



## The Rapid InService Courses Training Method Explained

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Rapid InService Courses are a series of safety and risk management online courses that are designed to deliver refresher and annual training using a series of multiple choice questions and videos. The format of the Rapid InService Courses was developed by Steven C. Wilmes, PHR, CPSI, RSSP, ARM-P in February 2014. Specifically, the Rapid InService Courses were designed to address common challenges organizations face when implementing training: Boring content, time constraints, respect of participants' lives, unlearned knowledge, and budget.

### The Format

Traditional safety and risk management training begins by delivering content and then tests participants on the content at the end of the training module. In contrast, Rapid InService Courses begin by delivering test questions about the participants' knowledge, one question at a time. When a question is correctly answered, participants move to the next question, but when a question is answered incorrectly, video content explaining the correct answer is provided. Thus, Rapid InService Courses reverse or "flip" the learning format, allowing participants to reinforce their current level of knowledge while also rapidly learning information that may have been unknown previously, forgotten over time, or misapplied.

Learning Approach Rapid InService Courses focus on the top three tiers of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning (applying, analyzing, or evaluating) to train participants. Each question is designed to test the participants' ability to apply, analyze or evaluate the content to a "real world" situation that meets the particular standard or regulation the training is designed to meet.

Let's take Cal-OSHA's heat illness standard for example. The standard requires that employees are provided 1 quart of drinking water per hour for each hour they work outside in temperatures 85 degrees or greater. A simple *remembering* question may look like "How many quarts of water per hour must be provided to you when you work outside?" Response options: (a) 1 quart; (b) 2 quarts; or (3) 5 quarts. This question asks participants to memorize and recall what they learned in the previous 55 minutes of training. Participants are expected to learn such facts in Rapid InService Courses, but they are tested on their ability to apply the information to a particular situation because the application of facts requires a deeper understanding of the material. Due to the serious nature of training topics and their role in saving lives and reducing injuries, we believe it is critically important to move beyond the memorization of facts.



Let's look at a Rapid InService Course question that uses the *applying* form of learning. Using the same training component above, the question would read "Jim has been working outside since 7 am. The current temperature is 97 degrees and the time is 1 pm. Jim gets off work at 3 pm. How much drinking water should Jim have available to him for the remainder of his shift?" Response options: (a) 2 quarts; (b) 8 quarts; or (c) 2 liters.

## Question Design

A minimum of two questions are designed for each topic listed under a Cal-OSHA or related safety, risk management regulation. Additional questions may be asked depending on the seriousness of the topic. Questions are always designed to oppose each other to ensure participants really understand the content. In other words, the first question in a set is designed to seek a positive response, and the second question in the set is designed to seek a negative response.

Additionally, questions related to the same topic are not presented next to one another. To ensure reliability (i.e., consistency in knowledge), questions from the same set are separated from each other during the training. If a participant answers a question correctly, they move on to the next question without video or a further response—i.e., it is assumed that they know the correct answer. An incorrect answer, however, requires the participant to watch a video response with an optional text comment. The video may contain a short skit and/or an explanation of the learning element. In order to progress through the training, participants must demonstrate understanding of the topic.

## Answer Design

All questions are delivered in a 3-choice multiple choice format. One of the 3 choices is correct, and the remaining two choices correspond to a video response designed by the Wilmes, LLC writing team. Some video responses are designed as video skits written by our comedy team in order to emphasize the incorrect answer with humor and enhance the participants' ability to retain the information in a practical way.

## Delivery System

All Rapid InService Courses are delivered via an online learning management platform. The courses are housed on an open source platform and, sometimes, on a proprietary system. While the particular system can make a difference in the aesthetics of the online system, the format and content do not change. Rapid InService Courses can be designed to work with a variety of platforms allowing schools, colleges, public agencies and other organizations to incorporate the Rapid InService Courses into their systems.