

Lecture Title: Health and Safety Essentials

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Date: 24th October 2025



Award in Office Management and
Administration Fundamentals

Course content

- Introduction to OHS
- What are Safety Management Systems
- Legislation
- Hazards & Risks
- Risk Assessment
- Most common Office-related hazards
 - Ergonomics
 - Layout
 - Lighting
 - Air Quality
 - Noise
 - Storage
 - Electrical Equipment
- Fire & Emergency
- Legionella control



Why Health & Safety?



We work to live and not live to work



We all deserve to go back home health and safe

What is Health and Safety?

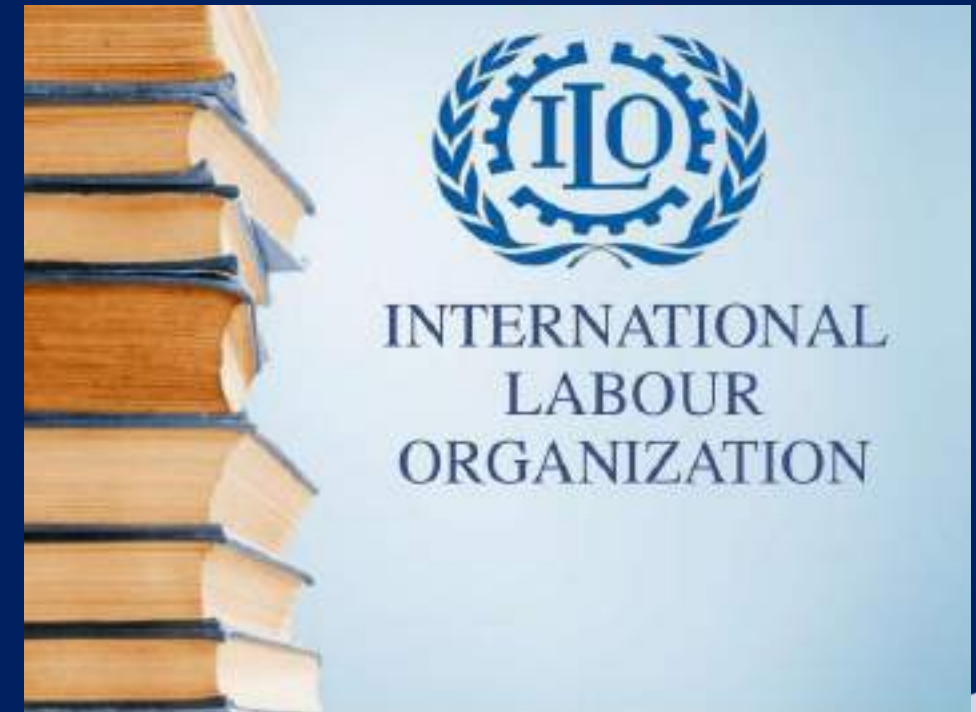
OHS is a condition free from the risks of injury, harm or loss. This condition is to be achieved and not a natural state of affairs.

ILO: Occupational safety and health (OSH or also OHS) is generally defined as the science of the anticipation, recognition, evaluation and control of hazards arising in or from the workplace that could impair the health and well-being of workers, taking into account the possible impact on the surrounding communities and the general environment.



ILO

- The ILO Constitution sets forth the principle that workers must be protected from sickness, disease and injury arising from their employment.
- Yet for millions of workers the reality is very different.



Managing health & safety - SMS

- What is a Safety Management System (SMS)?

A Safety Management System (SMS) is a systematic approach used by organisations to manage safety, including the necessary organizational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures. It provides a framework for proactively identifying, evaluating, and controlling risks to ensure a safe working environment. The goal of an SMS is to prevent accidents, injuries, and health hazards in the workplace by integrating safety management into every part of an organisation's operations.

Benefits of SMS

- **Proactive Risk Management:** SMS helps to identify hazards and prevent accidents before they happen, rather than reacting after incidents occur.
- **Legal Compliance:** Ensures that the organisation complies with relevant safety regulations and standards.
- **Improved Safety Culture:** Promotes a culture where safety is a priority at all levels of the organisation.
- **Cost Reduction:** Preventing accidents reduces costs associated with injuries, damages, and lost productivity.
- **Enhanced Employee Morale:** A safe work environment leads to greater employee satisfaction and productivity.



