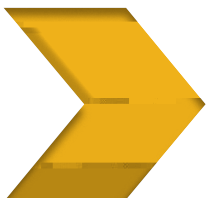


Ministry of Labour

Supervisor



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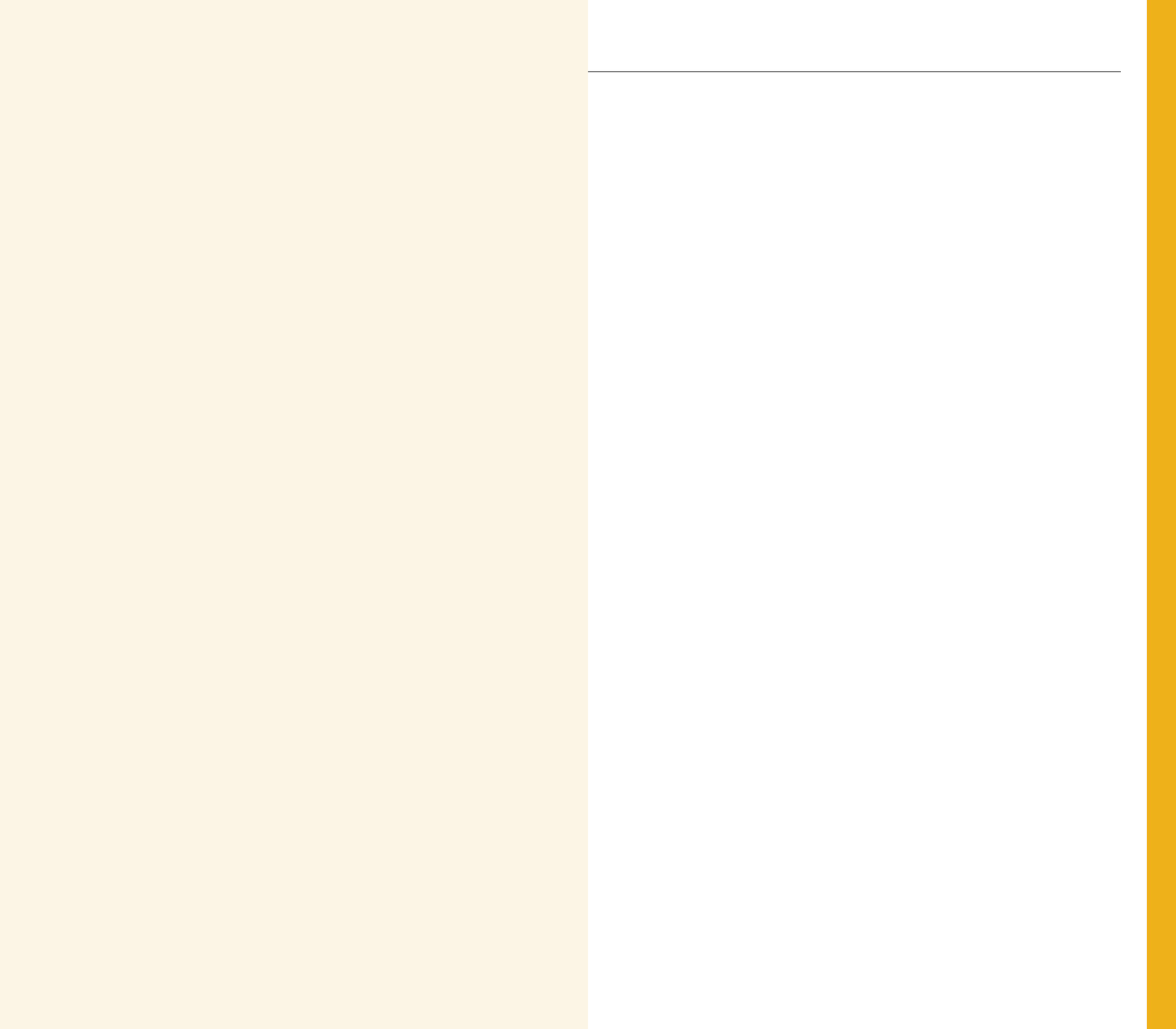


Health & Safety at Work Prevention Starts Here

Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps

Introduction

Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) defines a supervisor as anyone who "has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker." This training is designed to help you understand what the OHSA expects



A supervisor has to play a lot of different roles, often at the same time. Think about the roles that people play at a basketball game. From the list below, check off the roles that you think apply to a supervisor's work:

- Coach
- Trainer
- Referee
- Cheerleader
- Captain

If you didn't check off all of the above boxes, go ahead and do it now. Because chances are you will be called upon to play any and all of the above roles as you strive to keep your workplace healthy, safe and productive.

