

Orange County IFMA Roundtable Discussion October 26, 2006

In attendance:

Kay ArDilonge	<i>Kimball Office</i>	Robin DeBaun	<i>KI</i>
Marie Cohen	<i>Fremont</i>	Sharon MacDougall	<i>Kimball Office</i>
Jim VanHoepen	<i>NDS Americas</i>	Teresa Geetersloh	<i>Gensler</i>
Larisa Edwards	<i>Gayle Stewart Enterprises</i>		

In attendance via conference call:

Karen Copeland	Beverly Grow	<i>Evangelical Christian Credit Union</i>
Linda Doheny	Tim Shook	<i>Evangelical Christian Credit Union</i>
Karen Forbes	<i>Veterinary Pet Insurance</i>	Vicky Stiles <i>Avery Dennison Corp</i>

Call to Order

Ron Moyer opened the meeting at 11:30 a.m. sharp. Introductions and interest in attending was explained by each attendee.

Robin DeBaun

Would like to see what companies are interested in and learning how to meet the needs of their employees

Jim VanHoepen

Is now overseeing ergonomics in his office and is looking to refresh ergonomic ideas. Currently has a problem with an employee with back and shoulder problems, the employee has provided a note from the Doctor.

Ron Moyer asked Kay ArDilonge; Are you required to do an evaluation if a note is brought in? Kay ArDilonge responded; Yes, check with the chair manufacture for different chairs. Be sure to evaluate and write everything down. It is required by the state of California to evaluate if a problem is brought in.

Marie Cohen

Works in the manufacturing department and is currently putting an ergonomic policy together, every employee has asked for a different chair. OSHA looks at a manufacturing department harder than a regular office. Every new hire is required to be assessed. Right now assessments are only made if a problem occurs. Maire Cohen is interested to know what others do to create her own policy. Fremont has 5 locations, Marie Cohen manages two. She is currently working with FM's from the other locations to review and create a policy.

Kay ArDilonge

Attending to provide input on Ergonomic practices. Kay is certified through UFC. Ergonomic practices became law in California under Cal-OSHA in 1997.

Sharon MacDougall

Worked with Kay 10 years ago in Ergonomics and is interested to find the hot issues we're now dealing with in Ergonomics.

Karen Copeland

As Facilities Manager, Copeland established an Ergonomic program and policy in her company in 1996. As part of the policy evaluations are done on a case-by-case basis. One chair is standardized to avoid complaint from each employee. Copeland stated the chair and follow-up assessments are the most important.

Viki Stiles

Working to create chair/equipment standards, a policy in presenting techniques and a program to prevent problems from occurring.

Karen Forbes

Currently has an Ergonomic Program. Sheet included in packet provided

Teresa Geetersloh

Following back surgery a year ago Geetersloh is always open to ideas to help improve her back. Currently working with Gensler HR to write up a white paper on the topic for her office.

Linda Doheny

Looking to learn from today's meeting to build a program, implement a policy, program and training at her office.

Review Questions Discussed

Is it necessary to make an individual assessment of every employee?

While Cal-OSHA requires an assessment be made if a problem occurs it is better to assess each employee prior to the problem. The more proactive the better, prevent the problem before it starts, schedule assessments at the hire date, one month later or each quarter. With a program in place problems are less likely to occur.

Have each employee sign off to prove training has been received. This is another form of prevention. If a doctor's note is brought in the company cannot be held responsible with proof of proper training against these problems.

Gensler's program is used with each new hire. The computer program shows each employee how to adjust while working etc. Employees have to sign off however follow-ups are not in place at this time.

If more than one complaint is made at once OSHA requires assessments to be made on all employees in that department. Once this trigger is hit each assessment must be documented.

What is involved in an Ergonomic Assessment?

Start from the bottom up. Start with the chair seat, height and arms; get them to us the chair adjustment and the back of the chair. Go to the work surface, then the display terminal. Emphasize movement to break the 8-hour day cycle. It is always wise to have a manager present to make sure another set of eyes is aware the assessment occurred.

