



Best practice guidance

Effective driver training and education in companies



Introduction

All over the world, driver error and risk-taking is a leading cause of road crashes. Training and education thus present key ways our roads can be made safer. For many employees, driving is the riskiest activity they undertake at work.

The behaviour of drivers on the road – whether they are customer-facing or not – is one of the key ways businesses are seen by the public. In this way, encouraging safe driving behaviour can help improve companies' reputation, reduce costs, and benefit the business. Driver education can have a direct effect on safety, as well as aiding the effectiveness and improving the value of other measures, like vehicle technology.

Driver education can take a broad variety of forms: one-to-one in-vehicle training, induction training, awareness-raising presentations, talks and workshops, posters, internal communications, and online courses. It is essential to have a holistic and coordinated approach to educating and training your drivers: using a variety of methods as part of a planned, coherent plan will have the greatest sustained impact. Developing the notion of drivers as professionals, using their own judgement to make informed decisions, is one of the most important goals of driver education.

This report explores some of the key methods and themes of driver education. It explores when education and training can take place, and gives advice on reaching drivers at all stages of their driving career.

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PART ONE: Approaching driver training and education

When to deliver driver training and education

An organisation should develop a holistic, broad-based training and education programme for drivers. It should be an ongoing process that goes throughout a professional driver's career.

It is helpful to make a distinction between **training** (the skills that a driver uses), and **education** (driver behaviour and attitudes). Both are essential for a driver to be safe on the roads: if a driver has the skills to control their vehicle but doesn't have the understanding of how to drive safely, or believe this is important, they may still prove a danger. Similarly, educating a driver in safe practices will not help them if they lack the skills to put it into practice.

Training, education and awareness-building can take place at the following stages in employment:

- **Pre-induction:** driver awareness begins before a new driver is employed. For example, by making a potential employee aware of the company's safe driving policy at interview, you are instilling in new employees' minds that safety is a priority, and employees with potentially problematic issues may remove themselves or be eliminated from the process.
- **Induction:** a risk-assessment (see below) should be conducted at induction. This includes a licence check, an analysis of risk factors, and possibly psychometric testing. By identifying specific issues, training can be targeted at the needs of the individual driver. Training at staff induction should include:
 - A clear emphasis on safety as the company's top priority
 - Company, sector-specific issues and legal safety issues
 - The company's safe driving / fleet safety policy
 - Site/equipment/journey planning training
 - The relationship between safe and fuel efficient driving
- **Ongoing:** throughout a driver's career, training, education and awareness should be an ongoing part of their professional development, including:
 - Regular reminders through internal communications, briefings and meetings of aspects of company safe driving / fleet safety policy, the importance of these, and the company's overall commitment to safety

- Training or briefing in any changes of company policy or use of new technology
- Reminders of or training in relevant policies upon promotion or change of role
- Reminders of seasonal information, for example bad-weather driving in winter
- Training and refresher courses on areas identified as problematic across the company, such as a series of crashes of a particular type

- **Following an incident or risk assessment** (see below). When a particular issue is identified with a driver following an incident or risk-assessment, targeted training and education should be offered. Driver training and education should not be presented as a 'punishment', but rather a way of improving skills and knowledge as professionals. Ideally this should target the root cause of the incident or risk identified, and ensure the driver has the skills, awareness and attitude to prevent the issue arising again. For example, the reason that a driver is speeding may be done to various factors: it may be that they lack the skills to keep the vehicle at an appropriate speed, or it may be that they have an attitudinal problem towards speed.

Directory of service providers

A directory of service providers is available on our Brake Professional website, featuring assessment and training providers.





Risk assessments

It is useful to explore the different risks that drivers face and pose, as different risks can present different training and education needs. Risk assessments should cover a broad range of metrics to calculate driver risk. These often include:

- Distance driven per year;
- Night or early morning driving;
- Use of high-risk routes;
- Collision history;
- Penalty points;
- Risky behaviours identified through telematics or other means;
- Young or newly qualified drivers;
- Attitudinal problems;
- Psychometric testing.

Risk assessment should link with the broader systems used by your business. Incident recording is an essential part of a risk assessment system to enable drivers involved in crashes, and the causes of these, to be identified. Technologies such as telematics can be powerful tools in identifying specific issues across the fleet and among individual drivers. This also enables targeted education and training to be undertaken to meet particular needs.

