

ROSPA

accidents don't have to happen

Safety Training: Get your boss to buy-in



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Introduction

Get your boss to buy-in

Times are hard for many businesses and this can make presenting the business case for health and safety a tough task. Directors and business owners want to know why they should devote precious money and time implementing and upgrading health and safety systems.

This eBook is designed to help you overcome that challenge and ensure that senior management buy into the benefits of health and safety management.

We'll look at the risks involved in not managing health and safety, the systems you need to have in place and the business benefits of adopting a "beyond compliance" approach to the subject.

At the end of this eBook, you should be able to present a compelling case for investing in health and safety.

First of all let's look at the risks of not correctly managing health and safety...

If you think health and safety is expensive, try having an accident.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

1. Moral

The issue that underpins this whole topic is the simple fact that having a strong health and safety system in place decreases the likelihood of accidents occurring. After all, we all want to leave work in the same condition as when we arrived.

Statistics relating to the number of injuries and fatalities in the workplace make sobering reading:

- The number of workers fatally injured in work related accidents in 2013/2014 was 133
- In addition, there were 78,000 reported injuries in that time period
- 1,200,000 workers suffered a work related injury or illness
- This resulted in 28,200,000 lost working hours

Equally as important are the intangible consequences of these statistics – loss of workforce morale, staff turnover and a decrease in productivity. All of which will have a big impact on company reputation. For businesses which depend on maintaining a high competence and reliability profile to remain on clients' tender lists, accidents, injuries or enforcement action are very bad news. In contrast, having a good health and safety performance record, particularly if it is attested to independently by third parties, is very positive and can make the difference between winning and losing a tender bid.

And then there's the money...

Reasons to manage health and safety:

2. Financial

When it comes to investing in health and safety, it is not just a case of doing the right thing; it is underpinned by a very strong business case. Furthermore, although it might seem wholly counter-intuitive, that case is even stronger when times are tough financially. The reason is very simple: accidents and ill health caused by work (not to mention non-injury incidents which are much more numerous) impose massive - but largely unrecognised - costs on business.

It is often assumed that most accident and incident costs are recoverable through insurance. **This is a dangerous misconception.** The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) estimates that uninsured losses are ten times the cost of insurance premiums paid. Uninsured losses from accidents in smaller firms, average £315 per employee per year.

Uninsured costs can include:

- Lost time
- Sick pay
- Damage or loss of products and equipment
- Repairs to equipment
- Extra wages, overtime working and temporary labour
- Production delays
- Investigation time
- Fines
- Loss of contracts
- Legal costs

Accident and ill-health costs can be likened to an iceberg. The visible recoverable costs are dwarfed by the hidden unrecoverable costs. The HSE has estimated that the ratio between insured and uninsured costs arising from accidents lies in the range of 1:8 to 1:36. So in the worst case, for every £100 recovered from the insurer, the business loses about £3,600.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

2. Financial

In difficult economic times, when the options for improving the bottom line through increased sales and turnover can be very limited, investing in loss control becomes even more important. Taking the time and trouble to upgrade management systems and procedures, tighten controls and enhance skills, perhaps by using competent health and safety professionals, can pay major dividends.

The aim should be to focus on priority risk issues such as [work related road safety](#), hazardous [manual handling](#) or [workplace transport](#) operations or on tackling slips and trips, [work related stress](#) and sickness absence.

Whatever the length and depth of any economic downturn turns out to be, businesses will need to keep their eyes firmly on the health and safety ball. But when the economy improves it is important that the "green shoots" of recovery don't become spiky brambles which can trip up the undiscerning organisation.

When business picks up, firms will have to cope with challenges such as an influx of inexperienced new staff, or competition for experienced subcontractors. The thought of losing a worker for a month due to an avoidable accident in difficult trading times might seem bad enough, but when things pick up it could spell disaster if an experienced team member is out of action. And on top of this, there is a need to maintain pressure for action on serious longer-term issues like occupational road risk or managing [asbestos](#) or occupational cancer, particularly in firms which may still be waking up to these dangers.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

3. Legal

Health and safety legislation means that you, and anyone else reading this today, can be fined or go to prison for failing to comply.