Safety Management Systems



Do not forget to think and plan for

- Control of contractors
 - Maintenance
 - Repairs
 - Permit To Work (PTW) systems
 - To be inducted
- Visitors
 - To be inducted
- Employees working off-site
 - Visiting/meeting clients
 - Driver/messengers
 - Company errands



OHS Legislation

- Malta – Cap. 646 The Health and Safety at Work Act.

<https://www.ohsa.mt/legislation>

- Act 33 of 2024 – Over 20 Legal Notices/Regulations
 - L.N. 43 of 2002 – Minimum Requirements for Display Screen Equipment
 - L.N. 44 of 2002 – Minimum Workplace Requirements
 - L.N. 36 of 2003 – General Provisions
 - Others... e.g. First aid, Maternity, Young Persons, Protection of Back Injuries, Chemicals, Signs, and many more.
- EU health and safety (H&S) legislation includes the Framework Directive 89/391/EEC, which establishes minimum safety and health requirements across all sectors, and is supported by numerous individual directives on specific risks like noise, chemicals, and workplace requirements. These directives provide a legal framework and set minimum standards that all member states must transpose into national law.
- <https://osha.europa.eu/en/safety-and-health-legislation>



Who is Responsible?

Onus on employer

- The most in control
- Identify, evaluate, ensure adequate protection, inform, monitor...

Employee is obliged to cooperate with the employer

- Including reporting to the employer if something is wrong
- Right to know
- Right to participate

Legal duty

- Criminal Law
- Civil Law

Moral Duty

Hazards & Risks

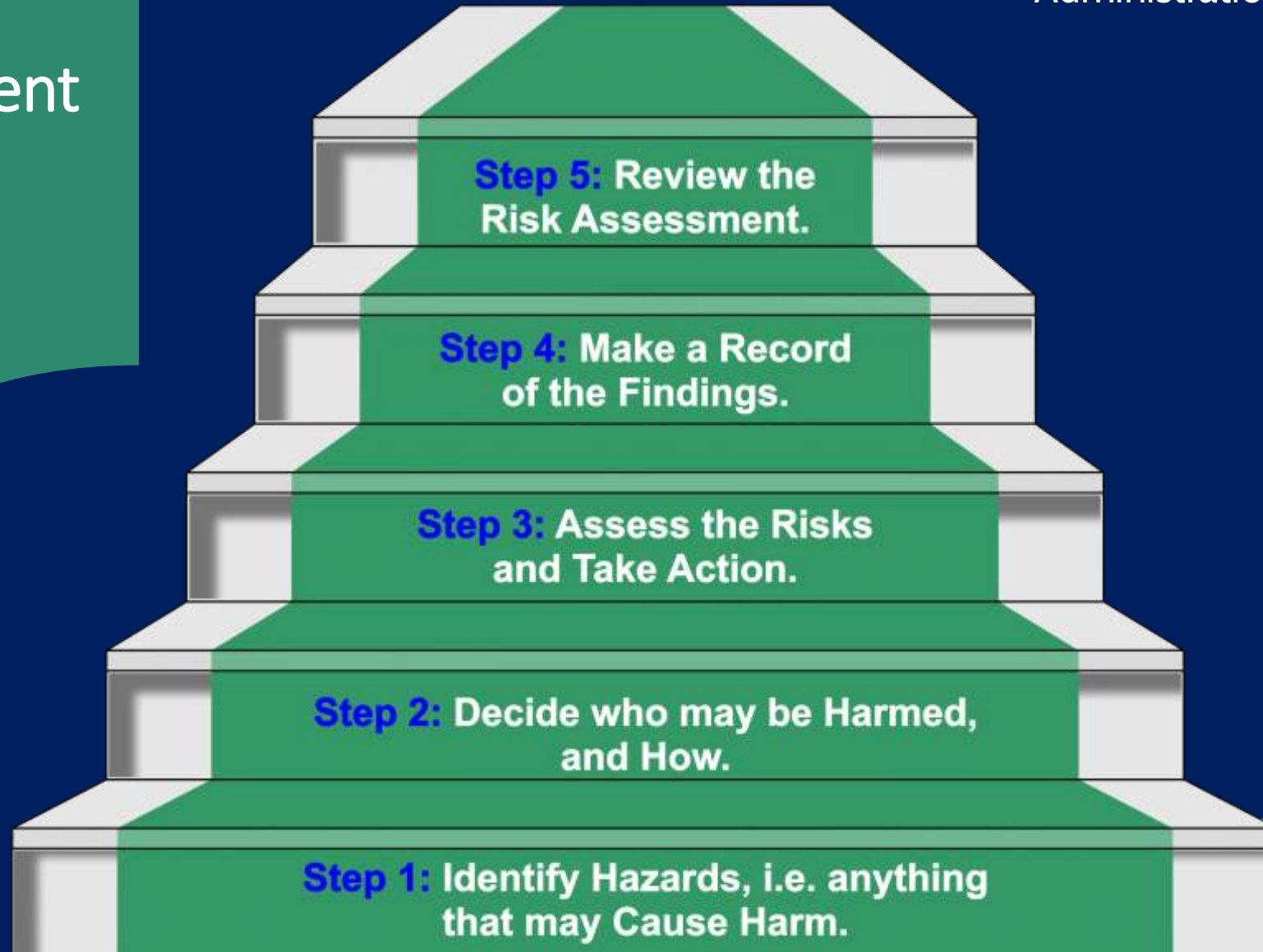
- A hazard is any source of potential damage, harm or adverse health effects on something or someone.
- Risk is the chance or probability that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard. It may also apply to situations with property or equipment loss, or harmful effects on the environment.



