



# Assessing the Impact of California's WOSH Specialist Program: Does worker leadership training have a positive effect?

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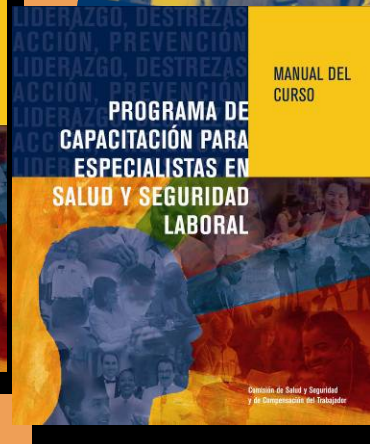
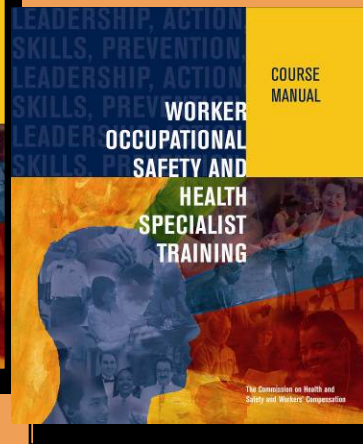
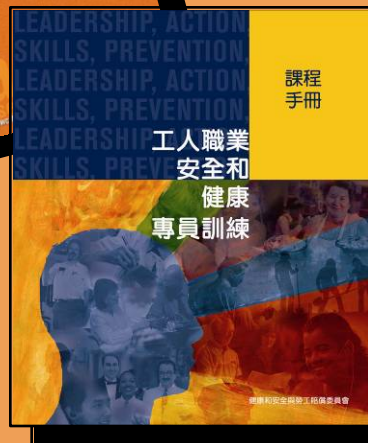
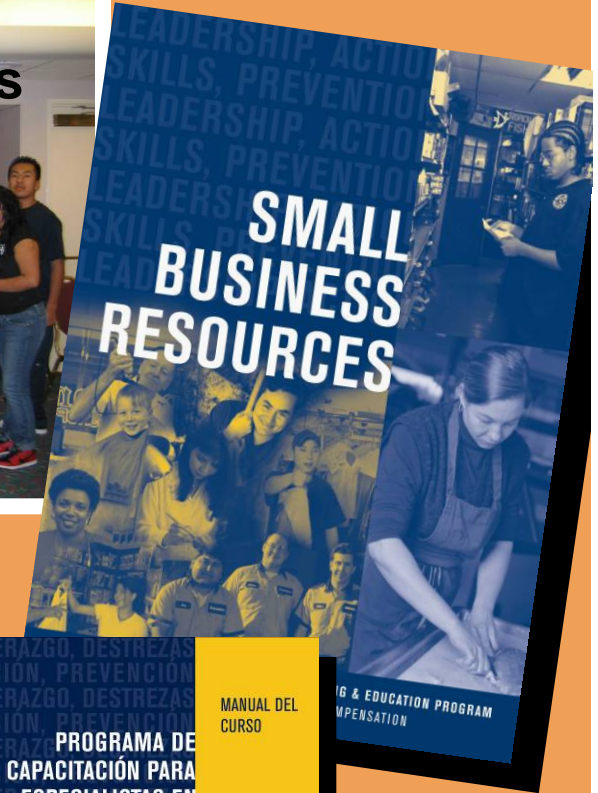
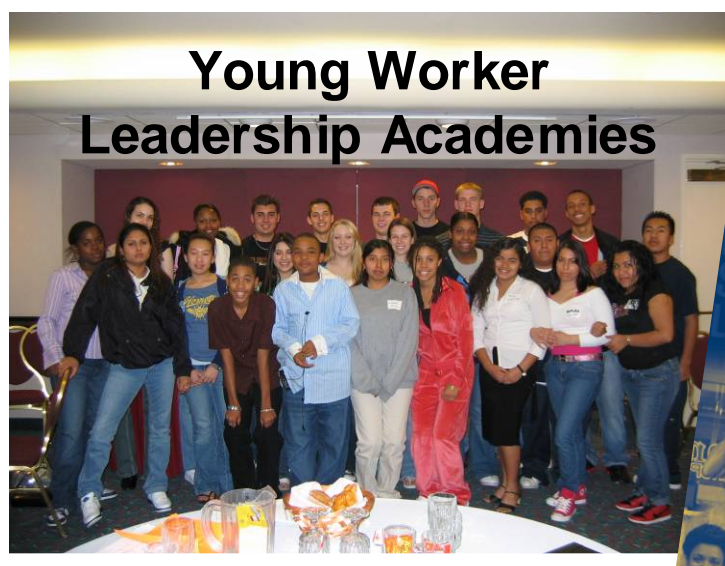
# What is the Worker Occupational Safety and Health Specialist Program?