Developing attitudes and behaviours

Driver education aims to develop drivers' understandings, attitudes and behaviour. A broad range of methods are available.

Research and experience in this field indicate that various key principles can be adhered to when running educational programmes. Programmes should:

- **Be based on an understanding of current behaviour and attitudes.** Through this understanding, your messaging can meet the real needs of your drivers, and reflect the realities they face on the roads. Explore the pressures that your drivers face to driver riskily and how they can overcome these.
- **Help drivers understand the consequences of crashes.** For example, victim case studies provide a powerful message for helping drivers understand the devastating impact that crashes have. "Anticipated regret" is a powerful tool to help drivers make the best decisions each time they sit behind the wheel, by considering the terrible consequences it would have (for themselves and others) if they were to cause a death or serious injury on roads, and therefore the regret they would feel.

- **Help drivers develop realistic strategies.** For example, many people are "addicted" to their mobile phones and subject to social pressure to be connected; you could assist drivers develop a strategy to put their mobile phones off, in the boot, before driving.
- **Create the sense that safe driving is the norm.** People are strongly influenced by how their colleagues and neighbours behave. By making safe driving the norm (and making clear that's what's expected within your company), it should encourage drivers to improve their own behaviour.
- **Be engaging.** The most successful workshops and seminars are not simply one-way presentations, but are interactive and tailored to the audience, enabling you to explore the real issues drivers face and help them to work out solutions. See box below for details of Brake's webinars and courses on running interactive 'Pledge' workshops with drivers.
- **Be multi-channel, planned and sustained.** To ensure safe driving messages sink in, and achieve real buy-in from your drivers, it's important to keep communicating and emphasising them. Using a variety of methods across a coordinated programme will help you to engage everyone and have maximum impact. See below for more on internal communications.

Learning from what others have done can also be useful, and you may be able to make use of or adapt existing programmes or resources. Brake Professional members can access case studies of best practice in the industry to give you great ideas on developing education and training, plus a range of tools and resources to support your efforts. See www.brakepro.org.





Brake's **pledge**

Brake's Pledge is a flexible driver education resource, and can be used by companies to engage their drivers with positive behavioural change. It provides a way to get across a summary of the most important safe driving messages, in a concise, positive and memorable way, and to gain drivers' commitment to these. The Pledge can be used in a variety of ways, depending on your needs. The Pledge can be integrated into, or used as the basis for, all sorts of driver education activities, from workshops to posters, and it can be used to structure an educational programme (for example by focusing on each topic in turn over the course of a year).

The Pledge covers six key topics:



Slow: "I'll stay under limits, and go 20mph (30 km/h) around schools, homes and shops. I'll slow right down for bends, brows, and bad weather, and avoid overtaking."



sober

Sober: "I'll never drive after any alcohol or drugs – not a drop, not a drag. I won't have more than a couple of drinks if I have to drive early the next day."



Secure: "I'll make sure everyone in my vehicle is safely belted up. I'll carry out a walk round check of my vehicle before every journey and ensure it's well maintained."



silent

Silent: "I'll never use my phone while driving, even hands-free. I'll put my phone out of reach or on silent and stay 100% focused."



sharp

Sharp: "I'll get my eyes tested every two years and wear glasses or lenses if I need them. I'll take regular breaks and not drive if I'm tired, stressed, or on medication that affects driving."



sustainable

Sustainable: "I'll minimise the amount I drive. If I need to drive, I'll make my routes as safe and efficient as possible, and drive slowly and smoothly."

Brake offers:

- Free online taster webinars, to find out more about the Pledge and how it works.
- A broad range of resources for members of Brake Professional to promote the Pledge among drivers. This includes an online toolkit, web banners, emailable forms, and advice sheets on Pledge topics.

In the UK and New Zealand, we also offer the following paid-for services:

- In-house one-day "train the trainer" courses to equip managers to deliver the Pledge to drivers through interactive workshops.
- Internal workshops for drivers, where Brake runs interactive Pledge workshops directly with drivers.
- Working with the management team to embed the Pledge in your company's policies and practices.

Find out more at brakepro.org/pledge.

