

**Readiness and Resource Self-Assessment Checklist**

|  |  | Yes | No | Not Sure |
|--|--|-----|----|----------|
| <b>Senior Management Commitment</b>  | a) Senior management is willing to commit to a participatory safety, health and wellness program for 9-12 months.  |     |    |          |
| <b>Form a Design Team</b><br><b>(choose one from this list—b, c, d)</b>        | b) Front-line employees are willing and able to form a Design Team that meets at least once a month for two hours.   |     |    |          |
|  | c) My organization is not willing to form a Design Team, but there is an existing committee that can serve as a Design Team.   |     |    |          |
|  | d) My organization has not yet committed to any type of a Design Team. We may prefer to form a single, multi-level Design Team/Steering Committee. <i>*if yes, g will also be yes</i>        |     |    |          |
| <b>Form a Steering Committee</b><br><b>(choose one from this list—e, f, g)</b> | e) My organization is willing to allow management to form a Steering Committee that meets regularly.   |     |    |          |
|  | f) My organization is not willing to form a Steering Committee, but an existing committee is willing and able to serve as a Steering Committee.  |     |    |          |
|  | g) My organization has not yet committed to any type of a Steering Committee. We may prefer to form a single, multi-level Steering Committee/Design Team. <i>*if yes, d will also be yes</i> |     |    |          |
| <b>Identify a Facilitator</b>  | h) An employee with group facilitation skills is available and willing to serve as a Program Facilitator.  |     |    |          |
| <b>Availability of Resources</b>   | i) Funds and other resources are available to support safety, wellness or health activities.   |     |    |          |
| <b>Participatory Culture</b>   | j) Within my organization, the current managerial culture often encourages all employees to get involved in making decisions.  |     |    |          |
| <b>Organizational Communication</b>  | k) Within my organization, management communicates frequently with all employees about resources, programs and policies affecting the workforce.   |     |    |          |
| <b>Subject Knowledge</b>   | l) In my organization, there are employees with expertise in ergonomics, occupational safety, or health and wellness.  |     |    |          |
| <b>Existing Program Capacity</b>   | m) My organization has well-developed programs in safety, ergonomics, or wellness/health promotion.  |     |    |          |

## **Response Guide**

### **Senior Management Commitment**

#### **a) “Senior management is willing to commit to a participatory safety, health and wellness program for 9-12 months” –**

**YES** – You are ready in this area. Having senior manager commitment over the long term is vital for program success. Participatory programs work best when front-line employees collaborate with management in identifying health, wellness and safety issues, and in planning appropriate interventions. Some time will be required to initiate the program and train participants, so they know their roles and can function effectively. The time is well worth the investment.

**NO** – This is an area you will need to work on before proceeding with the program. You can build readiness by taking time to gain management support. Meet with management and discuss the benefits of a participatory safety, health and wellness program. The Toolkit includes informational material to help you make a business case for this program.

### **Forming a Design Team**

#### **b) “Front-line employees are willing and able to form a Design Team that meets at least once a month for two hours.” –**

**YES** – You are ready in this area. Having a Design Team of front-line employees is a crucial component of a successful participatory safety, health and wellness program. The team will need to meet frequently in the initial phases of the program. They will need time to become trained in their roles, and to focus on jump-starting their work. Be prepared to provide work time for the Design Team to meet as often as they need to do so. Long periods between meetings could slow the process and disrupt momentum.

**NO** – This is an area you need to work on before implementing the program. Participatory programs require employee involvement during work time. If organizational barriers make this difficult, work with management to remove those barriers. For instance, if lack of managerial buy-in is the problem, talk with your managers about the benefits of a participatory program, the key role of a line-level Design Team, and the importance of regular meetings. If time or scheduling constraints prevent the Design Team from meeting regularly, engage management in brainstorming organizationally appropriate solutions (e.g., amending employee schedules to accommodate regular meetings).

#### **YES to c) “My organization is not willing to form a Design Team, but there is an existing committee that can serve as a Design Team” –**

Your organization may still benefit from a modified version of the participatory program. However, the existing committee should include at least some line-level workers who can directly speak to the workplace health concerns of the broader workforce. Acting as a Design Team, this existing committee can be trained to use program tools to achieve a healthier workplace. For example, the committee may use the Intervention Planning Tool to identify health and safety issues affecting front-line workers, as well as to propose appropriate solutions to management.

