The training of workers plays a critical role in the prevention of injury and disease in the workplace. The important role of worker training and education in prevention programs is recognized in numerous OSHA substance-specific regulations such as those for asbestos, lead, arsenic, and cotton dust, as well as in several process-specific standards, such as those for respiratory protection, lock-out/tag-out, HAZWOPER, blood-borne pathogens, and process safety management for highly hazardous materials.

Because OSHA standards have little specificity concerning detailed training program content, delivery, or quality assurance, it has been critically important to develop innovative methods for delivery of training to workers, as well as valid methods for evaluating the quality and impacts of such training.

We have learned that safety and health training efforts must convey complex information on toxicity, safe work practices, and control measures in a way that is useful and understandable to both high-literacy and low-literacy individuals. Curriculum development and pedagogical approaches must be flexible enough to reach numerous, diverse target groups.

This volume reflects a range of forms that training evaluations have taken, including a focus on individuals or groups, use of qualitative or quantitative methodologies, and findings that are descriptive or inferential.

Research has documented that trained workers can, through knowledge gained and skills developed, help to establish a safety-conscious work climate to assure that proper methods and techniques are utilized during the conduct of work in dozens of complex and highly hazardous operations.
Worker empowerment is also a core concept in the safety and health training field. Whether the focus is on building a peer trainer network or an informed voice for labor-management collaboration on removing or reducing hazards and worker protection, inclusion of workers in all aspects of the training process is a key component for a successful training intervention.

**Editor's Note:** Chip Hughes is the Director of the Worker Education and Training Program (WETP) at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). The NIEHS WETP has made this issue of *New Solutions* available for free access online in order to expand the dialog about the importance of worker training.

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