There is a range of legal duties for employers and employees. These are expressed as broad, general duties by the Health and Safety Act, but they are spelt out in more detail in subsidiary regulations that cover industry sectors such as construction, agriculture, railways and mines.

Here are 20 key requirements of health and safety law...

1. General Duty of Care

All employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. They also have a duty to protect non-employees from risks arising out of their work activities.

2. Health and Safety Management System

Employers must make adequate arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of protective and preventive measures. They must record in writing these arrangements (where five or more are employed), as part of their health and safety policy statement.

3. Safety Policy Statement

A written policy statement must be prepared (if five or more persons are employed) covering the employer's organisation and arrangements in force for ensuring health and safety. It must be brought to the attention of all employees.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

3. Legal

4. Competent Persons

An adequate number of 'competent' persons have to be appointed, with sufficient time and resources at their disposal, to assist the employer in complying with his legal duties and to implement emergency arrangements. Competent health and safety advisers can be either employees with appropriate qualifications and experience or professionally qualified consultants.

5. Risk Assessments

'Suitable and sufficient' risk assessments must be carried out by the employer. The purpose is to identify hazards, assess the probability that harm may arise from them and evaluate the effectiveness of control measures.

6. Tackling Risks at Source

The workplace must be made safe without risks to health. So far as is reasonably practicable, accidents and work related health damage should be prevented by tackling risks at source, using engineering means in preference to systems of work, personal protective equipment only being an acceptable alternative where risks cannot be controlled by such other means.

7. Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision

Employees must be given comprehensible information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure their health and safety and that of others. [HSWA, MHSW and other regulations e.g. COSHH].

If you employ anyone, you must display the health and safety law poster, or provide each worker with a copy of the equivalent pocket card. You must display the poster where your workers can easily read it. The poster is available from the HSE: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawposter.htm>

Reasons to manage health and safety:

3. Legal

8. Cooperation and coordination

Employers sharing workplaces must co-operate and co-ordinate their activities to ensure that they can meet their health and safety responsibilities.

9. Hazardous Agents

Exposure to hazardous agents such as dust, fumes, noise, vibration, radiation or harmful micro-organisms must be eliminated or adequately controlled.

10. Health Surveillance

Arrangements should be made for any necessary health surveillance of employees and appropriate records should be kept.

11. Personal Protective Equipment

Where risks cannot be controlled at source (see point 6 above), appropriate personal protective clothing and/or equipment should be provided free of charge.

12. Work Equipment

All work equipment must meet essential safety requirements and safe systems of work must be established. Risks from work with [Display Screen Equipment](#) must be assessed and controlled.

13. Articles and Substances

Articles and substances should be safe and without risks to health when properly used. They must be: properly designed; tested; packaged; labelled; accompanied by adequate information; and moved, stored and used safely.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

3. Legal

14. Special Precautions

Special precautions should be taken against entry into confined spaces and working at height. Harmful manual handling should be eliminated. Lifting plant and pressure systems should be regularly eliminated. Safe use of electricity and site transport should be ensured.

15. Emergency Arrangements

Adequate emergency arrangements must be in place under the control of 'competent persons'. There must also be suitable procedures for employees to report serious and imminent danger as well as shortcomings in health and safety arrangements.

16. Fire

Adequate precautions should be taken against fires and explosions and adequate means of escape and fire fighting equipment should be provided.

17. Workplace Requirements

Essential workplace requirements should be ensured, including those concerning temperature, cleanliness, working space, ventilation, lighting, safe access and egress.

18. Reporting and Recording

Accidental injuries, dangerous occurrences and notifiable occupational diseases should be reported to the appropriate enforcing authority and records kept. Records also have to be kept of the results of workplace environmental monitoring, health surveillance and maintenance.

