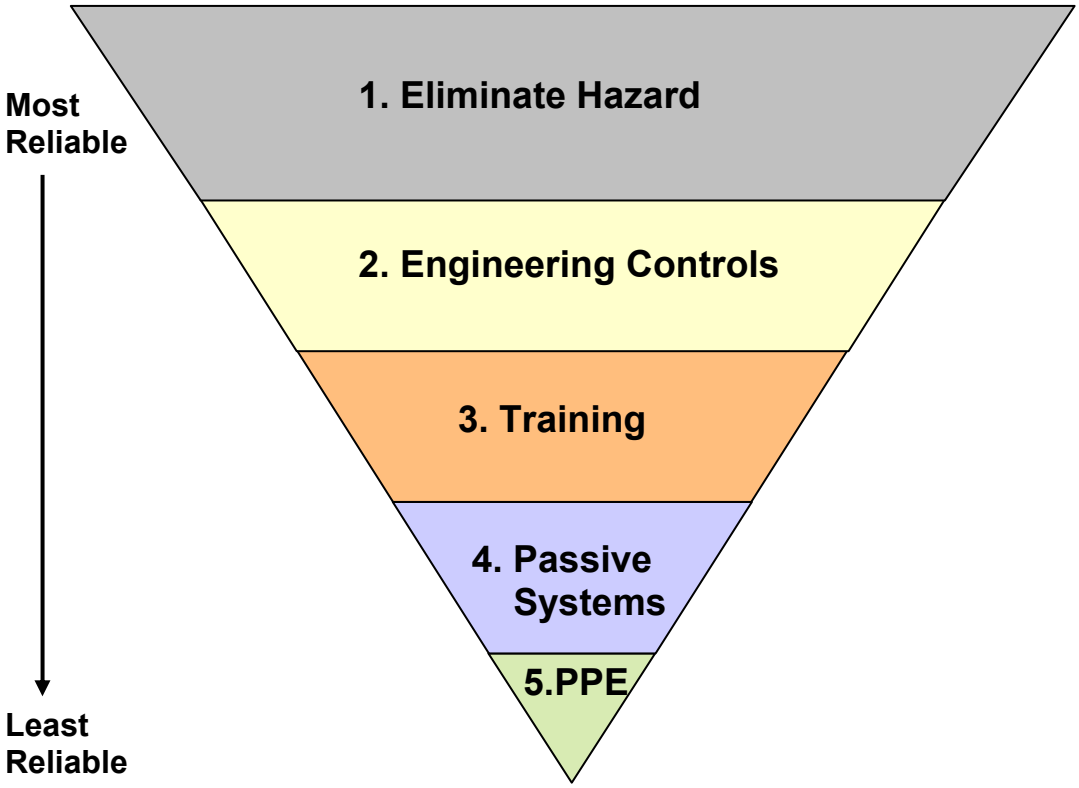
Methods to Reduce Fall Hazards

Fall hazards exist because of the need for workers to perform particular maintenance tasks at a level six feet or higher than the ground or nearest obstruction. Protecting that worker from the fall hazard can take one of the following forms. In order to make the selection process easier, the following Hierarchy of Controls has been developed:

1. **Elimination of the Hazard**
   - This is almost always the most favorable choice because it involves simply eliminating the need for the worker to climb.
   - Can the process be automated by the addition of ground level controls?
   - Does the hazard involved with climbing justify the results gained by the task? These are questions that must be asked by the work team before this option can be selected.
2. **Installation of Passive Fall Protection Systems**
   - Passive Fall Protection Systems are usually the next favorable choice since they eliminates the training of personnel on use of PPE.
   - Examples include permanent walkways, handrails and guardrails
3. **Installation of Active Fall Protection Systems**
   - A common example of an active fall protection system is an anchorage point used in conjunction with a harness and lanyard.
   - Since there is a possibility that a worker may not utilize the Active Fall Protection System when in a hurry or otherwise distracted, this is normally the least desirable option of the three.
   - This often is the only viable choice because of physical space limitations, aesthetic issues or economic constraints.

Hierarchy of Health and Safety Controls

There are five types of fall hazard controls, ranked from most to least reliable:



Whenever performance of any task would allow a worker to fall a distance of six feet or more, or any distance where the likelihood of a serious or fatal injury exists, the hazards of falling must be identified, evaluated and controlled based on the hierarchy of controls.