Hazard classifications

A common way to classify hazards is by category	
biological	- bacteria, viruses, insects, plants, birds, animals, and humans, etc.,
chemical	- depends on the physical, chemical and toxic properties of the chemical,
ergonomic	- repetitive movements, improper set up of workstation, etc.,
physical	- radiation, magnetic fields, pressure extremes (high pressure or vacuum), noise, etc.,
psychosocial	- stress, violence, etc.,
safety	- slipping/tripping hazards, inappropriate machine guarding, equipment malfunctions or breakdowns

Risk Assessment – 5 Steps



How to risk assess - Quantitative

Consequences

Score	1	2	3	4	5
Description	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Example	Minor injury, no first aid required	Harmful injury (first aid required, under 3 days recovery time)	Serious injury, medical assistance required. Injury must be reported	Major injury, urgent medical assistance required	Fatality

Likelihood

Score	1	2	3	4	5
Description	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain

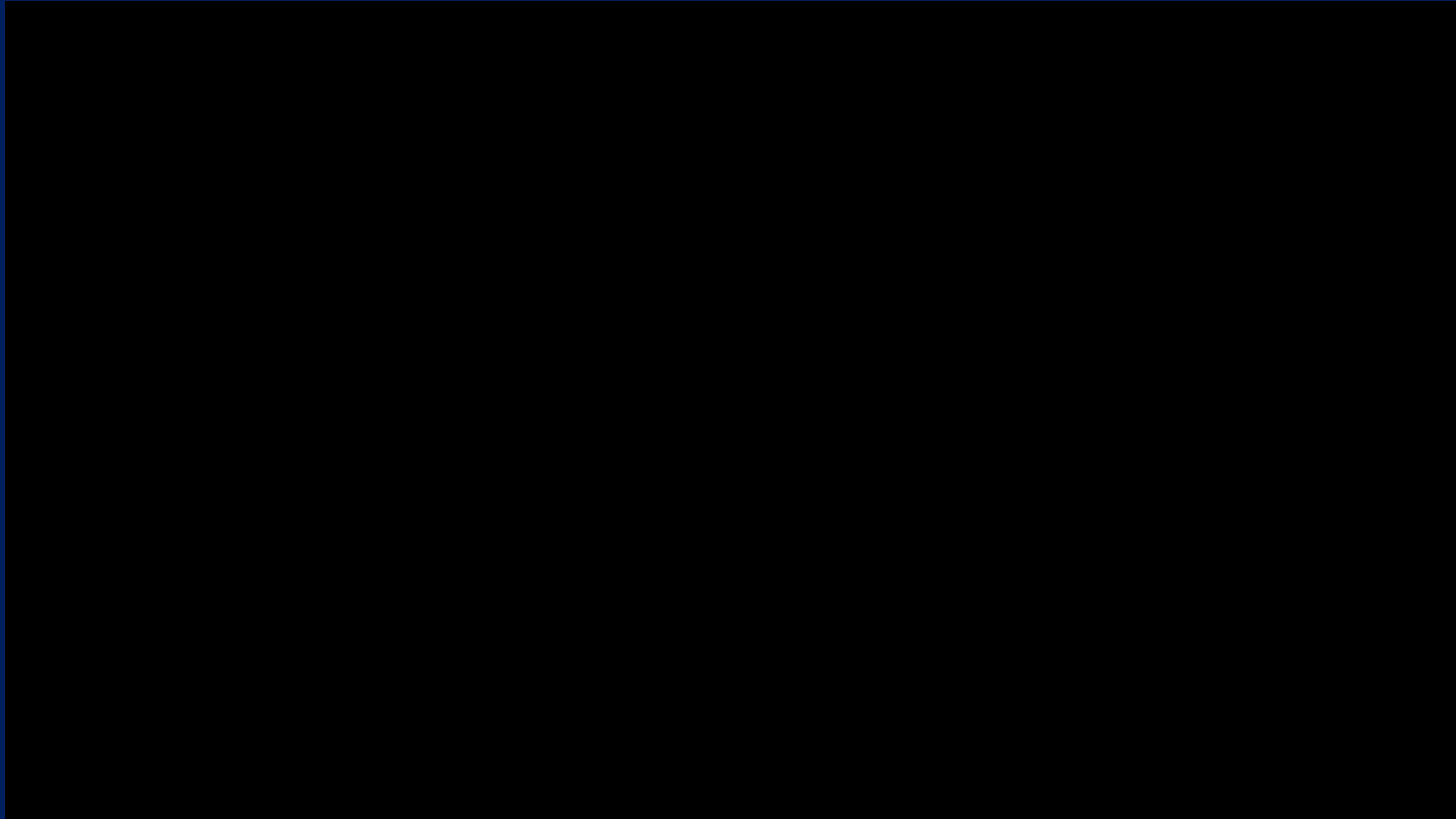
Risk matrix

Consequences / Impact	Catastrophic	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Major	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Minor	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Insignificant	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Possible	4 Likely	5 Almost certain
Likelihood / Probability							