**YES to d) “My organization has not yet committed to any type of a Design Team. We may prefer to form a single, multi-level Design Team/Steering Committee.”**

If you choose to merge the Design Team and Steering Committee into one multi-level group, the challenge will be to ensure that both line-level employees and management have an equal say in selecting health and safety issues, and that both sides are equally active in designing interventions. The program facilitator can play a key role here. It will be his/her job to keep the discussion all-inclusive and productive. For this reason, it is important to have a neutral (non-biased), skilled facilitator who is credible and trusted at all levels of the organization.

### **Forming a Steering Committee**

**e) “My organization is willing to allow management to form a Steering Committee that meets regularly” –**

**YES-** You are ready in this area. Support from managers within the Steering Committee is crucial for guiding program decisions, facilitating resources for planning and interventions, and aligning the proposed interventions with the mission and goals of the organization.

**NO-** You will need to build readiness in this area. Talk with your managers about the benefits of a participatory program, the key role of a Steering Committee, and the importance of regular meetings. If employee time is the problem, discuss whether an existing committee of decision-makers can undertake the role of Steering Committee.

**YES to f) “My organization is not willing to form a Steering Committee, but an existing committee is willing and able to serve as a Steering Committee.”**

Your organization may be ready in this area. However, the existing committee must be trained to collaborate with the Design Team to achieve a healthier workplace. Using the Intervention Planning Tool, this committee can consider the Design Team’s proposed interventions, and work to implement them as appropriate.

**YES to g) “My organization has not yet committed to any type of a Steering Committee. We may prefer to form a single, multi-level Steering Committee/Design Team.”**

If you choose to merge the Design Team and Steering Committee into one multi-level group, the challenge will be to ensure that both line-level employees and management have an equal say in selecting health and safety issues, and that both sides are equally active in designing interventions. The program facilitator can play a key role here. It will be his/her job to keep the discussion all-inclusive and productive. For this reason, it is important to have a neutral (non-biased), skilled facilitator who is credible and trusted at all levels of the organization.

## Identifying a Facilitator

### h) “In my organization, line-level workers have access to channels for communication with management”

**YES** - You are ready in this area. The success of the participatory program depends on an impartial, tactful facilitator who can promote communication between the Design Team and Steering Committee. Having an employee with these skills is an advantage for your company, because it enables you to recruit a facilitator internally, rather than hiring one from the outside. Be sure that the facilitator is properly trained in his role as a neutral agent and promoter of productive collaboration.

**NO**- You will need to build readiness in this area. The success of the participatory program depends on an impartial, tactful facilitator who can promote communication between the Design Team and Steering Committee. Consider training an internal employee in facilitation skills using our *Identify and Train a Facilitator*, as well as third-party resources such as the International Association of Facilitators. Alternately, you may recruit an expert facilitator externally, from a consulting firm or a professional organization.

## Availability of Resources

### i) “Within my organization, line-level workers communicate frequently with management.”

**YES** – You are ready in this area. This is a significant advantage, because it could allow the participatory program to produce tangible, beneficial results. For this to happen, management must be willing to use available resources in support of the participatory program. The Steering Committee and Design Team should collaborate in deciding how to funnel funds and resources into each intervention.

**NO**- You will need to build readiness in this area. Talk with upper management about the benefits of promoting a healthy workplace: improved productivity, fewer sick days, cost savings on workers’ compensation claims, reduced employee turnover, increased company loyalty, etc. In particular, focus on a participatory health and wellness program as an efficient and effective way to promote workplace wellness. For helpful materials, see our *Gather Management Input and Support* and *The Science behind the Program* pages.

## Participatory Culture

### j) – “Within my organization, the current managerial culture often encourages all employees to get involved in making decisions”

**YES**- You are ready in this area. Since the Healthy Workplace Participatory Program depends on employee participation, it will be very helpful to already have a participatory culture in your organization. Consider this program an opportunity to expand and formalize your organization's policy on participatory decision-making.

**NO-** You will need to build readiness in this area. We have found that employee participation brings innovation and positive organizational change. This program can help you train line-level employees in the skills that lead to innovative ideas. It can also orient middle and upper-level managers to the value of input from the front-lines, so that they begin to support employee participation.

