



1. Involve Employees

2. Find Hazards

3. Assess Hazards

4. Fix Hazards

5. Check for Success

Step 1: Involve Employees

Employees play an important role in an ergonomics process. Involving your employees at each step of your ergonomics journey is key to its success.

Why involve your employees?

- They know the most about their jobs.
- They feel the effects of the work on their bodies, and can tell you what tasks take the most effort, are tiring, or cause pain.
- They may already have ideas for ways to make the work safer and easier to do.
- People often resist change. Employees are most likely to use the solutions that they took part in creating.

Training your employees on basic ergonomics will give them the knowledge and skills to more effectively help with all of the steps in this process.

Training your employees

- Train each employee involved with your ergonomics process.

Schedule time for your supervisors and employees to take L&I's on-line [Using Ergonomics to Prevent Sprains and Strains](#) and [Ergonomics Essentials](#) courses. Include time for activities (see sidebar) and group discussion on how the training applies at your organization.

It is recommended that you keep records of this training.

GETTING EMPLOYEE INPUT DURING TRAINING

Training sessions are a great opportunity to begin involving employees in your ergonomics process. You can add one or more of these activities to training sessions to make the training livelier and get a head start on Step 2:

- Body mapping – a quick way to visualize the effect of work on employees' bodies.
- Hazard mapping – employees sketch their work area and label hazards.
- “Yellow sticky” exercise – employees write their main concerns on sticky notes, which are then grouped into categories and voted on to help select priorities.

Instructions for these activities are in the Appendix.



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Other ways you can involve your employees

- Select an employee to be an “ergo” champion.

An ergo champion can help keep your ergonomics process on track, encourage employees to be involved, and follow-up on fixes.

An ergo champion should have additional ergonomics training to be the most effective. A course on ergonomics is typically available from the [OSHA Training Institute](#). You can also [contact L&I’s Ergonomics program](#) for more recommendations.

- Create an “ergo” team.

Another way to involve your employees is to create a team to lead your ergonomics process. The ergo team should consist of employees that be might affected by changes to the tasks and workplace. These could include supervisors and employees that work in the area, and your facilities and maintenance teams.

- Talk about ergonomics during safety committee meetings.

Add ergonomics to the agenda for all safety committee meetings. A standing agenda item will help employees remember to bring up ergonomics concerns and remind them to think about ergonomics when reviewing incident reports.

Next Step

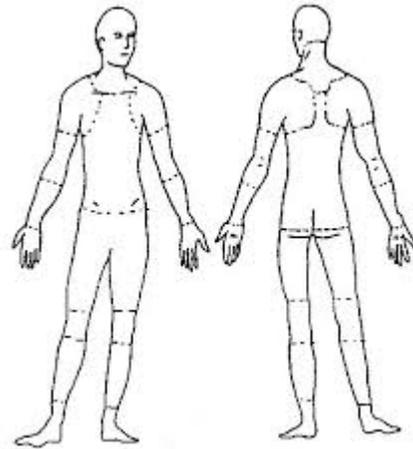
Now that your employees are trained in basic ergonomics, you are ready for them to move to [Step 2](#).

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Appendix: Training Activities

Body Mapping

- Sketch the outline of both sides of the body on a white board or large sheet of paper. You can use the illustration to the right as an example to work from. Try to make the drawing large enough to be seen from across the room, and don't worry if it's not perfect.
- Have small groups of employees come up to the body map, and use markers or sticky dots to mark areas where they've felt discomfort when working. Employees should crowd around the body map and move quickly, which gives each of them some anonymity.
- After everyone has placed their marks, use the body map to start a conversation about common areas of discomfort, and the types of work that might be the cause.



Hazard Mapping

- Have employees sketch the hazards in their work area. You can have them do this individually or as a group.
- Next, have them label and describe the hazards, and list any solutions they can think of. You can then have employees share their maps and discuss solutions.

Hazard Map	#	Hazard Description	Possible Solutions
	1	Puddle by water cooler	Floor drain Paper towel dispenser
	2	Heavy boxes on high shelves in storage area	Rearrange storage Use cart to move boxes

There's a blank hazard map on the next page.

"Yellow Sticky" Exercise

- Hand out stacks of sticky notes to employees. Have them write down the concerns they have about their jobs, one per sticky note.
- Place the sticky notes on a table or up on a wall. Group similar concerns together.
- Have employees look at all of the concerns, and then vote on their top priorities to be fixed.

Hazard Map

Sketch each of the hazards in your work area below. Number each hazard, and then describe it in the column to the right. List any solutions you can think of in the next column over.	Hazard Number and Description	Possible Solutions