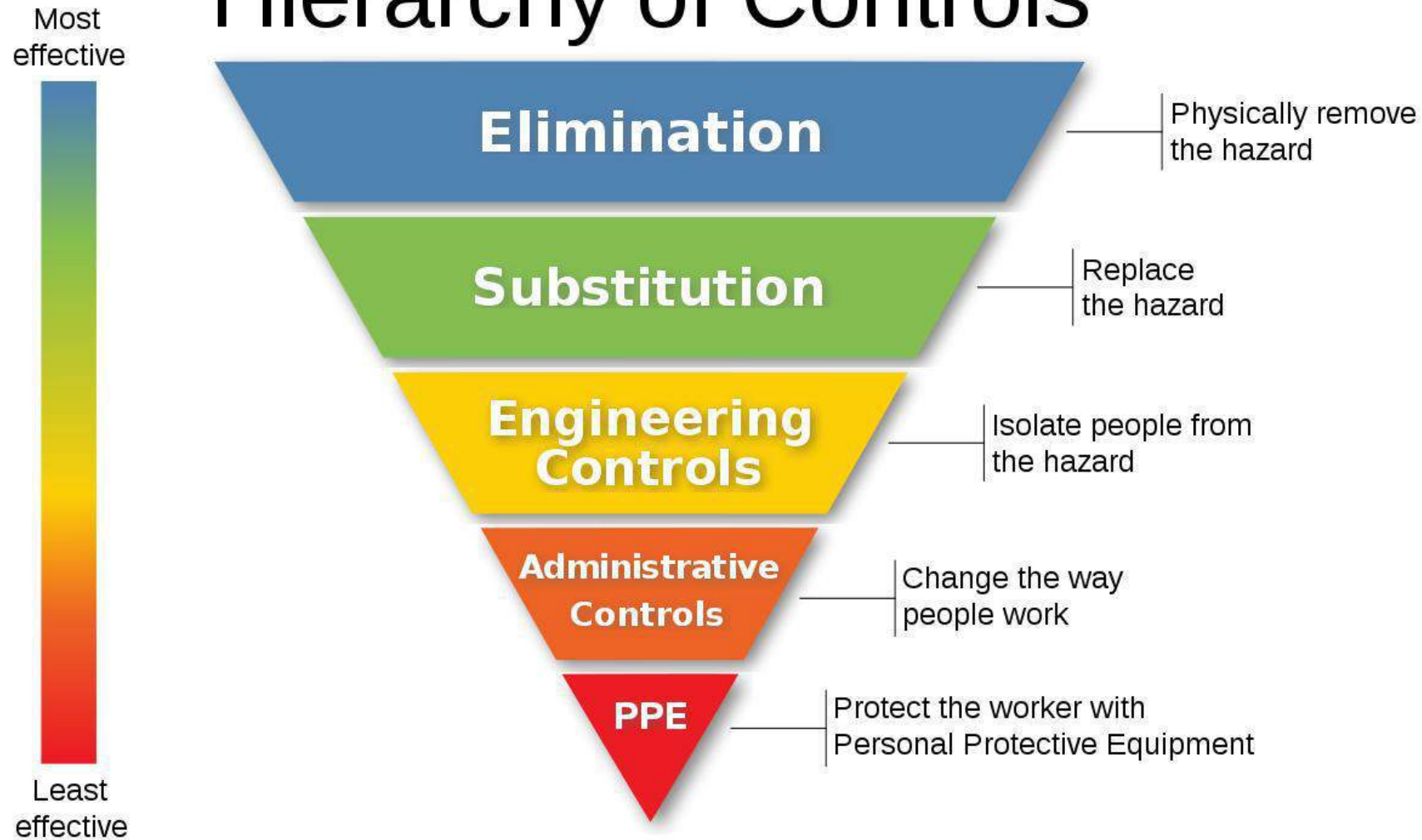
The Risk Matrix explained



EU-OSHA OIRA Tool <https://oiraproject.eu/en/oira-tools>



Hierarchy of Controls





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Common hazards in the office

- Ergonomics
- Layout
- Lighting
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Storage
- Electrical Equipment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgFrA9-kks4>