As a supervisor, you are a crucial part of your workplace's Internal Responsibility System. This is a very important concept for workplace health and safety and you will learn more about this throughout this training.

The number of people in Ontario who suffer a work-related illness or injury each year would fill the seats of a dozen big hockey arenas. New and young workers in Ontario are four times more likely to get hurt during the first month on the job than at any other time. They often aren't told or understand the hazards of the job. They don't know what to

expect from their employer and supervisor. Sometimes they aren't sure what questions to ask; sometimes they don't even know who to ask. That's where you come in. It's a big challenge, but it's also a big opportunity to make a difference.

Your duties as a supervisor

Under the OHSA, every supervisor is also considered to be a worker and has the same workplace duties and rights as a worker. But the OHSA also gives you specific duties related to your role as a supervisor, including

- Telling workers about hazards and dangers and responding to their concerns
- Showing workers how to work safely and making sure they follow the law, and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- Making sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment
- Doing everything reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers from being hurt or getting a work related illness

The OHSA requires every employer to prepare a written occupational health and safety policy for that workplace and to develop and maintain a program to implement that policy. One of your tasks as a supervisor is to put that program into action. Here is how you do it:

1. **You know the OHSA and the various Regulations attached to it that apply to your workplace.** A supervisor who knows and understands the OHSA and Regulations can make sure workers follow the law, and can identify ways to make the workplace safer. The various Regulations under the OHSA contain detailed requirements about how to make the workplace safe. For example, several Regulations, such as the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Regulation, explain what workers need in order to work safely with chemical and other hazardous materials or designated substances – things like training, warning labels on products and information sheets. There are also Regulations that specify requirements for different types of workplaces, such as construction projects, health care facilities, industrial establishments and mines.
2. **You make sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment.** Your employer is responsible for telling you what types of protective equipment, device or clothing they require workers to use or wear, and both of you are responsible for making sure the workers are using or wearing it. That means you need to know and understand the requirements in the Act and its regulations about equipment, devices and clothing, as well as your employer's health and safety policy, program and work procedures.
3. **You tell workers about the hazards in their work.** Every workplace has hazards. Hazards include anything in the workplace that can hurt workers or make them sick. A supervisor must know and be able to explain the actual and potential dangers involved in the work he or she is supervising, and ensure that the workers do their work safely. A few Regulations even say that you have to give written instructions that tell the workers what steps and procedures must be followed to stay safe. You need to know about these Regulations if they apply to the work you are supervising. Your general duties as a supervisor also apply to the prevention of workplace violence.
4. **You plan the work so that it can be done safely.** The people you supervise are relying on your knowledge and experience of the work to make sure it's done safely. The OHSA requires employers to make sure you have the necessary competence to be a supervisor. Later we will look at this responsibility in more detail.
5. **You make sure workers know and follow through on their health and safety duties.** It's your job to monitor the work, to remind workers of their health and safety duties if necessary, to show them how to work safely, and to enforce the employer's workplace health and safety policies and procedures if they aren't being followed.

Doing the five things we have just reviewed will help you to carry out your duties under the OHSA.

To make sure you're doing your job right, here are a few important questions you should ask yourself:

- › Do I understand the OHSA and the Regulations

Here are some other things the OSHA says the employer must do:

Where there are more than five workers regularly employed in the workplace:

- Create and review on an annual basis a health

Step 1 Quiz

Before we move on to Step 2, here's a short true-or-false quiz on the material we have just covered. (The answers are in the back of the workbook, but please don't look at them ahead of time.)

1. The only duty of a supervisor that's included in the Occupational Health and Safety Act is the duty to "take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances" to protect workers.

True False

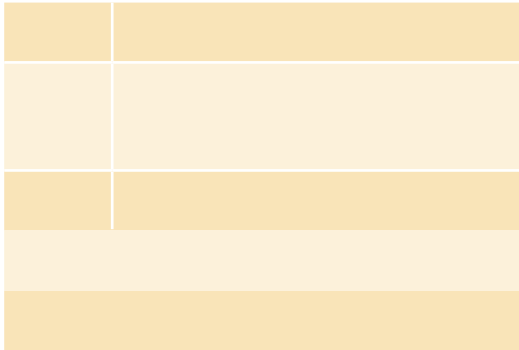
Step 2: Lead the Way

Teamwork and the Internal Responsibility System (IRS)

People in successful workplaces understand that a safe and healthy workplace is a productive workplace. They also know that they have to work together to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace. As you have seen, the Occupational Health and Safety Act is very clear about the different roles of the employer, supervisor and worker, and how those roles cooperate to make a safe and healthy workplace. This is the Internal Responsibility System, or IRS as it's commonly known.