Each assessment should take 10-15 minutes. Take pictures to show how the employee was sitting and a second picture at the follow-up assessment to see any improvement. Surgery's and doctor's appointments have been cancelled because the correct training was implemented. Karen suggested applying a program similar to an instant message, each hour or so a message pops up with a reminder to move some part of your body.

Where can I purchase Ergonomic equipment other than chairs?

Office supply stores, KI offers supplies such as tables and chairs, Kimball Office is expanding Ergonomic supply offerings.

Kimball Office

Ergonomic support tools; http://www.kimballoffice.com/products_net/systems/index.aspx Click on Lighting & Accessories for a general overview.

Ergonomic seating; http://www.kimballoffice.com/products_net/seating/index.aspx Click on High Performance Task Seating.

Contact Sharon MacDougall for more specific information about keyboard accessory offerings. smacdou@kimball.com 714-343-8084

How many adjustments are recommended for a true Ergonomic chair and what are they?

It's not the number of adjustments, it's the chair involved. In each assessment the arm width and height, pan depth, back, lumbar and height all need to be evaluated and adjusted.

The assessment teaches the employee to adjust all the measurements to create that "neutral position".

A pamphlet or CD from the manufacture should be available with each chair purchased.

Is there a Template available for my company to use for Ergonomic Assessments?

Templates and videos for policy's can be found on OSHA's website. (*see below*) Crystal Olivar with Veterinary Pet Insurance (*see attached*) and Teresa Geetersloh with Gensler have offered their template as well. (*see below*)

OSHA website <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/index.html>

Assessment Template <http://www.lib.msu.edu/ergomsu/images/wrkstation.jpg>

Stretching Tips <http://www.paratec.com/>

Are there Companies available to provide Ergonomic Assessments with out purchasing furniture?

Yes. Service charges are usually around \$150 an hour. This is a minimal cost compared to the \$150,000 for a claim.

Karen Copeland, CFM (Ret.) is available to perform office ergonomic assessments in the San Diego/Orange County areas. Contact information: mkcopeland@uci.net or (541) 347-1761 or leave a message with Ron Moyer's office (714) 996-6800.

Humanscale handles assessments and training for manufacturing companies.

Irvine location

535 Anton Blvd Ste 160

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

714-430-6850

Most health providers offer assessment services

If a complaint is received regarding pain in any body part, is it too late to do an Ergonomic Assessment?

No. That is when most companies do them, but it is better to prevent the complaints or injuries. The goal is to teach the warning signs.

If I have less than 100 employees, do I still need to have an Ergonomic Assessment program?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of employees. You want each employee to be comfortable and learn the techniques to take responsibility of themselves.

How often do I need to repeat an Ergonomic Assessment of my employees?

In a perfect world assessments would occur when the employee begins working for the company and every six months to evaluate. In a large company it is common and more practical to teach department managers to train their employees.

Ergonomic tips can be sent out each month to remind employees how to stretch or move throughout the day to avoid injuries. Tips can be found and subscribed for at www.ctdnews.com

Karen made rule for assessments to be made one month after hire date. This allows the employee to be settled into their job a bit and retain the information.

If employees only work on computers for 2 hours a day, do I need to do an assessment?

According to OSHA's site assessments are only required for employees working at the computer for more than four hours each day.

The reason for proper Ergonomics is to avoid the body staying in one position for an extended period of time. This not only creates injury but causes the body to become tired. Movement is the only way the spinal cord replenishes nourishment to your organs. Without it the body becomes tired, in turn decreasing productivity.

How do you handle employees working at home? Do you provide Ergonomic accessories, chairs and assessments?

Ergonomic accessories do not have to be provided. Most employees at home are responsible for their work station. The best thing to do is offer the information and tips and encourage them to abide by them.

Meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

Additional Ergonomic sites

Alan Hedge <http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/>

ERGO Conference <http://www.ergoexpo.com/index.asp>