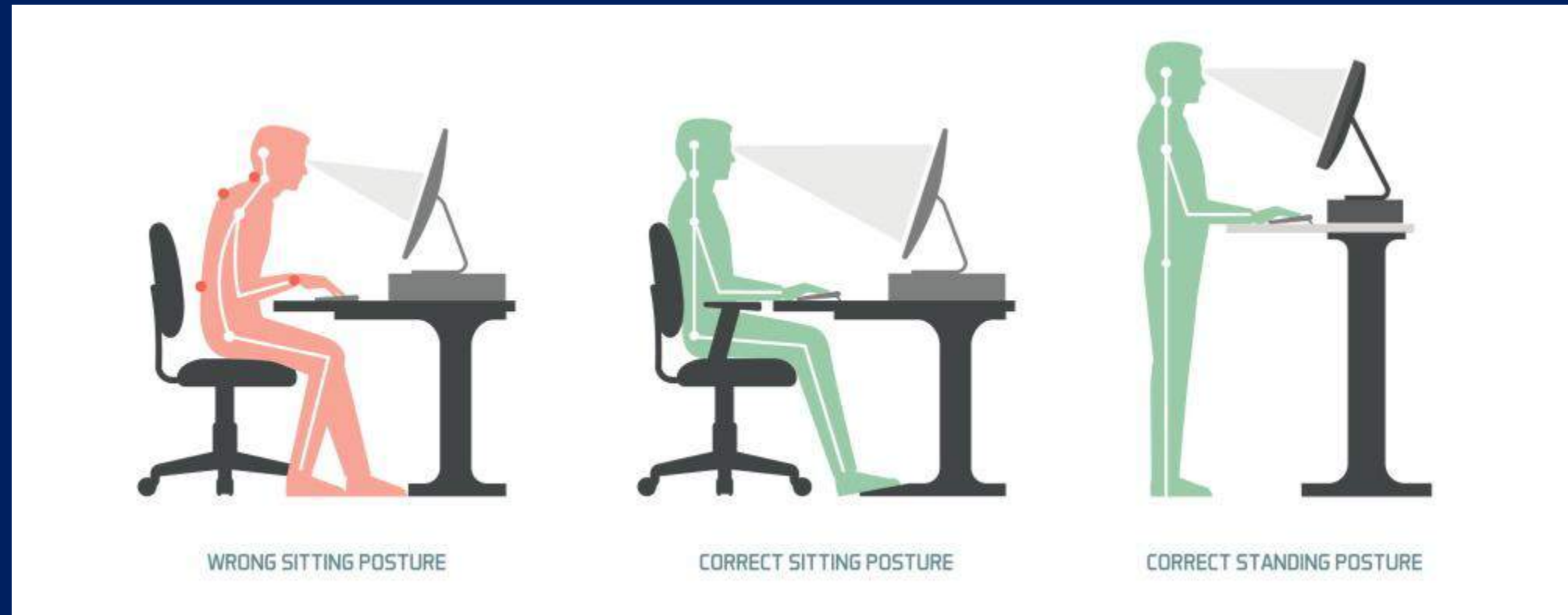
Ergonomics

- Take a moment to pause and consider how you're sitting.
 - Is your back straight?
 - Are your shoulders hunched over?
 - Can your feet reach the floor?
 - Is your computer monitor or mobile device screen too close or too far away?

These inconveniences may seem small on a day-to-day basis, but if you sit hunched over or strain to see your monitor every day for ten years, you could cause serious damage to your body. This can lead to pain, numbness, tingling and even musculoskeletal disorders, or *MSDs*. *MSDs* include carpal tunnel, leg numbness, and chronic pain in the neck, back or shoulders.



Correct Postures



Display Screen Equipment Information



Identify the hazards



Identify the hazards - answers

1. Cords running across an office can be a tripping hazard.
2. Materials such as boxes should be stacked no more than 45cm beneath a sprinkler to ensure the sprinkler's effectiveness.
3. Ensure space heaters are approved for commercial use, and never leave them unattended or near any combustible materials. Consider policy.
4. Boxes should not block paths.
5. Never leave file cabinets open and unattended; someone could trip over or bump into them.
6. Paper cutters should be guarded and closed when not in use.
7. All food should be properly stored; studies show 400 times more germs are present on a desktop than on the average toilet seat.
8. Keyboards should be adjustable to improve comfort and reduce strain.
9. Electrical hazards are one of the leading causes of office fires; never overload an outlet.