Posters and displays

Posters and displays in break rooms, receptions, rest areas and workshops are a simple way to highlight specific issues. Posters are particularly important when there is a change in the law or in company policy, or when a particular issue is identified as being problematic. They can also be used as part of a year-round programme focusing on particular topics at certain times, to back up messages communicated via other means such as briefings and workshops.

Free Brake posters

Brake produces a range of posters to raise awareness among drivers within companies.

A full range is available to download by Brake Professional members at www.brakepro.org.

A more limited range is available at www.brake.org.uk/shop.

Posters for international audiences, including some translated into languages other than English, are available at

www.roadsafetyweek.org.





Road Safety Week

National, regional or company-wide Road Safety Weeks are useful ways to promote road safety. They can provide a focal point for engaging drivers, promoting key messages (perhaps linked to a particular theme) and reinforcing your company's commitment to road safety internally and externally.

For example, in the UK, Brake runs a national Road Safety Week every November, and provides resources and guidance to help companies get involved. Several countries around the world offer similar events and activities. Wherever you are, if you want to get involved in an existing road safety week, or develop your own activities, find out more at Brake's global site roadsafetyweek.org.



Advice sheets

More detailed advice can be offered to drivers in the form of resources like driver advice sheets. These can serve as a reference, or provide a refresher on materials covered in other training. They can also be used as a hand-out or for reference at presentations and workshops.

Brake driver advice sheets

Driver advice sheets are available on a wide range of road safety topics for members of Brake Professional at www.brakepro.org. Non-members can access a number of free advice sheets (UK-orientated, although they can be adapted) by ordering our toolkit for small to medium size businesses at brakepro.org/smetoolkit

Case study: Ocado

Ocado is a UK online grocery and delivery company, operating a fleet of more than 1,100 vans and 75 trucks.



Education and training of drivers runs throughout a drivers' career: rather than relying on any one method, Ocado's view is that a holistic approach to educating, raising awareness and training drivers has the greatest sustained impact. All new drivers at Ocado must successfully complete a five week training and development programme, including a classroom-based driver safety workshop, and a practical on-road defensive driving course, provided by internal trainers or during busy periods by external driver training companies like Drivers Domain UK.com, who provide on-site tutor support across the UK. Once assessed as competent, they are assigned routes that are designed to allow new starters more time on the route and at each delivery address, to reduce stress and ensure they stick to slow speeds.

Safety information and advice is provided via 'toolbox talks' and informal discussion sessions, and videos, posters, and information boards in break areas. Ocado runs incentive schemes for safe drivers, including a Safe Driver of the Year competition, and monthly selection of a Driving Hero.

All drivers complete regular safety awareness sessions, and on-road coaching and targeted awareness sessions are provided for drivers who have been involved in vehicle incidents, identified as at risk via Ocado's telematics system, or returning from long-term absence.

Ocado's annual employee survey shows that 91% of employees are clear about what is expected of them in their job (national average 84%), and 85% feel they receive sufficient training (national average 53%). From 2010 to 2013, Ocado saw a 17% reduction in third-party insurance claims, and from 2007 to 2013





Developing driver skills

Issues with the skills of your drivers can be addressed through driver training. This can include one-on-one on-the-road training, as well as skills-focused seminars, talks and mentoring. Targeted training can be based upon the particular skills issues that have been identified through risk assessments, incidents, or drivers' own feedback. This also offers greater value for money than a generic approach rolled out to all drivers.

Many training providers offer a combined, targeted approach incorporating risk assessment, skills-based training and awareness-raising education – or advice on how to integrate the training they offer with wider safe driving initiatives and policies. It's a good idea when selecting a training provider to check this is the case, and where possible to seek an accredited provider with a strong track record and good customer testimonies.

Fleet safety directory

A range of training, education and risk assessment providers are listed in Brake's fleet safety service directory at brakepro.org/fleetservicedirectory.

Case study: Partners4Health NHS

Partners4Health is a UK company that provides health care in patients' homes. They employ 18 people who drive for work, driving company cars between appointments at patients' homes. Over a two month period, they noticed an increase in minor incidents and damage to vehicles, whereas previously they had very few incidents. They made the decision to employ a specialist fleet and company driver training company – Drivers Domain UK.com – to provide one-to-one driver training by an advanced driving instructor.

