

Different work-related stress prevention measures for different situations in a global aircraft manufacturer

COMMENDED

Airbus, France and Spain

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The issue

In recent years, Airbus has launched a lot of new products to remain leader in the aircraft manufacturing market. Hundreds of improvement projects have been carried out which aim to boost performance and support new developments. Optimisation also concerns organisation changes including mergers and acquisitions.

In order to reach the desired increased performance while also taking care of the adaptation for the workers concerned, there was a need to thoroughly consider the effects of changes on working conditions and employees' well-being, implementing adequate change management and worker involvement.

In addition, there was the need to improve work-related stress prevention by combining the Airbus Group policy requirement and local legal frames and tools.

Action taken

Airbus France

Airbus France has developed a prevention methodology which consists of assessing in an exhaustive and participative way the impact of change, which may result in psychosocial risks in the company, and drawing up key recommendations which will be transformed into an action plan.

The first step of the process consists of applying a checklist to select only the significant projects from a psychosocial risk point of view that deserve a full analysis. In a second step, the methodology involves an 'impact workshop' in which participants from a variety of hierarchical levels give their inputs in an exhaustive review of human and social risks related to the project or change being assessed, based on a structured questionnaire. The session is conducted by two qualified facilitators in which the objectives, the affected groups and any related events or projects are discussed. A systematic review is conducted of the impacts of the change on working conditions including workload, autonomy and recognition at work. The initial vulnerability of workers with respect to psychosocial risks can be assessed in parallel. A summary report is issued which synthesises the main impacts detected and gives recommendations for each risk. The project leader then creates an action plan based on these recommendations, and this action plan is then reviewed after around three months.



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This methodology has, to date, been applied around 15 times to varying projects ranging from aircraft final assembly line to IT department reorganisation.

Airbus Spain

Airbus Spain regularly conducts screenings to identify groups at risk of psychosocial issues. Assessments of these groups are then conducted to diagnose problems and guide the development of corrective collective measures through workshops and feedback sessions. Identifying risk areas through screenings serves as a preventive measure, minimising the possible occurrence of hazardous situations and mitigating the existing ones.



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Individuals are also monitored by medical services to identify those at risk, and workers can request psychological attention if required through unions, managers or human resources. Psychological counselling is provided in the form of face-to-face sessions as well as via the web (the latter being an ongoing pilot project).

After six to eight months, the situation is reassessed and the interventions are evaluated. A guide detailing improvement actions has also been developed. It is applicable to a wide range of areas and is a functional tool for practically implementing this methodology.

Results achieved

Airbus France:

- There is greater awareness of the importance of change management and the effects psychosocial risks can have on the success of a project.
- It has been noticed that a relatively small amount of time is required by managers and participants (about six working hours for about 15 people) for significant benefits to be observed.
- Standard project management methodology in Airbus will now include more exhaustive change management that includes psychosocial risk prevention.

Airbus Spain:

- There is greater awareness of psychosocial risks and mental health in the workplace.
- After reassessment, progress can be seen in participation and role performance factors in almost all reports.
- This approach has been successfully extended to workplaces located in different provinces.
- The range of potential actions has continued to increase and the process can now assist a larger number of workers.

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