10. Keep papers clear from devices such as hot plates, and never leave them on while out of the office. Consider policy.
11. Coffee cups should have a lid to reduce spills.
12. Chairs should be ergonomic and include armrests and an adjustable back.





Lighting

- Too much lighting can cause glare on computer screens, which can cause eye fatigue and strain. Employees should avoid sitting with their backs to a window.
- Too-bright offices can be made dimmer by removing one of the rods in overhead fluorescent lighting.
- Too-dark offices can be made brighter with task lamps.

Air Quality

- Poor air quality caused by construction elsewhere in the building, mould and mildew, or unpleasant odours, can cause respiratory illness, dizziness, and more.
- Keep all common areas, especially kitchens, clean and free from spoiled food.
- Temperature should ideally be set between 23°C to 26°C
- Clean filters and maintain ventilation and AC systems



Noise Levels

- High noise levels can trigger headaches or migraines and distract your employees from their work. This is particularly common in open office environments.
- To combat this, you can move desks farther apart, install desk barriers, use headsets, dedicate rooms for longer online meetings, and move noisy office machines away from desks.

Storage

When storing boxes of files, papers or other flammable materials, you should be sure never to store them near an ignition source, like a water heater.

Stack the heaviest objects or boxes on the bottom and the lightest objects on top.