At the start of these sessions, drivers are asked to drive normally; this gives the instructor the chance to identify the issues with individual drivers. An instructor can then give advice and support for addressing any shortfalls in the drivers' skills. A report on the drivers' skills, and issues addressed in the training, is then passed on to management. This gives both the driver and the manager the opportunity to monitor the drivers' performance going forward. Partners4Health will continue to monitor the incident and crash data from drivers, and identify any future training or educational needs in the future.

Toolkit for SMEs

Small and medium size companies can access free advice and tools from Brake on managing road risk, developing a road safety culture, and providing advice for drivers. These resources, which are especially aimed at UK businesses, can be downloaded for free from brakepro.org/smetoolkit.

Young drivers

Young drivers are particularly at risk. Targeted education and training can benefit these drivers. Some countries have graduated driving licensing (GDL) schemes: these give beginner drivers more experience and training before allowing them to drive unrestricted. The proven effectiveness¹ of these schemes show the benefit of additional learning and limiting exposure to risk for younger and beginner drivers. Even in a country without GDL (such as the UK), employers can emulate these schemes through targeted training and policies for younger drivers. For example, companies can reduce exposure to risk among young or inexperienced drivers by giving them routes that have been identified as being less risky, limiting the amount of time they spend driving, and not requiring them to drive at night.

Young drivers have specific training needs. These include attention allocation, visual search, hazard detection, anticipation, perception of risk, reacting instinctively to potential hazards (e.g. by slowing down), vehicle control and self-assessment². In general, young, novice drivers need help to manage the transition from having too little control over the driving task and too much confidence, into mature, responsible drivers who recognise hazards and resist impulses to act unsafely, even under pressure. Employers can make a substantial contribution to this.



PART TWO: Some key topics in driver education

Drink and drugs

Driving under the influence of drink or drugs is a major cause of death and injury on the world's roads. There is no "safe" level of alcohol in the body; drivers with even 20-50mg alcohol per 100ml of blood are at least three times more likely to die in a crash than those with no alcohol in their blood². That's why the only safe amount to drink if you're driving is nothing at all – not a drop.

Brake encourages employers to take a zero tolerance approach to drink and drug driving. Employers should have a clear policy, ideally backed up by a testing regime. Driver education, however, is key to making these policies effective.

Training and education should make sure that drivers are fully aware of the company's policy on drink and drug driving, and the law. It should highlight, in particular, myths surrounding drink and drug driving: especially how even one small drink can affect your driving, even if you feel fine, and the dangers of "morning after" driving after drinking, where you are still impaired from the night before.

Driving on illegal drugs is also extremely dangerous behind the wheel. In educating drivers, it is important that drivers are made aware that illegal drugs can affect your driving for days (or constantly if taken regularly) including through disrupted sleep patterns, and be told of the risks of both being caught and crashing.

They should also be made aware of the risks of some medication. They should always check the label and information leaflet before taking medication, and ask their doctor or pharmacist if unsure. In educating drivers on this issue, however, it is important that drivers are not put off taking essential medication, as this could make them more dangerous behind the wheel. You should make clear that drivers should speak to their manager if there is any chance that a medication they need to take could affect their driving, and will not be punished for this.



Speed

Companies should not assume that drivers are aware of the dangers of speed; they should take steps to ensure drivers are educated about speed - particularly stopping distances - and informed about company policy on speed. It is important to address both speeding and driving too fast for conditions in driver education, as often the speed limit is itself too fast for safety. As well as making drivers aware of the dangers of speed, it is important to educate them about the many positive benefits of slowing down for the good of the wider community. Slower speeds means less threatening and quieter traffic with lower emissions, making streets and communities more pleasant for everyone including children and the elderly.

Companies can assess attitudes to speeding through methods such as interviews, psychometric testing and online driving assessment tools. Any evidence obtained of speeding can trigger a need for remedial training and assessment.

When assessing and educating drivers regarding their attitudes to speed, it is important to spot and address common misconceptions, such as believing it is acceptable to go faster at night because there is less traffic about (it is not acceptable because visibility is reduced and hazards are still present). Another misconception is that driving above speed limits is acceptable if you are overtaking (drivers should never put themselves in a position that requires them to drive at dangerous speeds to avoid a hazard). Another misconception is that 'good' drivers can drive faster because they have better reactions (a false argument given that it is the stopping distance that increases with speed, rather than the thinking time of the driver).