Middle and upper-level managers should be trained on:

- The value of line-level participation. For training materials in this area, see our pages on Why a Participatory Approach and Gathering Management Input and Support.
- Management's role in accepting proposals from front line workers and working together from concept to implementation. Please see the Form a Steering Committee page.

Design Team should be trained on:

- The basics of health and safety, so they can incorporate this knowledge into designing interventions. See our Form a Design Team page for resources.
- The use of the assessment tools in this website, in order to ensure that proposed interventions are aligned with business goals (i.e., health and safety, but also cost). To see the available assessment tools, visit this web page Identify Health and Safety Priorities.

## **Organizational Communication**

**k) – “Within my organization, management communicates frequently with all employees about resources, programs and policies affecting the workforce.**

**YES-** You are ready in this area. We suggest you announce the new participatory program to all employees once you have formed a Steering Committee. Outline the goals and timeline for the program, and give as much information as possible about committee members. We suggest you announce the names of Design Team members when they are recruited, so that the general workforce will know to whom they should address health, safety and wellness concerns.

In addition, consider empowering the Design Team to send communications about:

- Health, safety and wellness issues the Design Team is working on,
- Steering Committee decisions about implementation of Design Team ideas,
- Changes in policies and procedures that impact health, safety, ergonomics, or overall well-being in the workplace.

**NO-** You will need to build readiness in this area. Communication is crucial for a healthy workplace. If your organization wishes to improve in this area, consider the participatory program as an opportunity to establish new communication channels.

Here are some ideas for using the participatory program as an occasion to improve communication in your organization:

- Publicize the names of Design Team members so that employees can directly communicate with the Design Team about issues they wish to see addressed. The Design Team can then take up these issues and present them before the Steering Committee in the course of the participatory program.
- Educate the workforce on the roles of the Design Team, and encourage them to discuss issues of workplace health via email.
- Send out regular updates to the entire workforce, informing them of the work of the Design Team, and highlighting available health, safety and wellness resources.

Here are some ideas for supporting and improving communications within the participatory program itself. Please note that communication between the Design Team and Steering Committee is key to the success of the participatory program.

- Establish an email distribution list between the Design Team and Steering Committee. The list can be used to communicate updates in the participatory process and schedule joint meetings.
- Create opportunities for direct dialogue between the two committees. For instance, schedule periodic joint meetings between the Design Team and Steering Committee, and create a process for both committees to contribute agenda items. Alternatively, the Steering Committee might plan to sit in on Design Team meetings or working groups periodically.
- Further encourage communication by selecting a facilitator with outstanding interpersonal and communication skills – an individual who will promote the smooth flow of ideas between line-level workers and management.

## Subject Knowledge

**I) – " In my organization, there are employees with expertise in ergonomics, occupational safety, or health and wellness."**

**YES-** You are ready in this area. The Design Team and Steering Committee can draw on internal experts when creating and implementing interventions. Subject matter experts can be found either within your organization or through vendors or community organizations willing to act as advisors. If expertise comes from non-managerial employees, these individuals should be included in the Design Team. If the expertise comes from management, the experts should be invited to participate in the Steering Committee.

**NO-** You will need to build readiness in this area. To help you build the organization's knowledge in these areas, make use of the committees of the participatory program. For example, the Steering Committee can organize health, safety and wellness training sessions for the Design Team, and if desired, for the workforce at large. Training material can be found online, or requested from vendor providers (health insurers, universities, and other public and private organizations focused on health and safety).

## Existing Program Capacity

**m)- “My organization has well-developed programs in safety, ergonomics, or wellness/health promotion.”**

**YES-** Your organization has a reservoir of specialized knowledge in ergonomics, health, wellness or safety. Ergonomics, health, wellness or safety experts should be invited to participate in the design team and steering committee; and persons with facilitation skills should be invited to fill the role of facilitator. In this way, the design team and steering committee can draw on the maximum available knowledge when making their decisions and implementing solutions.

**NO-** Your organization should consider the participatory program an opportunity to build the organization’s knowledge in these areas. For example, as part of the participatory program, you could coordinate training sessions for your employees. The Steering Committee could take responsibility for identifying training resources for themselves, for Design Team members, and for the general workforce. Training resources are available online, or from vendor providers such as health insurers, universities and other public and private organizations focused on health and safety.