Consider securing storage racks to the wall with a wall anchor so they don't tip over, and never store objects in walkways where they could present a tripping hazard.

Electrical Equipment

- Thousands of office fires are reported every year worldwide.
- Many of these are caused by malfunctioning or improperly used electrical equipment.





...Electrical Equipment

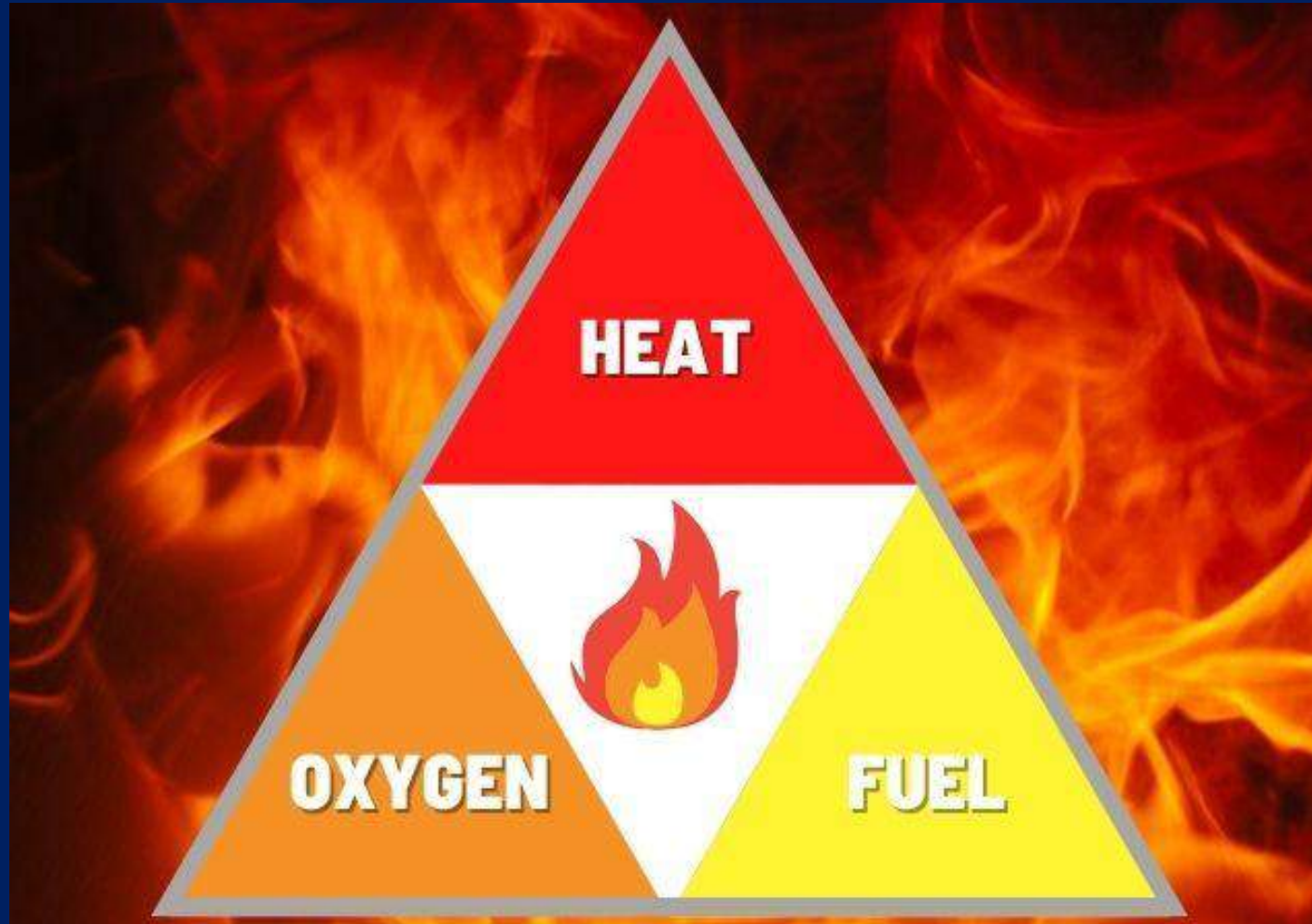
- Office fires are hazardous because most office equipment, like chairs and machinery, produces toxic fumes as they burn. Inspect all electrical equipment, like monitors, fax machines, and space heaters, for damaged cords and plugs.
- Make sure your employees are not overloading electrical outlets with multiple power strips or plugging multiple extension cords into each other.
- Train your new and existing employees on what types of electrical equipment are and are not allowed in your workplace.

