EcoOnline

Your Safety
Program Starter Pack

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Your Safety Program Starter Pack

Having an effective safety program in place can help mitigate risks on-site and protect your people. With the right policies and procedures in place to create a safer work environment, you can take a more proactive approach to safety rather than a reactive one.

EcoOnline wants to help you make sure the right elements are included in your safety program to ensure compliance with international standards. Learn more about the proper framework of a safety program, challenges faced within certain safety systems, as well as how our suite of solutions at EcoOnline can help.

**Framework of a Safety Program:
The 7 Elements of ISO 45001**

Building an impactful safety program is a journey that all organizations go on, which is continuously reviewed and refined. As new policies and procedures are introduced, new hazards and risks are identified, or safety data is analyzed, employers work to improve their safety program by putting new measures in place.

Below are the 7 elements of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 45001 that should be included in your safety program to help implement best practice for health and safety. While these are the minimum elements meeting international standards, if you are working towards your Certificate of Recognition (COR) or are included in Voluntary Prevention Program (VPP), there may be additional or somewhat modified requirements that you will have to meet.

Element 1

Context of the Organization

**Understanding the context of your organization when building your safety program is critical to its success.
This includes looking at both internal and external factors such as:**

You must look at such factors when outlining the context of your organization to understand what is required of your safety program to reduce injury and illness on-site, as well as maintain compliance with international standards.

Looking at external factors like legislation and industry regulations is a key point to help lay the foundation for your safety program.

Keeping workers protected is the very soul of your safety program and a top priority. Defining what internal training requirements are needed by all workers, for instance, to help identify and mitigate risks and hazards on-site is a key part of any safety program. By putting measures like this in place to implement preventative measures, employers can build stronger safety programs to protect more people and create a safer work environment.

Internal	External
Your workforce and training requirements	Legislation
Dedication of your teams	Industry expectations
Communication across the organization	Stakeholder and investor requirements

Element 2

Leadership and Worker Participation

The EcoOnline suite of solutions can help mitigate employee, equipment, and contractor risks. Learn how we can help strengthen your safety program and help you create a safer work environment with our cloud-based, mobile-first safety software.

Talk to our team

Safety is not just one person or team's responsibility at an organization. It should be the responsibility of all members from the leadership and C-suite team to the front-line workforce. Having equal participation from all members will help make safety a part of the organization's ethos and not just a tick-box exercise. This will also help create a strong safety culture where all employees are invested in safety.

Leadership buy-in is an essential piece of any safety program. When the leaders of an organization are helping to provide resources, getting involved in safety meetings, and showing their support to their safety leaders, all employees will recognize the importance of safety. This will help empower them to realize the vital role they play in keeping their organization safe.

Element 3

Planning for the OH&S System

This element is all about setting objectives for your safety system and program and documenting them. Below is a list of the required documents[1] needed at this stage to maintain compliance with international standards:

- Scope of the OH&S management system (clause 4.3)

- OH&S policy (clause 5.2)

- Responsibilities and authorities within OH&SMS (clause 5.3)

- OH&S process for addressing risks and opportunities (clause 6.1.1)

- Methodology and criteria for assessment of OH&S risks (clause 6.1.2.2)

- OH&S objectives and plans for achieving them (clause 6.2.2)

- Emergency preparedness and response process (clause 8.2)

Several mandatory records are also required at this phase such as showing evidence of communications, verification of monitoring equipment, internal audit programs and reports, evidence of continual improvement, and much more.[1]

Having these documents and records in place will help to ensure standardization of processes across the organization and proof that the right policies and procedures are being carried out.

1 45001 Academy, ISO 45001 Blog: List of mandatory documents according to ISO 45001, Mar. 2018

Element 4

Support

This element focuses on support in terms of documentation as well as properly communicating your safety program and elements to all employees. As mentioned in the "Leadership and Worker Participation" section above, safety is the responsibility of the entire organization, so encouraging all teams to support one another by making sure communication is streamlined and always up to date, is crucial.

