



New Hire Training

We all remember our first days on the job. No matter where you came from or what your background or training was, the first time you set foot on a work site you were probably eager, and most likely you thought you knew everything.

You probably woke up early on that first day to get to the site on time, and you believed you were ready for anything. How long did it take for you to realize that you had a lot to learn? Maybe a superintendent gave you instructions or a foreman told you to complete a task, and suddenly you felt like you didn't know where to start. What happened then? Did someone take you under their wing and show you the ropes? Did anyone teach you how to do your best work—while working safely?

Those of you who have been in the work force for several years should go out of your way to reach out to a newbie and share some of your knowledge. Consider how you felt in your early days. Back then, someone helped you out; now it's your turn to do the same for someone else. If no one did help you out back then, and you wished they had, then you know how lonely and difficult it was to manage on your own; you can and should prevent others from having to struggle in the same way today.

Make time to tell young workers about your industry and how far safety has come. Tell them about the importance of wearing personal protective equipment. Share a story or two about some of the work you have done over the years and maybe a close call you've had that you learned a lesson from. Teach them about the importance of following the rules and regulations. Remind them to take all the safety training they can get because it will help them work safely and get home to loved ones at the end of every day. Talk to them about not being a hero and caution them against taking shortcuts. Show them how to operate a tool or piece of equipment instead of just telling them. Introduce them to the idea of reading the manufacturer's instructions before operating the tool or equipment.

Remember that even if you're not trying to be a role model, young workers look up to you. It's great to share your experience and knowledge, but the example that you set is even more important. Don't skip steps or take shortcuts. Demonstrate that working safely is the only way we work here. Show them that you care and are interested in seeing them succeed in the trade just as you have. Reach out to young workers even if they don't approach you first.

The new guy might also have something to teach you. Maybe he's more familiar with the new tool than you are or learned a different technique from someone else.



SAFETY REMINDER

While it's normal for new workers to have to "pay their dues" by having to do some of the tougher tasks on the jobsite, it is NEVER appropriate to engage in hazing. Always treat your co-workers with respect.