Goal: To promote active worker participation in injury and illness prevention activities in the workplace.



# Worker Occupational Safety and Health Training and Education Program

## Young Worker Leadership Academies



# Priorities for Targeting

- High hazard / injury / workers' comp cost workplaces and occupations
- Underserved workers (low-wage workers, non-English speaking, limited literacy, youth)
- Workers in leadership roles (H&S committee members, safety reps, can train others, etc.)
- Geographical diversity – to extend reach

# WOSH Specialist Course

- Taught by LOHP and LOSH and a network of 76 trainers
- Open enrollment classes and workplace or occupation-specific classes
- 24-hours of core health and safety topics as well the opportunity to practice leadership skills:
  - Identify hazards and potential solutions
  - Investigate underlying causes of injuries
  - Talk with workers about their rights to a safe workplace
  - Communicate effectively with managers and co-workers about the need for safety
  - Serve as a resource on WC and RTW
  - Participate effectively on a health and safety committee
  - Develop an action plan to improve health and safety

# Why Evaluate the Program?

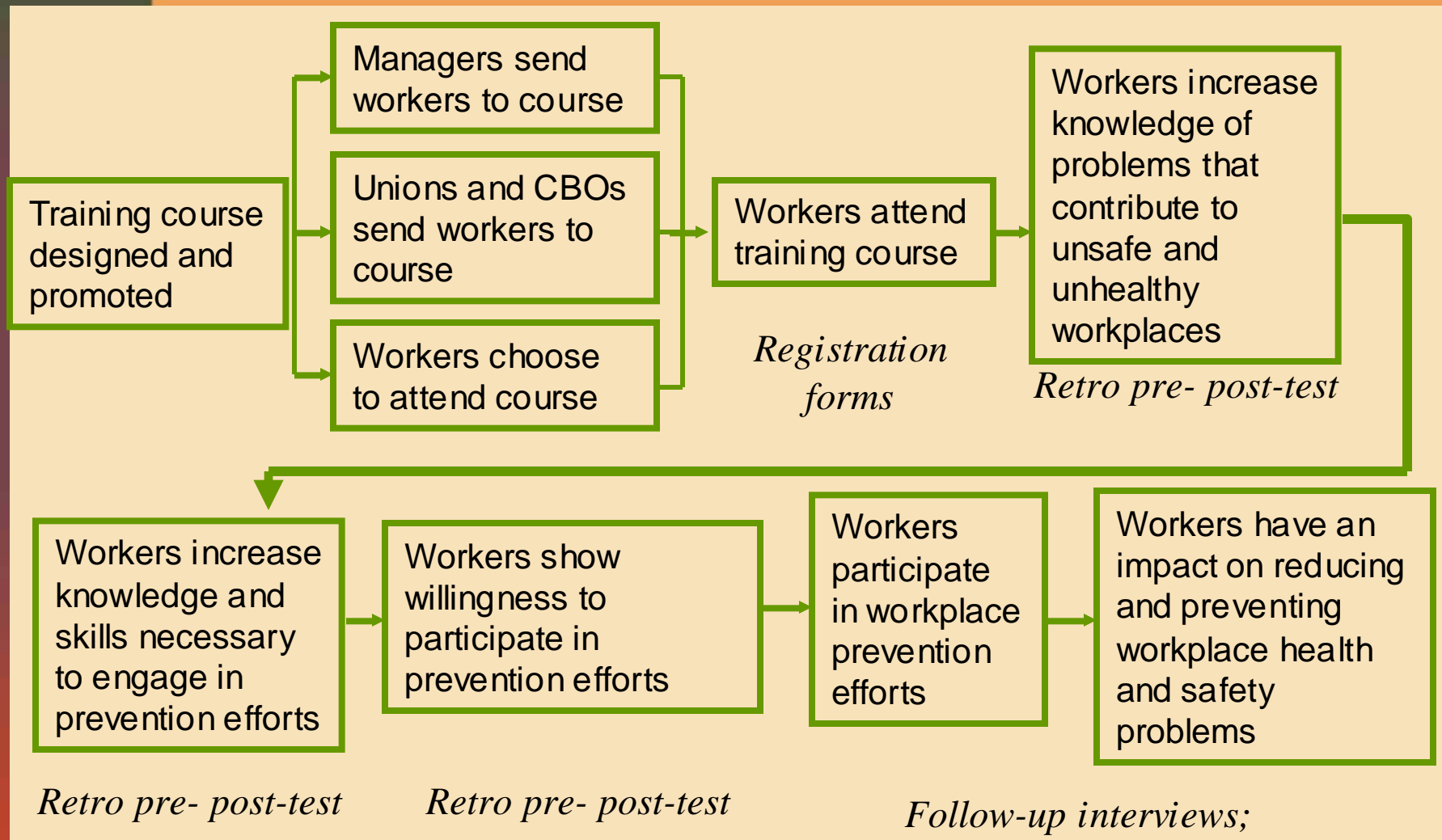
- Are we reaching targeted workers?
- Do course participants feel they are prepared to be worker leaders?
- Are Specialists having an impact in the workplace following the course?