For instance, if a certain safety procedure or piece of equipment has recently been replaced or updated, all employees should receive communication on this modification as well as the necessary training. This will help ensure that all procedures and activities are uniform across the organization. Feedback from employees should also be asked for before such a change takes place, as they are the ones in the field.

It's also important to note that employers are responsible for training all employees on how to perform their jobs safely. This must be done in a method and language that they understand to ensure all messages are getting across to avoid the risk of injury or illness on-site.
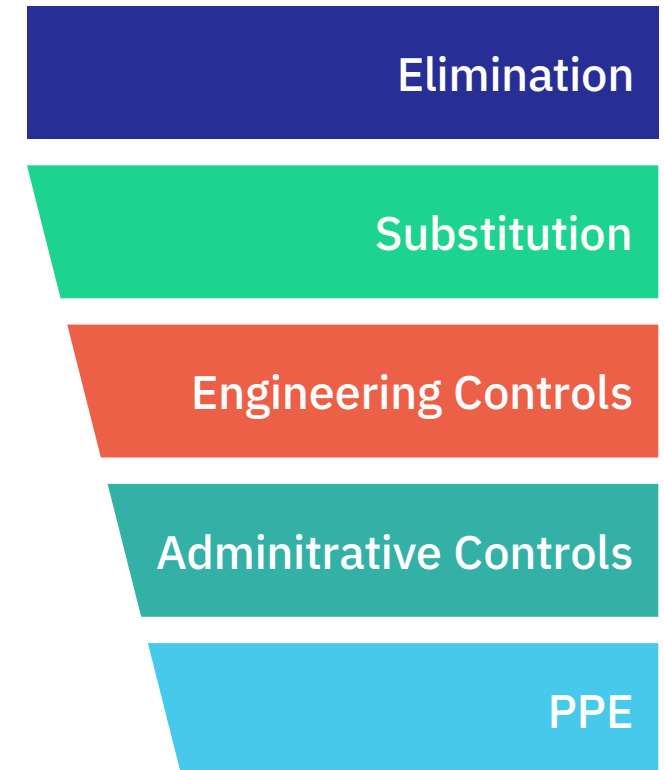
Element 5

Operation

Operational planning and controls as well as emergency preparedness, are crucial in any safety program. It is the responsibility of the employer to mitigate risk by implementing a hierarchy of controls to protect workers and create a safe working environment. This is not only to all in-house employees but to third-party contractors as well.

The hierarchy of controls seen on the right, is listed from most effective to least effective. Completely removing or eliminating the hazard, if possible, is an ideal solution. Substitution is often seen with chemical management when a highly hazardous chemical is often replaced with a less harmful one. Engineering controls can also be put in place such as machine guards, when workers could be subjected to flying objects or sparks when working with certain types of machines. Administrative controls are when safety policies and procedures are used to encourage safe behavior like staggered schedules to avoid worker fatigue. Lastly, personal protective equipment is the least effective way to control hazards and should only be used when all other methods are ineffective.

Hierarchy of Controls

Elimination

Substitution

Engineering Controls

Adminitrative Controls

PPE

Element 6

Performance Evaluation

Making sure elements are put in place to measure and monitor the performance and effectiveness of your safety program are important to strengthen safety practices. It's important for senior leadership and safety teams to look at the safety objectives that were set and evaluate whether they have been accomplished or not.

This can be done by looking at certain data like lost time injury rates (LTIR), total recordable incident rates (TRIR), days away restricted or transferred (DART), and many more. Employers must also ensure that all safety program elements show compliance with industry regulations and international standards.

Performance evaluation also helps employers identify any gaps or deficiencies within their safety program. This will help focus their efforts on the areas that need attention to better protect employees.

