

How are we doing? You rate our training

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THIS IS A QUESTION we have to continually ask as we provide training opportunities throughout the state. Are we providing training that helps you do a better job? We ask this question in a number of ways. First we have an evaluation form filled out at each of our training sessions. These evaluations are reviewed and appropriate training content changes are made. The LTAP advisory board meets on a regular basis and provides feedback. Also, there is a planning committee for each of our training sessions and they meet after the training has been conducted to critique the event. And we sometimes send out a specific questionnaire to survey our effectiveness.

In August 2000 we did just that. A questionnaire was developed to answer the following questions: Are we meeting the needs of the people attending our workshops? Are we making a difference? First a draft questionnaire was distributed to city and county engineers and managers who send employees to training sessions. We asked for their critique and made appropriate changes to the document.

Then we sent the questionnaire to individuals who had attended training sessions during the last two years. We felt that two years was an appropriate time to assess if training had made an impact when implemented on the job, yet not so far into the past that people would not remember the training session. Approximately 10 percent of the people attending each training session were sent the survey. The training sessions selected included Flagger Workshop, Signing Workshop, Access Management, Iowa Secondary Road Maintenance Supervisors Annual Conference, Signing Conference, Construction Inspection, Motor Grader Operator, Walkable Communities, Excavation Safety, and the Pavement Markings Conference.

A total of 480 survey questionnaires were mailed and 84 were returned for evaluation. This response rate is adequate considering it was a cold survey and the audience didn't expect it to be coming.

The survey included the following questions:

1. How valuable was the training to you?
2. How much difference has the training made in how you accomplish your job?
3. How significantly has the training improved your efficiency in performing your tasks?
4. Did the training include safety-related training? If yes, how significantly has your participation in the training improved safety in your organization? If safety has improved in your organization indicate which areas have improved.
5. Would you recommend this training session to others?
6. What training can we provide for you in the future?

Responses to three of the questions were particularly significant. In response to question 3, almost everyone indicated they experienced improvement. In response to question 4, many indicated a reduction in accidents and personal injuries. And, in response to question 5 (see Figure 1), nearly everyone noted that they would recommend the training to others.

The responses to our survey questionnaire are very encouraging. We know we are on track with the training we are developing and presenting. We have room to improve and we will. Of special interest is question 5. This is like asking "Would you buy a used car from these people?" Most (98 percent) said yes, they would recommend the training session to others.

We want to offer a special thank you to the individuals who responded to this questionnaire and to their supervisors who provided the time to attend the training and complete the survey. •

Figure 1

■ Workshop attendees who would recommend their workshop to others

