Why Most Safety Training RFPs Fall Short

From content checklists to KPI-first risk controls

Safety training = critical risk control

When near misses, repeat recordables, unplanned downtime, and audit findings keep showing up in the same areas, **traditional training isn't closing the gap** between "certified" and truly ready.

TRIR & DART
universal safety performance metrics

OSHA requires all companies with recordable incidents to calculate and report TRIR and DART annually. High scores trigger targeted OSHA inspections, raise insurance premiums by tens of thousands of dollars, and disqualify contractors from bidding (most projects require TRIR < 5.0)—not total training hours completed.

80–95%
of accidents driven by human factors

Decades of data show that unsafe behavior and human factors drive roughly 80–95% of workplace accidents and 85–90% of reportable incidents, which is why focusing only on compliance completions misses most of the real risk.

90% vs 20%
knowledge retention

Simulation-based training delivers significantly higher long-term retention than lecture-only formats, making it more effective for hazard recognition and safe decision-making.

Traditional learning RFPs

- ✓ Number of courses and modules
- ✓ Formats and durations (classroom, eLearning, video)
- ✓ Generic compliance topics
- ✓ LMS compatibility checkbox

High-impact learning RFPs

- ✗ TRIR, DART, severity targets as success criteria
- ✗ High-risk, site-specific scenarios (LOTO, confined space, line breaks)
- ✗ Proof of proficiency—not just completions
- ✗ Segmentation by site, crew, contractor group

How high-performing EHS teams write RFPs

01 START WITH KPIs
Define desired improvements in **TRIR, DART, recordables, severity, near-miss closure, unplanned downtime up front.** Use these as the anchor for vendor evaluation.

02 DESIGN AROUND REAL RISK
Use near-miss and incident reports to identify the **top 5-10 high-risk tasks** at your plants, terminals, or field operations. Require scenario-based practice for each.

03 REQUIRE PROOF, NOT PROMISES
Ask vendors to show **how they measure behavior and proficiency** (scenario scores, pass thresholds, refresh frequency) and how those indicators tie back to safety metrics over time.

The safety RFP that actually moves your numbers

- ✓ **KPI-first requirements** aligned to TRIR, DART, recordables, severity, downtime, audit scores
- ✓ **KPI-first requirements** aligned to TRIR, DART, recordables, severity, downtime, audit scores
- ✓ **Integration** with LMS, CMMS, incident/audit systems to connect training data to safety outcomes
- ✓ **Audit-ready proficiency reporting** for employees and contractors—beyond completion records
- ✓ **60–90-day pilot design** with baselines and decision gates tied to incident, near-miss, downtime metrics

Get the frontline safety & compliance training RFP checklist & template

Use it in your next RFP or as a scoring guide for Ops, EHS, and L&D.

GET CHECKLIST & TEMPLATE

REFERENCES

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