# Evaluation Methods

- **Pre-course information** on employee and worksite characteristics collected from 1,050 Specialists from 57 courses (April 2004-June 2007).
- **Post-training tests** and self-assessment collected from 641 Specialists (Jan. 2006-April 2007). 81% response rate.
- **Follow-up telephone interviews** using a systematic 1-in-3 sample during the evaluation period. 88 interviewees. 63% response rate.

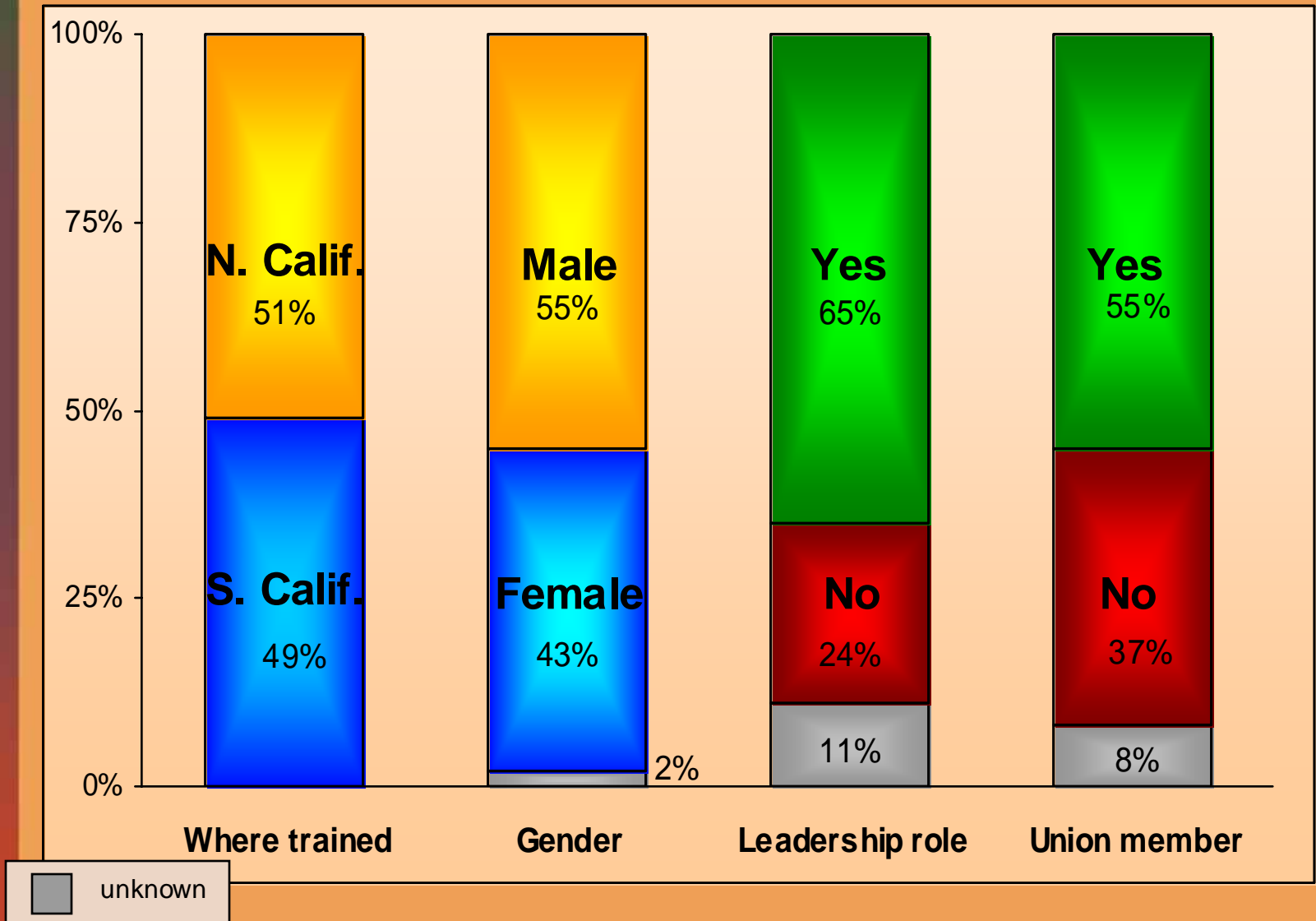
[Data entered by CHSWC staff into a database developed and maintained by CHSWC. Data analyzed by independent program evaluator. All findings are preliminary.]

