

# Handout 5: Information Analysis

Table 2: Information Analysis	
Subject	Questions
<p><b>Task</b> Here the actual work procedure being used at the time of the incident is explored. Members of the investigation team will look for answers to questions such as:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was a Safe Job Procedure used?</li> <li>• Had conditions changed to make the normal procedure unsafe?</li> <li>• Were the appropriate tools and materials available?</li> <li>• Were the appropriate tools and materials used?</li> <li>• Were safety devices working properly?</li> <li>• Was lockout used when necessary?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Material</b> To seek out possible causes resulting from the equipment and materials used, investigators might ask:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was there an equipment failure?</li> <li>• What caused it to fail?</li> <li>• Was the machinery poorly designed?</li> <li>• Were hazardous substances involved?</li> <li>• Were hazardous substances clearly identified?</li> <li>• Was a less hazardous alternative substance possible and available?</li> <li>• Was the raw material substandard in some way?</li> <li>• Should personal protective equipment (PPE) have been used?</li> <li>• Was the PPE used?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment</b> The physical environment, and especially sudden changes to that environment, is a factor that needs to be identified. The situation at the time of the incident is what is important, not what the "usual" conditions were. For example, investigators may want to know:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the weather conditions?</li> <li>• Was poor housekeeping a problem?</li> <li>• Was it too hot or too cold?</li> <li>• Was noise a problem?</li> <li>• Was there adequate light?</li> <li>• Were toxic or hazardous gases, dusts, or fumes present?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Personnel</b>  The physical and mental condition of those individuals directly involved in the event must be explored. The purpose for investigating the incident is not to establish blame against anyone; however the inquiry will not be complete unless personal characteristics are considered. Some factors will remain essentially constant while others may vary from day to day:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were workers experienced in the work being done?</li> <li>• Had they been adequately trained?</li> <li>• Can they physically do the work?</li> <li>• What was the status of their health?</li> <li>• Were they tired?</li> <li>• Were they under stress (work or personal)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Management</b>  Management holds the legal responsibility for the safety of the workplace and therefore the role of supervisors and higher management must always be considered in an incident investigation. Answers to any of the preceding types of questions logically lead to further questions such as:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were safety rules communicated to and understood by all employees?</li> <li>• Were written procedures available?</li> <li>• Were they being enforced?</li> <li>• Was there adequate supervision?</li> <li>• Were workers trained to do the work?</li> <li>• Had hazards been previously identified?</li> <li>• Had procedures been developed to overcome them?</li> <li>• Were unsafe conditions corrected?</li> <li>• Was regular maintenance of equipment carried out?</li> <li>• Were regular safety inspections carried out?</li> </ul>