

To The Point Driver Training

Daily driving is such a common task that is taken for granted. Mental autopilot is engaged, and individuals frequently arrive at their destination with little to no memory of the journey. For many, driving or riding in a vehicle is the most dangerous daily activity.

Business-related driving can also become routine, especially if employee drivers spend a great deal of time behind the wheel. That makes regular driver training an important part of a company's culture and overall fleet safety program. Unfortunately, many companies do not have a formal driver training program and those that do often fail to train their drivers again after the initial training.

Proactive companies train employees who drive for business purposes either at the time of hiring or when assigned to a driving position. They also offer refresher training for all drivers at least once every three years or more frequently, depending on the frequency and extent of driving required. It is also a good idea to conduct driver training whenever there is a change or addition to fleet safety policies or when drivers are cited or involved in a crash. If a company uses predictive telematics and AI camera data to improve driver behavior, it can prompt micro-learning or driver coaching focused on specific metrics, such as hard braking and rapid acceleration, to reinforce good driving habits.

Driver training can take many forms: classroom training, online training, behind-the-wheel training, driving simulator training, commentary driving sessions, peer-reviewed drives, on-road skill building and assessment, reinforcement training, and refresher training are typical. Vary the delivery method for training to keep it fresh. Tailor the content to address:

- Company's specific driving policies, procedures, and rules
- Employees' vehicle crash and citation history
- Employees' jobs and the various environments they may encounter
- The types of vehicles driven, such as route trucks, executive vehicles, service vehicle fleets, tractor-trailer fleets, and hired vehicles
- The latest driving trends, issues, laws, and technology

Document the training provided for each driver, including a signed driver acknowledgment form for policy review sessions and driver training sessions.

Excuses for not training drivers are common—not enough time, too costly, productivity loss, etc. With the technology available for delivering training and the training resources at any company's disposal, there really is no valid excuse. The consequences of a crash—injuries, lost time, investigations, claim reporting, legal consequences, fines, and vehicle repairs—can make a company regret their decision to skip training. Avoid these negative consequences by developing an effective policy and program for training company drivers.

Resources

Network of Employers for Traffic Safety Road Safety Resources, trafficsafety.org/road-safety-resources/

National Safety Council (NSC) Driver Training, www.nsc.org/safety-training/defensive-driving

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Training Provider Registry, tpr.fmcsa.dot.gov/

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Driver Assistance Technologies, www.nhtsa.gov/vehicle-safety/driver-assistance-technologies

Learn More & Connect

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