Communication is a big part of the IRS in any workplace, and the ability to communicate effectively is an important skill for any supervisor. To communicate effectively, you need to be good at both listening and speaking. You need to be a

as asking questions, raising concerns and giving positive feedback. One of the most effective ways workers can participate in health and safety is by becoming a health and safety representative or a joint health and safety committee member.



In smaller workplaces, the health and safety representative has a similar role in helping improve health and safety conditions. Their duties and powers, like those of a joint health and safety

Supervisors are also workers. As a worker, you too may exercise the right to refuse unsafe work in the circumstances specified in the OHSA. As we saw earlier, the OHSA prohibits the employer from reprisal against a worker for such things as complying with the OHSA or seeking its enforcement.

Together, the OHS duties support a strong internal responsibility system in the workplace. Different people have different roles or positions, but they all have the same goal. As a supervisor, you can be a leader in making your workplace safer and healthier, but you can't do it alone.



Step 2 Quiz

Before we move on to Step 3, here's a true-or-false quiz. (The answers are in the back of the workbook, but please don't look at them ahead of time.)

- 1.

Step 3: The Supervisor's Toolkit

Know the hazards in your workplace

One of your jobs as a supervisor is to help plan and organize the work. This is a big job. To do it well, you need to understand the work and the hazards associated with it. You also need to know how to eliminate or control those hazards and to make sure the health and safety program implemented in your workplace is effective in doing so.

At the root of every work-related death, injury or sickness is a hazard of some kind. Hazards can take many forms. Sometimes more than one hazard can combine to make an even bigger hazard. Here are some of the most common hazards in Ontario workplaces:



- Motorized vehicles. Think of being hit by a dump truck that is backing up on a construction site, or someone getting hit by a forklift truck in a warehouse or on a loading dock.
- Using or working near machinery. Many workers have been killed or seriously injured by the equipment they were operating.
- Workplace violence. It can happen to workers in many situations, such as a retail employee working alone at night, or a health care worker in a hospital or in the community.

Exercise 3: Can you think of other common workplace hazards – especially ones in your own workplace? Below are a couple of possible examples. Try to list a few more, then read the answers on page 55.

- Loud noise
- No lighting

➤ _____

➤ _____

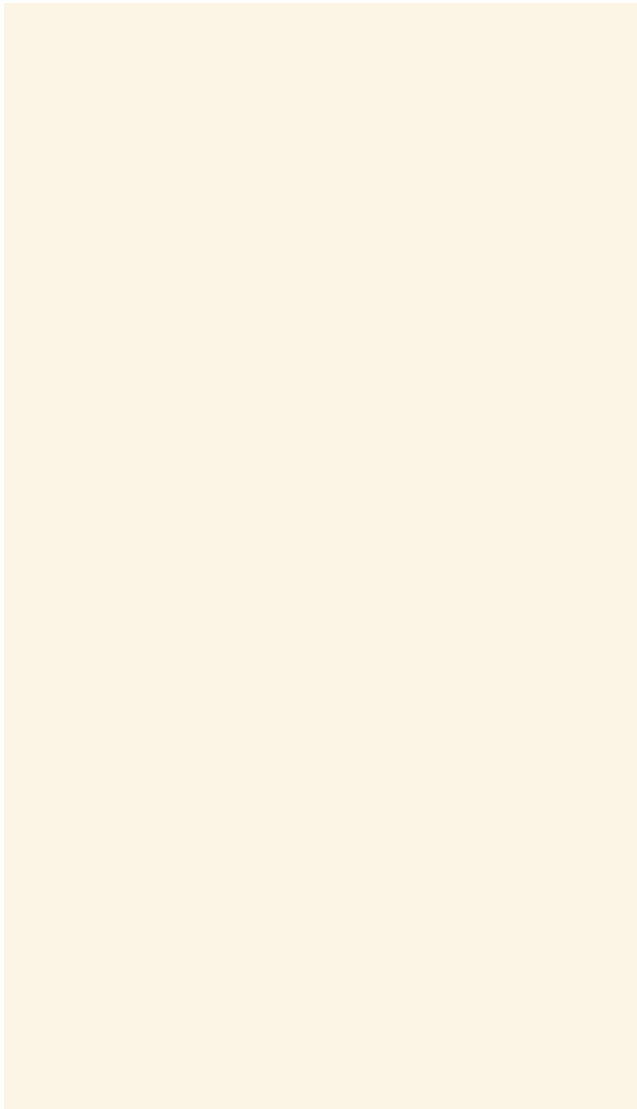
You also need to think about less apparent hazards – things like chemicals, fumes, toxic dust or germs and viruses in workplaces such as schools, labs and healthcare facilities. Some of these hazards can make a worker very sick. Sometimes the worker gets

