As the owner, manager, or representative of your organization, you have taken some steps to prepare for an emergency. You have joined the Red Cross Ready Rating® program and may have even created an Emergency Action Plan. However, is the rest of your organization ready? Training personnel for the unexpected can be critical to ensuring your organization is truly prepared.

Building awareness among your personnel can get you started. Hang posters which contain critical information, such as an evacuation plan, in a common workspace or break room. Share your Emergency Action Plan during personnel meetings and make sure critical personnel have access to it.

Take 10 to 15 minutes to ask your personnel some questions. For example, do you know where the Emergency Action Plan and contact list are located? What would you do if...? etc. Personnel need to understand if a certain time of year is critical to your business or community, for example, end-of-year, holiday season, tax time or seasonal weather risks like hurricanes, tornadoes, winter storms, or flooding. Most importantly, make sure that all personnel know their role in a crisis.

Beyond building awareness, the best training is experience-based, so practice what you can. Rehearse evacuation or shelter-in-place plans. If your Emergency Action Plan anticipates personnel working from home, have them do so occasionally to see how it works.

A great way to engage personnel is to have them participate in a scenario discussion. Select a particular event like a winter storm. Talk about the resulting impacts on your organization, actions that you and your team would take, and who you need to communicate with. The fact sheets in the [ReadyRating.](http://www.readyrating.ca/)org Resource Center can help get you started.

If you want to do more, test your Emergency Action Plan. It’s the best way to ensure your organization is prepared. A test involves talking through or executing your plan during a simulated event. It trains personnel on what to do in a crisis by actually responding. A test also provides an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and identify any gaps.

Whether building awareness or testing preparedness with your personnel, encourage them to also have a plan for their home and families. You are encouraged to use [ReadyRating.org](http://www.readyrating.org)for information on preparedness, emergency kits and other resources. Your personnel will appreciate your care and concern and you will be better able to support one another when the unexpected occurs.