



As your workforce continues to turn over, are your new hires prepared to avoid the hazards of electricity?

If there is an electrical accident in your facility, or you are in a high-risk industry, you've got pretty good chances of getting a visit from OSHA.

In a one-year period, OSHA issued \$26,460,902 in penalties for violations of electrical requirements. Because OSHA regulations are not updated with industry standards, when a violation of a recognized hazard occurs, OSHA's inspectors will issue citations under the General Duty Clause. This clause requires employers to provide a workplace free from "recognized hazards," as identified by industry consensus standards such as the NEC, NFPA 70E and IEEE.

On-the-job apprentice training is a proven, effective method of growing your staff. The new technician can learn a lot from the experienced ones, but what do you do when veteran electrical maintenance personnel are leaving the job market in waves? Burdening your experienced technician with a "less experienced" apprentice can lead to gaps in the knowledge transfer and can be dangerous.

When your experienced technician starts with a new apprentice, do they skip right to

A Perspective On Electrical Training

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application? What's the procedure for this, where to find it and what to do when this happens, etc.? While this type of focus is essential to continuing work during training, as a starting point for apprentices, it is fundamentally flawed.

To grow an effective electrical maintenance technician, you must start by building a foundation of fundamental knowledge—*those things veterans take for granted and may not adequately pass on*. The following fundamental subjects should be covered in your apprentice program:

- What is the difference between AC and DC electricity?
- How do you calculate voltage, wattage, resistance and current?
- How do you interpret the readings on a multimeter?

A technician cannot fully understand the implications of changes he/she makes to a circuit without this fundamental knowledge.

All electrical maintenance boils down to one essential question: "It's not working; why?" Each technician relies on troubleshooting procedures to locate the causes of failure—*and there is a logical way to locate those causes without "chasing the voltage."*

Inadequate troubleshooting skills can cost your organization. Staying compliant is very important, but worker safety is essential.

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