sick right away; other times, the worker doesn't know he or she is sick until months or even years later. That's why it's important that you know about these hazards now.

One of the **employer's duties** is to make sure that the supervisor knows enough and has the experience and necessary training to keep workers safe. One of a **supervisor's duties** is to inform workers of health and safety hazards. If a worker sees a hazard or practice that goes against the OHSA or workplace health and safety policies or procedures, that worker has a duty to tell their supervisor or employer. This should be done as soon as possible so that the hazard can be fixed. That's how employers, supervisors and workers come together to make the workplace safer. This is an example of the **Internal Responsibility System** in action.

Dealing with Hazards

RACE is a commonly used process for dealing with hazards. RACE stands for Recognize, Assess, Control and Evaluate. These steps, when done in order, help the workplace identify and control hazards. Supervisors are encouraged to communicate with workers, the employer, and the joint health and safety committee/health and safety representative throughout this type of process.



Step 3 Quiz

Before we move on to Step 4, here's a short true-or-false quiz on the material we have just covered. (The answers are in the back of the workbook, but please don't look at them ahead of time.)

1. To help you plan and organize work,



Step 4: You Are Not Alone

Getting the help you need

Many supervisors are promoted to that position because they were good at their previous job. They learned as much as they could about that job, the hazards involved and how to work safely. They knew how to do their work in a safe and healthy way. But they may not be too sure about what's involved in supervising work. Now they are a supervisor and their duties have changed. But do they know everything they need to know about this new role?

That's the question you should ask yourself. You may know a bit about the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the various Regulations that are attached to it, but do you know enough about the specific requirements in the OHS Act and about which of its Regulations apply to your workplace? You may have the necessary experience in the work you are being called upon to supervise, but do you know enough about what's actually involved in supervising workers?

Exercise 5: Think back to what you learned in Step 1: You were told that the OHSA requires the employer to make sure that the supervisor is a “competent person.” It’s the employer’s job to see to it that you have what you need to do your job competently. The OHSA emphasizes three things in particular that you need in order to be competent at your job. List those three things below, then check the answer on page 9.

- _____

- _____

- _____

We have reviewed various duties the OHSA assigns to you as a supervisor. If you feel that you don't have the necessary knowledge, training and experience to carry out those duties, it's important

that you talk to the employer. Tell him or her you are happy to be a supervisor, but that you need more information and training in certain areas to do your job. Perhaps you need to attend a training course on the OHSA and Regulations. Maybe you need to learn more about how to recognize, assess and control hazards and to evaluate the hazard controls. Maybe you want to know more about leadership skills and communication, about how to develop your listening skills and about what the workers expect from their supervisor. Remember that your employer needs to give you the tools to become a competent supervisor.

Even when you have the necessary knowledge, training and experience to be a competent supervisor, fixing a health and safety problem will sometimes be out of your control. Maybe it's a hazard that affects the whole staff. Or it might cost a lot of money to fix it and you may not be able to approve that expense. If that happens, you need to let your employer know that you need help with solving the problem. Bring the ideas you got from the workers and from the health and safety rep or committee. Together you can figure out the best way to eliminate or control the hazard. The workers need to know that you will do what's right for them, and you need to know that the employer will do what's right for everyone.

The OSHA supports a coordinated approach to workplace health and safety by giving everybody duties according to their position at the workplace. The higher your position is, the more duties you have. When you put all of these duties together, you get a strong IRS in the workplace.

Where else to go for help

Getting Help Inside Your Workplace

Sometimes a worker will come to you with a question

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Step 4 Quiz

Before we move on to Step 5, here's a short true-or-false quiz on the material we have just covered. (The answers are in the back of the workbook, but please don't look at them ahead of time.)

