

Psychosocial risk prevention measures within a major international industrial group

COMMENDED

Schneider Electric, France

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The issue

Schneider Electric, an electrical utilities group, has recognised the importance of psychosocial risks in the workplace since 2002. With 20 000 workers across 20 sites this is an ongoing challenge, and since 2009 the company has adopted a more systematic approach to psychosocial risks. Some areas had been detected as needing a more specific focus on psychosocial working conditions and risks. Accordingly, management decided to take measures addressing these areas.

Action taken

The company introduced a preventive approach, outlined in a company agreement by the social partners, using internal staff and resources already available. It found that recognising the importance of the role played by people at all levels within the organisation costs very little. Systematic psychosocial risk assessment (e.g. in-depth risk assessments by a participatory working group) was central to the success of this strategy.

A prevention programme was set up for each site, filtering down to organisational unit level where necessary. This programme was designed to identify hazards and assess risks through a participatory workplace risk assessment approach. It also aimed to train staff involved in prevention to develop a common language and to be alert to psychosocial risks, including burnout, and to develop tools to prevent bullying or suicide risks and to help affected employees to remain in employment.

A training programme was set up to raise awareness of the hazards, risks and consequences of psychosocial risks and their prevention, and this was tailored to different groups of employees. Psychosocial risk assessment was also built into the planning for every reorganisation project. Furthermore, under the 'Cool Site' programme, workplaces were ergonomically improved to make them more user-friendly and improve workers' quality of life.

A committee has been set up to monitor the agreement and consolidate the data resulting from psychosocial risk assessments with a view to producing country-wide action plans.



All those responsible for health and safety work together in the common cause of improving quality of life at work and preventing psychosocial risks effectively.



Results achieved

Schneider Electric has succeeded in mobilising all those responsible for health and safety — managers, the personnel department and the health and safety committee — as well the workers and their representatives to work together in the common cause of improving quality of life at work.

A significant number of managers, health and safety officers and employees have received training on psychosocial risks so far. Raising awareness about psychosocial risks is one of the priority training topics for 2015.

The first results from the measures implemented show that the number of managers suffering from burnout has decreased by more than 50%.