Fire & Emergency

- Carry out a fire risk assessment
- Fire alarm system
- Fire action plan
- Identify fire wardens
- Fire drills every 6 months
- Assembly points
- Consider coordination in shared premises



Fire triangle



How fast does a fire spread?



Type of extinguishers



KNOW YOUR FIRE EXTINGUISHER COLOUR CODE

Water	Dry powder	Foam	CO ₂ Carbon dioxide	Wet chemical
<p>For use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class A: Wood, Paper, Textiles etc. <p>Do not use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class B: Flammable liquidsClass C: Live electrical equipment	<p>For use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class A: Wood, Paper, Textiles etc.Class B: Flammable liquidsClass C: Gaseous firesClass E: Live electrical equipment	<p>For use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class A: Wood, Paper, Textiles etc.Class B: Flammable liquids <p>Do not use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class C: Live electrical equipment	<p>For use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class B: Flammable liquidsClass E: Live electrical equipment <p>Do not use in a confined space</p>	<p>For use on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Class A: Wood, Paper, Textiles etc.Class F: Cooking oil fires



Use fire extinguisher only if trained



First Aid

- Equipped first aid box
- Trained first aid persons

<div>  BS8599-1:2019 Workplace First Aid Kit Contents </div>				
Kit component	New workplace first aid kit contents			New travel & motoring kit contents
	Small	Medium	Large	
Conforming bandage	1	2	2	1X Guidance leaflet
Guidance leaflet	1	1	1	1X Contents list
Contents list	1	1	1	1X Med. sterile dressing
Medium sterile dressing	2	4	6	1X Triangular bandage
Large sterile dressing	2	3	4	10X Plasters
Triangular bandage	2	3	4	10X Alcohol-free moist wipes
Eye pad sterile dressing	2	3	4	2X Nitrile gloves
Plasters	40	60	100	1X Resuscitation shield
Alcohol-free moist cleansing wipes	20	30	40	1X Foil blanket
Adhesive tape roll	1	2	3	2X Burn dressing
Nitrile disposable gloves (pairs)	6	9	12	1X Clothing cutters
Sterile finger dressing	2	3	4	1X Adherent dressing
Resuscitation face shield	1	1	2	1X Medium trauma dressing
Foil blanket	1	2	3	
Burn dressing	1	2	2	
Clothing cutters	1	1	1	

Personal issue kit contents

1X guidance leaflet, 1X contents list, 1X l. sterile dressing, 1X triangular bandage, 10X plasters, 4X alcohol-free wipes, 2X nitrile gloves (pairs), 1X resus shield, 1X foil blanket, 1X clothing cutters

Critical injury pack contents

1X guidance leaflet, 1X contents list, 2X nitrile gloves (pairs), cutters, 2X large trauma dressing, 2X haemostatic dressing, 1X foil blanket, 1X clothing, 1X tourniquet



Note: The above list is British Standard and above Maltese minimum requirements



Legionella

- Legionellosis is the collective name given to the pneumonia-like illness caused by Legionella bacteria, including the most serious Legionnaires' disease.
- Infection is caused by breathing in tiny droplets of water contaminated by the bacteria.
- Common symptoms include coughing, breathlessness, high fever, muscle aches and headaches, which usually appear 5-6 days after infection but may take longer.

Summary of the most significant

- H&S is a condition free from risk of injury harm or loss
- Legal & Moral obligations
- Safety Management Systems help us manage effectively
- Risk Assessments are crucial to identifying the hazards and determine if the risks are adequately controlled or if more is required
- DSE is one of the most significant hazards in the office environment
- Emergency planning and fire control are essential in any environment
- There are several other legal obligations that may be applicable to your office



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