

**From Compliance to  
Competence :  
The Human Side of  
Developing Safe,  
Confident  
Electrical Workers**



# Compliance doesn't keep people safe. Competence does.



- In high -risk environments, ticking boxes isn't enough
- Real safety = decisions under pressure
- When conditions change... judgement matters most
- Unit standards provide structure but not full competence

# Why This Matters

**Training often becomes:**

- **Task-based**
- **Assessment -driven**

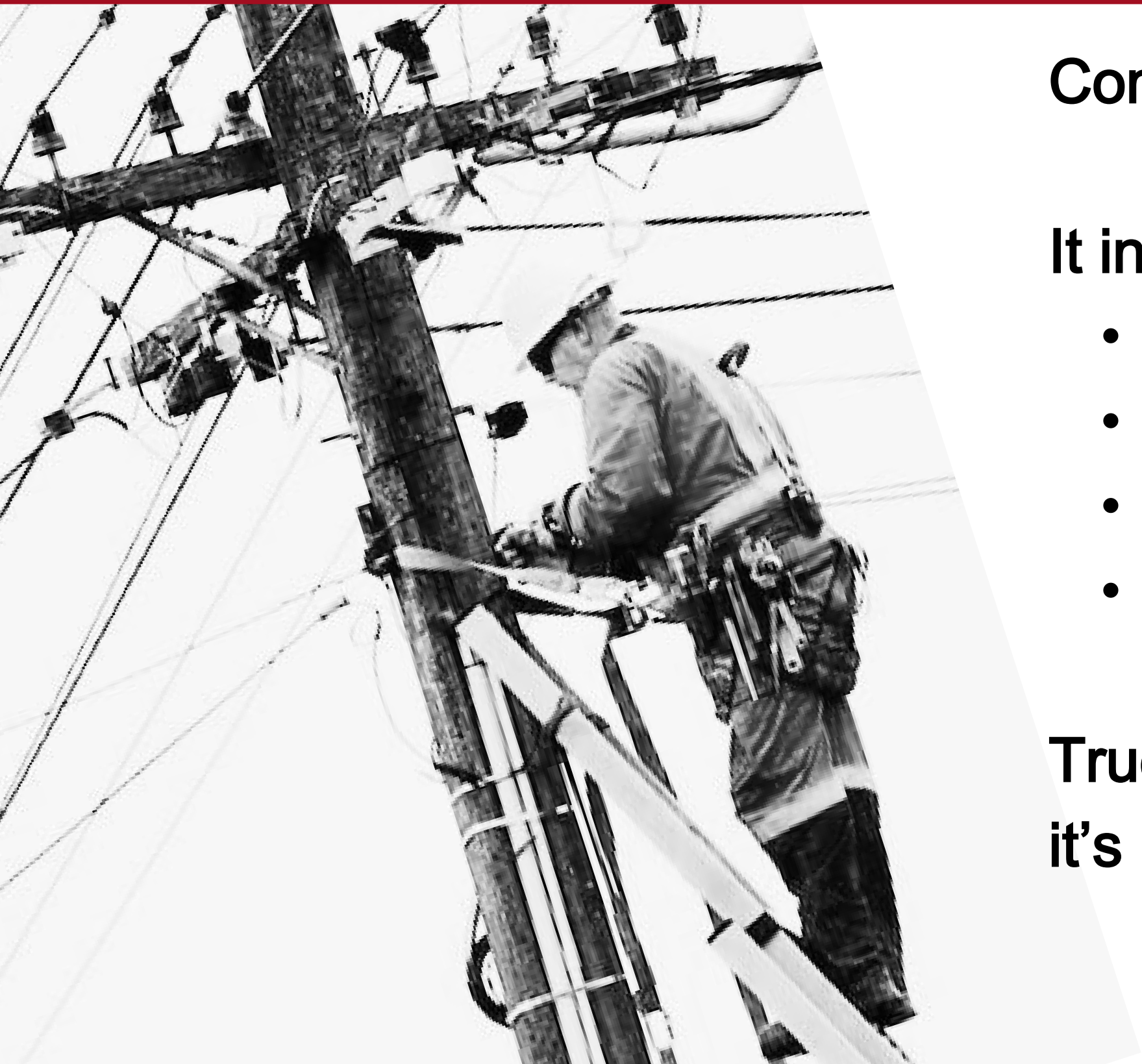
**But real work requires:**

- **Decision -making**
- **Adaptability**
- **Confidence**

**Unit standards does not equal real -world  
competence**



# What is Competence?



**Competence is more than skill**

**It includes:**

- **Knowledge (what to do)**
- **Skill (how to do it)**
- **Behaviour (how you show up)**
- **Judgement (when things change)**

**True competence is performing safely when it's not predictable**

# The Risk of Compliance -Only Training

- Learners focus on passing, not understanding
- Limited exposure to real -world variability
- Over -reliance on step -by -step thinking being the only way

**Result: Technically “qualified” but not fully prepared**

# The Challenge

## Compliance

- Tick-box tasks
- Minimum evidence
- Procedural focus
- Predictable tasks for sign off

## Competence

- Judgement
- Behaviour
- Confidence
- Adaptability



# Learning Environment

**If learners don't feel safe... they don't learn deeply**

- **Fear blocks decision -making**
- **Silence hides knowledge gaps**
- **Mistakes become hidden instead of learned from**



# Psychological Safety



## What Psychological Safety Looks Like

- Learners ask questions without judgement and are encouraged to explore.
- Mistakes are discussed, not criticised or punished
- Trainers model openness and humility

**Key Shift: From “don’t get it wrong” → “let’s learn from it”**

# Practical Strategies

- Normalise mistakes as part of learning
- Use scenario -based discussions
- Debrief decisions, not just outcomes
- We don't just ask what they did, we also ask why?



# Making Learning Real



- Use real job scenarios
- Introduce uncertainty into training
- Ask “what if?” questions
- Simulate pressure + decision - making

**Train for thinking, not just doing**

**Instead of: “Show me how to complete this task” Ask: “What would you do if something changed halfway through?”**

# Adapting to Learners

Not all learners learn the same way

Differences in:

- Experience
- Confidence
- Learning style
- Cultural background

Practical Adaptation

- Adjust pace and complexity
- Use visual + hands -on learning
- Pair experienced with new learners
- Check understanding —don't assume it

One-size training = missed capability

# Coaching vs Instructing

## Instructing:

- Tells people what to do
- Focus on task completion

## Coaching:

- Develops thinking
- Builds independence
- Encourages reflection

## Ask:

“What’s your plan?”

“What could go wrong?”

“What would you do differently next time?”

## Goal:

Create self -sufficient, thinking workers

# The Shift That Matters

**From:**

- **Trainer -led To Learner -centred**

**From:**

- **Telling To Enquiring**

**From:**

- **Assessment To Development**

**Competence is built through:**

- **Knowledge**
- **Skill**
- **Behaviour**
- **Judgement**
- **Supported by:**
- **Coaching**
- **Psychological safety**
- **Real-world context**

# Bringing It All Together

To build safe, confident electrical workers we must:

- Go beyond compliance
- Train decision -making
- Support the whole learner
- Create environments where people can think independently, not just follow instructions.

The goal isn't just qualified workers  
right call when it matters most.

- It's confident people who make the



# Q & A

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