# WOSHTEP Specialist Course Impact Model



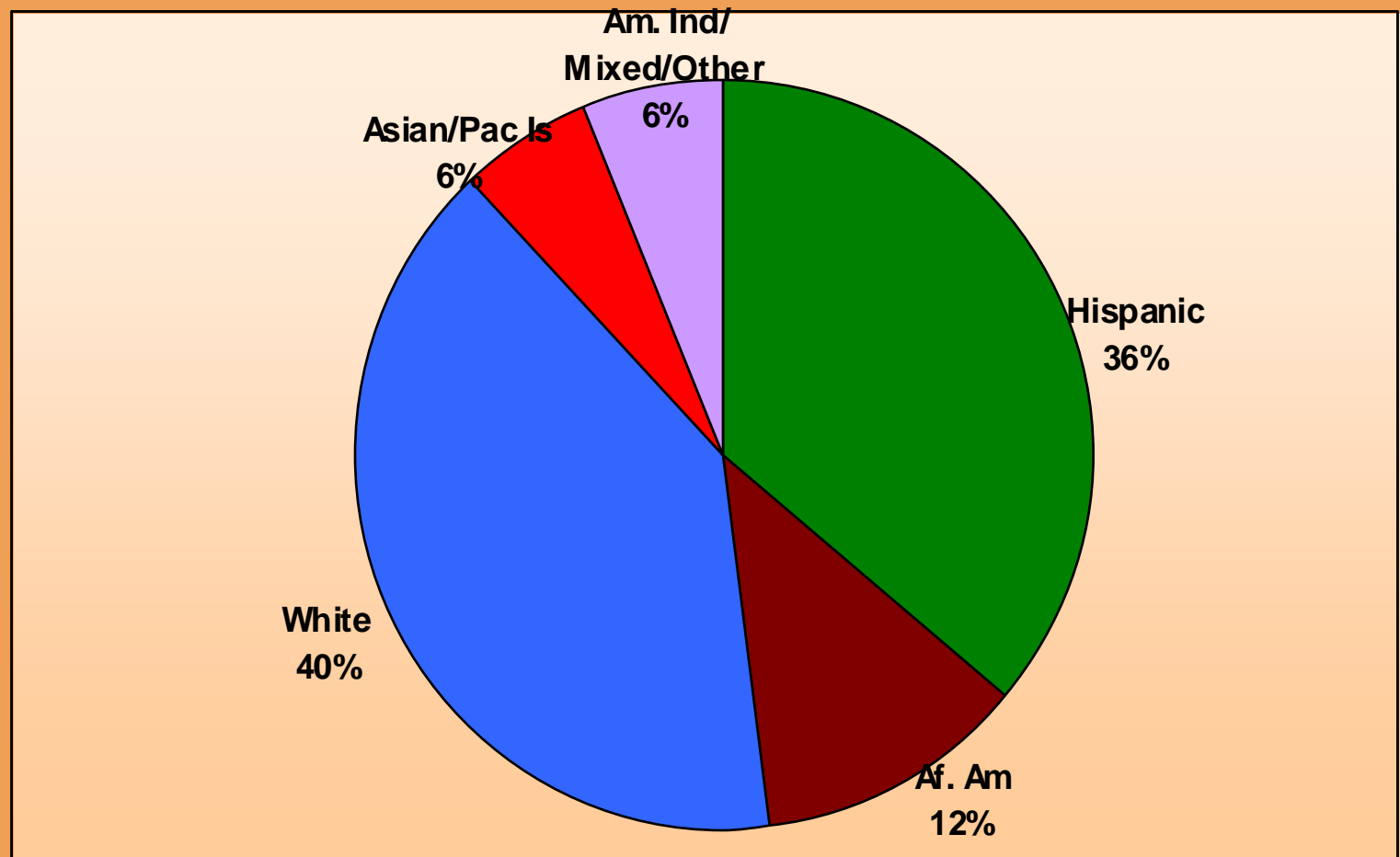


# WOSH Specialist Characteristics



# WOSH Specialist Characteristics

## Race/Ethnicity



# Employer / Workplace Characteristics

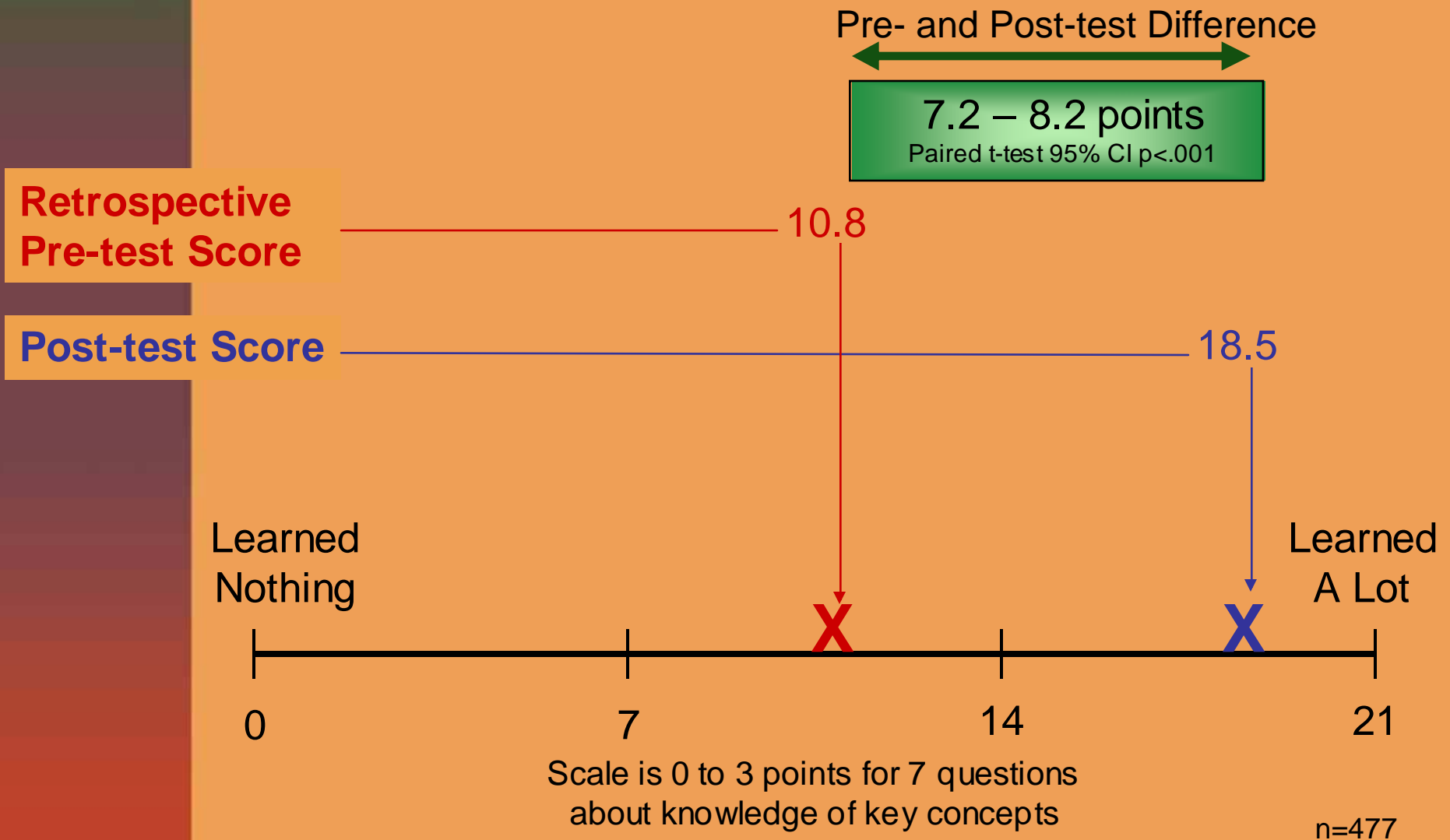
- **Industry Sector:**

- 51% from the public sector:
  - 38% state government
  - 15% local government
- 36% from the private sector.
- 6% from non-profit organizations.

- **Business Size:**

- 18% from small businesses employing fewer than 50 persons.
- 33% from businesses employing 50-999 persons.
- 49% from businesses employing 1000+ persons.

# Changes in Specialists' Knowledge



# Specialists' Readiness to Take Actions

How willing are WOSH Specialists to:	Not at all Willing (1)	(2)	(3)	Very Willing (4)	Mean
Use tools to investigate hazards.			X		3.7
Work with others to identify solutions.				X	3.9
Talk with workers about rights to safe workplace.				X	3.8
Talk with workers about compensation benefits.			X		3.6
Serve as H&S resource.			X		3.7

# Follow-up Interviews with Specialists

- Selection pool for interviews – 641 Specialists (1 in 3)
- Interview questionnaire – open and closed-ended questions
