

Using the Toolkit

► The SME Risk Management Toolkit provides a wealth of information and many tools for SMEs interested in risk management. Quickly accessible, this extensive Toolkit offers practical assistance for many risk management needs.

Information and tools

The risk management Toolkit provides practical tools and easy-to-read information for the development of risk management in SMEs.

Getting started has been made easy: elements of risk management have been grouped into small sections that can be covered with a reasonable amount of work. In this way, the process is set in motion with very little investment. Results can start to show quickly.

Where necessary, risks are examined more thoroughly so that important aspects don't go unnoticed. It is intended that workplace risks are managed as a collective effort.

The toolkit contains various tools:

- **Booklets:** There are three instruction books and one workbook. The **instruction books** are intended as background material for the topic in question. The **workbook** allows a more in-depth examination of risks. It contains sheets that describe and help to identify key hazards. It also includes tips on how to carry out more detailed risk analysis and how risks can be managed. Booklets have associated info/work cards. (booklets have **one-digit** references e.g. **1**)
- **Work cards:** There are seventeen tools to help implement a particular area of risk management. Work cards contain checklists or risk charts which include some topic information. (work cards have **two-digit** references e.g. **1.1**)
- **Info cards:** There are six short summaries on specific areas of risk management. Info cards are a good way to start familiarizing yourself with the subject. Some info cards link to work cards. (info cards have **three-digit** references e.g. **1.0.1**)

Trainers' Guide: Contains three info cards with instructions for risk management training in SMEs. The support material is intended for trainers and supervisors of group work. (these tools have **appendix** references)

How to find the right tool for the job?

- use the Toolkit contents list
- use the flowchart
- use risk charts
- use the contents lists in the booklets
- use the 'further information' section of work and info cards

How to get started

All SMEs are different and their situations differ. For this reason, starting risk management with the aid of the Toolkit can be done in a number of ways.

Dealing with a current problem

In practice, the need for risk management is often only realised when things go wrong. Acute problems should always be dealt with first in order to avoid further loss.

It is worth beginning risk management by finding and fixing the underlying causes of the problem, not just the effects or symptoms. Check if the Toolkit has a **work** or **info card** related to the problem. To identify the problem, it is often enough to run through the appropriate work card (see toolkit flowchart for 'direct route').

Getting started with risk management

If you don't have problems that require immediate attention, it is worth starting risk management with a **rough vulnerability analysis**. In the analysis, all operations and risks in the company are briefly examined without going into details. The aim is to find the company's key risks and the areas of risk management that should be developed first. Risk management is most beneficial when resources are well focused.

Once the main problems are identified and it is decided which area of risk management the company should deal with first, it is time to start work on the **specific risk**. With the aid of risk-type



specific information and tools, analysis becomes possible and appropriate control measures can be selected. Risk-type specific information and tools allow:

- the causes and consequences to be clarified in more detail than with vulnerability analysis; and
- the methods for managing the specific risk to become clearer.

The Toolkit offers a wide selection of risk-type specific tools, particularly for the management of personnel, business and product risks.

Identified hazards and agreed control measures are recorded on the **Risk Management Control Measures** summary sheet. An implementation plan is developed for the control measures and responsible persons are appointed. The implementation and effects of the control measures are monitored and reviewed. (see toolkit flowchart for 'partial system').

Development of risk management

In one way or another, risks are managed in all companies. Accordingly, it is good to start the development of risk management by charting the existing risk management practices. The work card **Assessment of a Company's Risk Management** is a useful aid for clarifying how risk management has been managed so far, indicating both its strengths and its weaknesses.

It is well worth involving **every employee** in hazard identification and risk management – this way all the company's expertise and experience can be utilised. However, it is often good to start with a group of key employees who are able to ensure the functionality of any new procedures that are to be introduced into the company. The adoption of new procedures or other control measures will require training (see Trainers' Guide). Risk management skills can be acquired by private study or external training courses.

How work cards are used

Checklists include a number of risk areas to be checked. Lists are risk-type specific.

- As group work, consider whether the risk areas on the checklist are relevant to your company – cross out all unnecessary or irrelevant ones.
- Are your risk areas well controlled?
- Supplement the lists with your own notes.

Risk charts are lists in which risk areas are grouped around core themes.

- Risk areas can be written down as they come to mind. There's no need to proceed in any particular order.
- You can draw lines to connect risk areas to each other.
- Notes written on risk charts also make it easier to remember issues afterwards.

The booklet **Risk Management Basics** introduces the basics of risk management in a clear and simple way. The booklet is suitable for all employees. Once all employees understand and apply the basics of risk management – significant benefits can be gained. Risk management can allow innovative solutions to be used where appropriate. (see toolkit flowchart for 'full system').

Further information

You can request general information about the initiative or the Toolkit by email: techinfo@iosh.co.uk, or by post:

IOSH Technical Affairs Department, The Grange, Highfield Drive, Wigston, Leicestershire, LE18 1NN, or by fax: 0116 257 3107.

More detailed information about the availability of the risk management materials can be found on our website at: www.iosh.co.uk/technical