

OSHA defines a **Competent Person** as:

One who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings, or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.

A competent person needs both knowledge and authority.

With training and experience, a competent person is knowledgeable about applicable standards, can identify workplace or job site hazards that are specific to the area of competency, and they have the authority to correct those hazards.

- Some standards add additional specific requirements for the competent person.

Competency is demonstrated by a person's knowledge, skills, experience, and training. Knowledge may come from on-the-job training, years of experience on the job, additional training classes, or a higher-level degree.

- A competent person is required for specific work types and work conditions. Often, an OSHA standard will require that a competent person inspect the work area, specific equipment, or job conditions before work begins.

It is the employer's responsibility to designate a competent person on a job site or in a facility.

- You do not need a certificate to show competence unless it is required by your employer.

Example: After completing training, an employee demonstrated to their employer that they are capable of recognizing hazards and performing inspections of their lifting slings and rigging hardware and they have the authorization to remove questionable or damaged equipment. The employer may recognize them as a competent person on specific lifting and rigging activities.



OSHA defines a **Qualified Person** as:

Someone who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated their ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter, the work, or the project.

It is up to the employer to decide what they consider to be a recognized degree or certificate, or how they define extensive knowledge and training. The employer must also determine what it means for a someone to have the ability to solve or resolve problems.

- A qualified person typically has more extensive training than a competent person.
- It is possible that someone is both the competent person and the qualified person on site.

Example: For electrical work, a qualified person is someone who has received training in and has demonstrated skills and knowledge in the construction and operation of electric equipment and installations and the hazards involved. The employer will decide which employees are qualified to work on specific electrical equipment or supervise others as a qualified person.

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