- 63% response rate = 88 interviews conducted

# WOSH Specialists' Activities at Worksite

## In 3 – 6 months following the course:

- 22% - 28% shared materials and tools from the course, such as inspection checklists, fact sheets, hazard maps, and worker health surveys.
- 47% helped improve workers' compensation program and/or assisted injured workers.
- 48% helped investigate injuries or hazardous events.

(n=82-88)

# WOSH Specialists' Activities at Worksite

## In 3 – 6 months following the course:

- 51% helped develop or strengthen their Illness and Injury Prevention Program (Cal/OSHA required)
- 55% provided health and safety training or prevention of injuries and illness training to others.
- 60% served on Health and Safety Committee.
- 63% helped others understand legal rights and responsibilities.

(n=82-88)



# WOSH Specialists' Activities at Worksite

## In 3 – 6 months following the course:

- 85% helped identify hazards and 83% helped control hazards or make the workplace safer.
- 89% talked with employers / supervisors about health and safety and prevention of injuries and illnesses on the job.
- 91% talked with other employees about health and safety and prevention of injuries and illnesses on the job.

(n=82-88)

# Summary of Evaluation Findings

- 1,050 people trained in the past 3+ years from all over the state, from both public and private sectors and from many industries and occupations.
- 85% indicated an increase in knowledge due to the course.
- The average increase in knowledge was both substantial (7 pts on a 21 pt scale) and statistically significant.
- Specialists indicated a high level of willingness to carry out health and safety activities.
- Most Specialists do conduct these tasks, especially identifying hazards and talking with employers and other employees about prevention of illness and injuries on the job.

# Next Steps in the Analysis

- More detailed analysis will take place in the next few months.
- Further areas for analysis and evaluation:
  - What factors in the workplace help or hinder Specialists to be able to take action?
  - To what extent does employer support impact the activities of Specialists?
  - To what extent do health and safety committees make a difference?
  - Are traditionally underserved populations well-served by this program?

# In Summary

