

## **Health & Productivity Management Workforce Tip**

### **Ergonomic Assessment – *Closing the door on musculoskeletal workers comp loss***

When taking a trip it is great to have directions to where you are going. It is difficult however, to print the map to your destination without knowing where you are starting from. With work place injuries it is very much the same. To know exactly where you are starting from with a process, a particular job or a work activity makes it a lot easier to improve that function. Taking *this* common sense approach is often times a good choice. Ergonomic assessment allows you to define job function from a physical viewpoint and then make positive change based on the understanding of anatomy, physiology, and the physics of stress from a job task. This type of assessment identifies risk and *many times* provides significant cost-saving solutions to reduce or eliminate many physical stresses of a job.

The components of your ergonomic assessment program should include but are not limited to:

1. Detailed observation and documentation of work activities and essential functions
2. Review of present job descriptions and procedures if available
3. Measurement of physical activities to include force, repetition, posture, contact stress, and environment (ideally by a C.E.A.S., Certified Ergonomics Assessment Specialist)
4. Collaboration with employees and supervisors about physical demands and activities
5. Review of findings and recommendations with key personnel for accuracy and development of solutions
6. Employee education with periodic reinforcement for continued safety and accountability

The components above will directly impact the development and management of your:

- Functional Job Descriptions
- Post-offer / pre-employment screens
- Temporary modified duty program (aka Light Duty)
- On-site Industrial Physical Therapy (IPT) rehabilitation
- Return to work / job coaching
- Injury prevention education program

The benefits you will most likely see include:

- Solutions that reduce short-term and long-term risk potential
- Solutions that improve employee productivity
- Reduction in costs related to workers compensation (injuries, lost-time, restricted days)
- Demonstrate to OSHA and other regulatory agencies that the company is proactively committed to improving workplace safety
- Demonstrate the company's commitment to improving employee safety
- High potential for improving morale

**Please contact us at 219-851-3827 if you would benefit from a meeting to develop a new plan or review your company's existing work-site risk analysis program.**