Step 5: Be a Role Model

How to send the right message

Telling people to work in a safe and healthy way isn't all there is to being a supervisor. Sometimes people want to take shortcuts because they think it will help them get the job done faster. Sometimes they're tired, or they're having a bad day. There will be days when you're tired or having a bad day, too. But you need to be a role model.

and following the healthy and safe work practices in your workplace. It means explaining how to work safely and correcting unsafe work situations whenever you see them.

Exercise 8: If you walk by a worker who isn't following the correct procedure or using the right safety gear and you do nothing about it, what message are you sending to that worker and everyone else? Write your answer below, then read the answer on page 58.

As we saw earlier, the OHSA supports a coordinated approach to workplace health and safety. To be a part of this, you have to understand your legal obligations and put what you know into action. So does everyone else in the workplace. That's how the Internal Responsibility System works.

- If the employer knows about a hazard and doesn't take steps to eliminate or control it, as well as make sure the workers are told about it and how to deal with it, that employer is not doing what the law requires.
- If the supervisor knows about a hazard and doesn't explain to the workers how to deal with it, that supervisor is not doing what the law requires.
- If the worker knows about a hazard and doesn't report it to the supervisor or the employer, that worker is not doing what the law requires.
- The Internal Responsibility System is all about people cooperating to recognize, assess and control hazards in the workplace and to evaluate hazard controls. Every supervisor has a key role to play in that system.

Remember when you were starting out on a job and you felt a bit overwhelmed by all the things you didn't know? Remember that one person – a supervisor or a co-worker – who took the time to show you things?

We all have someone we can think of who helped us settle into a job. They gave us useful tips. They kept us out of harm's way until we learned what we needed to know for ourselves. Well, now it's your turn to give back. You are the supervisor. You are the person with the know-how and experience. If you don't feel that you know

enough to carry out your health and safety duties as a supervisor, it's important that you talk to your employer and make sure you get the information you need.

Keep an eye on the new worker and everyone else you supervise. Even those who don't ask you questions are counting on you to show them the right way to do things. By always showing your commitment to health and safety, the people you supervise will follow your example. Prevention starts here, but it doesn't end here.

Step 5 Quiz

Here is the final true-or-false quiz. (The answers are in the back of the workbook, but please don't look at them ahead of time.)

1. How you think and talk about the work you are supervising can affect the safety of the people you supervise.
True False
2. Good supervisors are good role models. Good role models practice what they preach by following the workplace health and safety policies and procedures.
True False
3. Workers who ask a lot of questions can take up a lot of your time, so you should keep talking to them to a minimum.
True False



We hope this training has been useful, and that you will use the material that's been provided with it. Remember that when it comes to health and safety on the job, YOU can make a difference.

3. False. The RACE process involves recognizing, assessing and controlling hazards, then evaluating the hazard controls to make sure they are effective.
 4. False. Your employer has the same responsibility as you to protect workers, and so you need to inform them when concerns are brought to you. If you can solve a problem on your own or with the worker, you should do that. But if you need advice or help, you should talk to your employer. You can also involve the health and safety representative or joint health and safety committee if you have one.
 5. False. Your first priority is to make sure the injured worker gets the necessary first aid and/or professional medical attention. Then you inform the employer.
- Inspection and incident reports. The problem may have cropped up in the past, or there may be something in one of the reports that leads to an effective solution.
 - Other supervisors, if there are any. They might have encountered the same problem and have some good ideas on how to deal with it.
 -

Step 4: You are Not Alone

Exercise 5 (page 36):

The 3 requirements for a "competent person" are listed on page 9.

Exercise 6 (page 39):

You can find more health and safety information in your workplace at the following sources:

- The employer's health and safety program and procedures. The program is focused on the particular hazards in your workplace. The procedures to deal with those hazards may contain the answer you're looking for. You can ask your health and safety coordinator or employer for this information.
- If the problem is about hazardous materials such as chemicals, consult the workplace's material safety data sheet or MSDS for information on how to deal safely with those materials. The employer is required to make that information available in the workplace.
- The operator's manual for the equipment that's operated by the workers contains useful health and safety information. If no manual is available for the workers, the supervisor can contact the manufacturer for information.
- The joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative. It's a good practice to take the time to read the committee minutes and recommendations and to talk to the health and safety rep or committee.

Step 5: Be a Role Model

Exercise 8 (page 48):

The message you send if you ignore health and safety infractions is that safety doesn't really matter. That's not the message you want to send and it's not the message the OSHA expects you to send.

Quiz 5

1. True
2. True
3. False. You should be considered easy to talk to by the people you supervise.



