

# Trainer Competency – Ask the Expert



However, finding the right workplace trainer makes all the difference in what is competent and, ultimately, compliant.

## **QUESTION**

What makes a trainer competent in Saskatchewan?

## **ANSWER**

As in all jurisdictions, employers in Saskatchewan must ensure that workers are “competent” to perform the work they’re assigned, defined as “possessing knowledge, experience and training to perform a specific duty” (Saskatchewan Employment Act, Sec. 3-1(1)(e)). That would presumably include the duty to provide safety training.

## **EXPLANATION**

There are certain tasks that must be performed by a worker who’s not just “competent” but “qualified”, defined as “possessing a recognized degree, a recognized certificate or a recognized professional standing and demonstrating, by knowledge, training and experience, the ability to deal with problems related to the subject-matter, the work or the project.” “Qualified” worker tasks include performing electrical work and operating powered mobile equipment.

The problem is that the OHS laws don’t specify whether a person that provides training must be competent or qualified. On the one hand, the general approach in Saskatchewan is that “competent” is the default rule. In other words, a task requires competence unless it specifically says the worker must be qualified. Since delivering training isn’t addressed, the default “competent” standard would apply.

On the other hand, there are also some forms of training that do require not just competence but qualification, such as first aid or operating PME.

Based on all of this, my reading is that general and non-technical safety training must be provided by a “competent” person while more complex and elaborate forms of training would require a “qualified” person.