The Brake Pledge can form a key component of speed awareness education, as it invites drivers to make a positive commitment to never break speed limits and to slow down further in built-up areas, poor conditions or when there are particular risks. See brakepro.org/pledge.



Distractions

Studies in the UK and US have estimated that a fifth of crashes are caused by driver distractions, although it could be higher¹. Attempting a secondary task at the wheel increases drivers' crash risk by two to three times, with more complex activities like texting or speaking on a phone more risky still. Talking on a phone, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, increases crash risk by four times.

Mobile phones and other technology are a key cause of distractions, but employers can prevent their use through policies and education.

Some employers and employees believe that preventing drivers using phones while driving for work will hinder business. However, companies who have implemented bans have found this is not the case. Employees can return calls during breaks from driving and are able to give callers their undivided attention when doing so. Drivers have reported they are able to set up caller divers and other suitable systems to prevent any negative impact from being unavailable while driving. They also report customers responding favourably as it shows the company is taking responsible action to protect the welfare of employees and the public. Ideally, education should be used to promote understanding and buy-in of such a ban on using phones and other devices at the wheel, alongside emphasising that drivers should not attempt any secondary task while driving. In educating drivers about distractions, it is important to take into account that many drivers allow themselves to be distracted because they believe they are in control, and do not believe distraction poses a significant risk².

However, research shows drivers are not able to correctly estimate how distracted they are³ and 98% are not able to divide their attention without a significant deterioration in driving performance⁴.

It is also important to discuss with drivers pressures that might lead to them being distracted (e.g. pressure to take a work or personal call) and help them develop practical strategies to avoid such temptation (e.g. changing their voicemail to say they can't pick up if they are driving, and switching their phone off so it doesn't ring).

End notes

- 1 Brake (2014) Graduated driver licensing. <http://www.brake.org.uk/component/content/article/15-facts-a-resources/facts/489-graduated-licensing>
- 2 National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2010) Review of effectiveness of laws limiting blood alcohol concentration levels to reduce alcohol-related road injuries and deaths. <http://www.nice.org.uk/media/3FE/1A/BloodAlcoholContentEffectivenessReview.pdf>
- 3 National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2010) Review of effectiveness of laws limiting blood alcohol concentration levels to reduce alcohol-related road injuries and deaths. <http://www.nice.org.uk/media/3FE/1A/BloodAlcoholContentEffectivenessReview.pdf>
- 4 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2006) The impact of driver inattention on near-crash/crash risk. <http://www.nhtsa.gov/DOT/NHTSA/NRD/Multimedia/PDFs/Crash%20Avoidance2006/DriverInattention.pdf>
- 5 RoSPA (2007) Driver distraction. <http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/adviceandinformation/driving/driver-distraction.aspx>
- 6 Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety (2008) Assessing the awareness of performance decrements in distracted drivers. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001457507001534>
- 7 University of Utah (2010) Supertaskers: Profiles in extraordinary multitasking ability

Case study: TPK (Te Puni Kokiri)

TPK is the Ministry for Maori Development in the New Zealand Government. It operates a fleet of 80 cars. TPK has invested in the safety of its people by rolling out a comprehensive online driver assessment and in-car practical training programme working with FleetSafe NZ.

This provides insights into each driver's level of competency, confidence and risk, while also providing feedback on processes, culture and attitudes within the business that support or deter safe driving. The information has supported TPK to improve safety, fleet sustainability and working conditions for TPK staff.

TPK realises that operating a fleet requires investment in drivers as much as vehicles, and is committed long term to its driver assessment and education programme as a crucial component of its fleet management strategy. In the two years since commencing the programme, it has had 50% fewer at-fault incidents per 10,000km, average fuel expenditure has dropped by 38%, serious infringement rates are down 80%, and insurance premiums have been reduced.

Brake Professional membership



Brake Professional is a not-for-profit global membership service for professionals working in the field of road safety, run by Brake, the global road safety charity, and set up in 1996.

Brake Professional is open to all professionals, but typically health and safety officers, fleet managers, risk managers, driver trainers, human resource professionals, vehicle managers, road safety officers (in commercial organisations and the public sector), police and emergency service workers. We also have many members who supply road safety services.

Brake Professional provides online access to practical road safety management tools to improve road safety, and free and significantly discounted access to Brake events. Find out more at brakepro.org.

Brake is a registered charity, number: 1093244

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