

Health and Safety during a Training Event

When you are running a Training Event Health and Safety is paramount and your responsibility whilst you are training. The *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* states that 'Every employee is responsible for their own safety and the safety of others'. As trainers we have a duty of care towards our delegates whilst they are being trained by us.

Health and Safety does not need to be complicated or difficult. Approach it in a simple way and do what is 'reasonably practicable'. This means take simple steps to ensure that your training environment is as safe as it can be.

What does this mean?

First, if you are using a laptop, a projector or anything else electrical assess how safe it is to use in the environment you have been given to train in. This means looking at

- The size of the room
- The number and position of electrical outputs
- The availability of extension leads
- How much are the delegates going to need to move around the room

The size of the room is important as, if you don't have the room to place a projector and screens in there without people tripping over them then don't use them. Think about where the electrical sockets are and if your cables are long enough or if you can get hold of an extension cable. These should lay flat on the floor and be held in place with tape. If your delegates are required to move around whilst on the training is the room big enough? What other hazards¹ are there in the room that might hinder people moving around safely.

As a Trainer you need to check the tables and chairs to ensure they are fit for purpose, that they are not broken or have sharp edges. Is there enough light in the room and is it warm enough.

If you are using a flipchart, does it stand freely and is it stable. When this is all checked you need to then check how visible everything is from the delegates perspective. Will they need to move every time they need to see the screen or the flipchart? Check that you have enough room to move around without tripping over cables or walking into tables. If there is not enough room decide what you can do with without.

This is all before the delegates arrive. When they arrive they will bring more hazards with them. Their coats, bags and their laptops if they are needed add to the hazards already in the room. During the training more hazards may become apparent and you as the trainer and the person in charge of the room must be vigilant in identifying them and where you can, making them safe.

You as the trainer need to be aware of the hazards to you when you are training. One of the biggest in my view is the flipchart (if you are using one) as how you use it will determine how hazardous it is.

¹ Defined as anything that can cause bodily harm

Firstly, do not learn against it or on it as this is asking for trouble. If it has wheels it WILL roll away from you and if it is supported on legs they WILL collapse on you. One of the hazards for me with a flipchart is I will trip on the legs about three times in a training session. I have been lucky and not brought the flipchart down or fallen over but, it is a matter of time. It is not that I don't have enough room; I just misjudge the distance between me and the flipchart when moving around!

Using a projector correctly can save you having an accident. This means not looking directly into the light and this is easily avoided by not standing in front of it in the first place.

As trainers we sometimes have to carry a lot of kit with us. This in its self is a hazard as it could cause back injury. Manage your kit well and only carry what you must have. If you are new to training this is difficult to judge and every trainer is different but, learn quickly what you don't need and leave it behind. Use a case with wheels or a trolley to transport heavy items from your car or office. When you finish a training session you should be coming away with less as hand outs will be given away and pens (biros - if you provide them). If you have taken your own flipchart pad that will be lighter as well as pages will have been removed.

If you are unfortunate enough to witness an accident or to have accident in your training session you must report it and complete the accident report log or accident book.

Above all when you are training enjoy it and make sure you are safe and this should ensure that your delegates are safe to.

AiTraining Consultancy offers a Designing and Delivering Training course that covers how to ensure safety in your training room. For more information email andy@aitraining.net or call +44 (0) 20 328 65165 or visit www.aitraining.net .