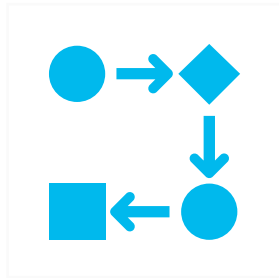


Common mistake : Assuming silence = understanding



Your role doesn't end at the end of the session

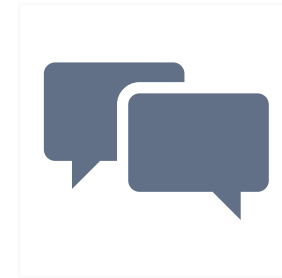
How to Check for Understanding



Ask them to explain it back – “Walk me through what you’d do”



Watch them do it – Observation is your best assessment tool



Quick Verbal Quiz – 2-3 questions before they leave

No paperwork required- just **intentional** follow-through

Spot the Gap: Signs Training Didn't Stick

Watch for:

Shortcuts being
taken

Same mistake
repeating

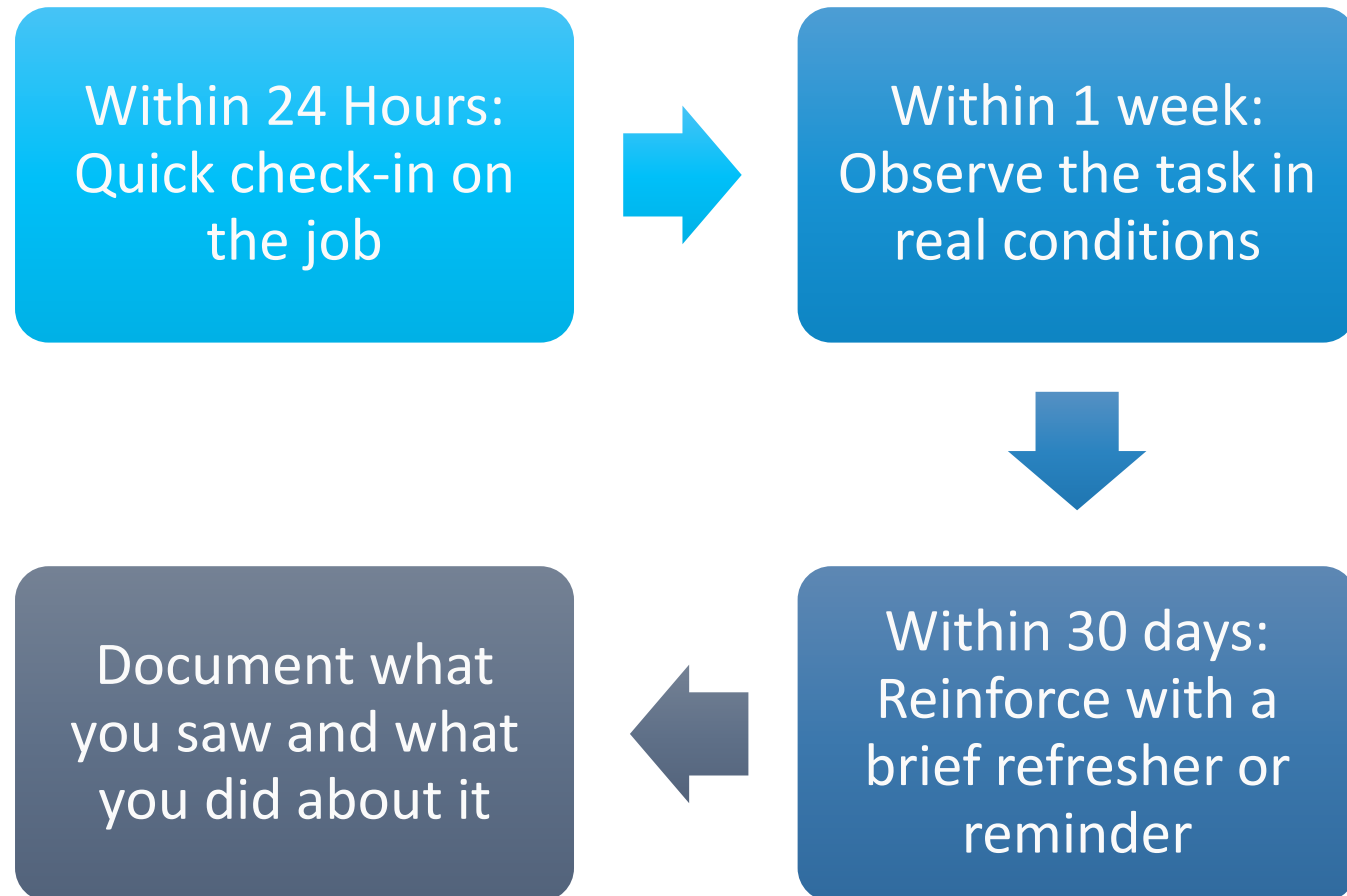
Crew asking
question they
should know
the answer to

Near misses or
incidents
related to
trained topics



These are signals NOT failures. They tell you where to go back.

Follow-Up Formula



When to Retrain vs. Coach

Retrain When:

The whole group missed it
The task has changed
If a long time has passed

Coach when:

One person is struggling
When it is a behavior or habit issue

Both are valid – know which tool to use

Key Takeaway

Checking for understanding is part of the training- not an afterthought

If You Only Change One Thing

Pick One

- Make your training more specific
- Add one question
- Do one follow-up check

3 Things to Remember

1. Make it relevant – connect to real tasks and hazards
2. Keep them involved- questions, demos, participation
3. Check if it worked - observe, follow up, close the gap

Questions?

Please email additional questions to losscontrol@bhhc.com