Element 7

Improvement

Finally, methods of continual improvement should always be implemented to strengthen an organization's safety program. This can be done through the Plan, Do, Check, Act Cycle on your safety program in its entirety, as well as its individual elements.

This methodology is divided into four steps:

When all safety objectives are planned and implemented, it's important to check their effectiveness and act by implementing the necessary corrective actions. Having meaningful collaboration between management and worker teams is important at this stage to work together to identify hazards and establish the necessary policies and procedures. This will help lay a strong foundation for safety procedures and practices within your safety program.

Internal	External	External	External
• Identify objectives • Review resources • Map out processes	• Communicate policies and procedures • Implement what was planned • Conduct training and meetings	• Check original plan • Assess implementation • Measure performance	• Identify gaps • Create an action plan • Modify systems and program

Challenges Faced Using Certain Safety Systems

Now that you know all the necessary elements needed to build an effective safety program, it's important to consider the right systems needed to help you accomplish your safety goals effectively and easily.

Reactive Safety

Employers face many challenges when using certain types of safety systems, including pen and paper-based systems or Excel. Traditional manual systems can lead to time-consuming processes, which could affect employee participation in safety activities and the success of your safety program. It could also lead to safety teams getting lost in administrative work rather than out on the field.

Imagine this: An employee completes a hazard assessment form on paper, then puts it on his manager's desk amidst a pile of other papers. This document could easily get lost or misplaced, with the employee not hearing any feedback or follow-up actions for days or weeks. By the time the data then gets entered into an Excel spreadsheet, it becomes stale.

The decentralization of such systems with ineffective communication, shows little transparency into the entire safety program with different elements scattered in various silos across the organization. Without 360-degree visibility into your safety program, it becomes very difficult to spot gaps, deficiencies, trends, and patterns to help strengthen your safety program and protect your people.

What's the Best Method?

Having a digital safety solution in place can help simplify and streamline safety at your organization. With all documents, forms, and information centralized in one cloud-based, accessible platform, employers can easily navigate compliance to avoid fines and spot gaps in their safety program.

It can also help to save time and eliminate silos, improving communication among different teams. With more visibility, employers can make problem areas a priority to help mitigate potential hazards. With deficiencies prioritized and the right corrective actions in place, more workers can be protected, leading to less insurance claims and downtime, and more money saved.

It can also:

Grow as your safety needs evolve

Investing in a digital solution can allow your business to quickly adapt to changes, while supporting your safety needs as your safety program matures and evolves. A prime example of this was during the pandemic. With the ability to quickly make changes or updates to health and safety procedures or processes digitally, you can easily adapt to such changes when they arise. A digital solution can also make communicating these sudden changes to employees simple and efficient with a few simple clicks.

Provide strong EHS analytics to deliver insights

A data-driven approach can help turn a reactive safety approach into a more proactive one. A robust analytics and reporting tool can help to provide meaningful insights regarding safety performance. With safety data centralized in one location, you can start to identify specific patterns and trends regarding leading and lagging indicators. Easily track safety KPIs, measure performance, and analyze data to implement positive changes in the workplace to protect more people.

Deliver a consistent safety approach with the flexibility to meet site-specific needs

A digital safety solution can also help businesses scale while allowing local supervisors to tailor health and safety activities to local job activities and risk mitigation. With the standardization of health and safety policies and procedures across the business, this safety solution can help bring consistency across the company. It can also allow supervisors to go deeper and tailor safe work procedures according to local employee profiles and tasks.

Be easy for end-users to adopt

Having everything on a mobile-first application puts safety in the workforce's hands, increasing safety participation and engagement. By empowering your team with the right tools and resources, they will begin to see the value they play in creating a safe work environment. This will help instill more confidence in employees and help them acknowledge that their organization cares about their well-being. This can assist in boosting retention rates and overall morale.

How EcoOnline Can Help

Create a safe work environment with us! To explore our suite of solutions, speak to an EcoOnline representative today!

Talk to our team ❯

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