Reasons to manage health and safety:

3. Legal

19. Safety Representatives, Committees and Consultation

Employers must consult their workforce on health and safety matters. When the employer recognises a trade union, that union has the right to appoint safety representatives who must be consulted on all matters affecting the health and safety of employees they represent and be permitted to carry out their functions. If requested to do so, the employer must establish a joint safety committee. Safety representatives are entitled to paid time off to attend TUC or union approved training courses.

20. Insurance

All employers must have specific insurance to provide compensation to employees following successful civil law claims for damages in the event of work related injury or damage to health.

That may seem like a lot of requirements, but remember that ignorance is no defence in a court of law if a health and safety prosecution is brought forward.

Now we've looked at the risks, it's time to start putting a case together for senior managers and directors...

Presenting the case:

1. Research

There are two compelling reasons why you need to conduct thorough research before presenting your case. Firstly, you need to find out whether it's a worthwhile exercise, and secondly you need to know what you're talking about when it comes to presenting it to your boss. So exactly how should you go about your research?

- Look at competitors - What are they doing, and how can you emulate and improve upon that? Look at their annual reports, and public statistics. If you have contacts at these companies then speak to them
- Look at sector specific trade associations for statistics - You can also get useful information from the HSE website, and of course [RoSPA](#)
- Talk to HR - Find out about historical sickness figures, how many workplace accidents have there been and how many working days have been lost? Also, talk to financial and operational managers about the impact of profits and productivity
- Finally, research the person you are presenting the case to – What is their position, are they a key decision maker or an influencer? This will help dictate the way you present the case.

Remember, when you present your research you need to use best case and worst case scenarios. Facts are obviously important, but you will need to make a few assumptions on what could happen in the future, make these scenarios realistic and allow for potential variations and uncertainty.

Presenting the case:

2. Outline the benefits

You need to think about how your proposal will benefit the business as a whole. There's a good chance that you will have to field a few difficult questions, so take along all of your research and statistics. There's also a good chance that you will have to negotiate the proposal and potentially drop certain elements of it. As such, you need to work out what is essential and what could be dropped. So what benefits should you be looking to present...

* **Decrease in sickness** - Improving health and safety measures at the workplace reduces the likelihood that people will need to take sick leave. This saves the business money in many ways:

- Paying the salary of an absent worker
- Reduction in productivity
- Overtime incurred by other employees covering for the absent employee.

There are also indirect costs to consider, such as:

- The time taken for a replacement to learn the new role
- Possible diminished services and product quality
- Loss of business, continuity and reputation.

* **Recruitment** – Of course, the sick or injured member of staff may end up leaving the business, in which case there will be costs:

- Allocating someone to recruit a new member of staff
- Searching and advertising for a new member of staff
- Conducting interviews with potential candidates
- Setting up contracts

Presenting the case:

2. Outline the benefits

* **Save money on Insurance costs** - Employers must have Employer Liability Compulsory Insurance to cover for injuries and ill health experienced by their employees while at work. If applicable, they will also have insurance for accidents involving vehicles, and possibly third-party and buildings insurance. However, that only covers a small proportion of the costs that could be incurred from accidents. Some of the uncovered costs can include:

- Sick pay
- Damage to products and raw materials
- Repairs to equipment, buildings, vehicles
- Overtime pay
- Production delays
- Insurance investigations
- Fines and legal costs
- Loss of contracts.

* **Increase in productivity** - Simply put, keep everyone safe and more work will be done. You'll also find that if workers feel safe they will work more comfortably and produce more. Having a robust safety policy can increase worker morale, which can also have a positive effect on productivity. If workers have to cover for absent colleagues it puts additional pressures on them, which can adversely affect their productivity.

Presenting the case:

3. Strategic goals

No matter how strong a case you make, you need to ensure it fits in with your company's goals. This is particularly relevant if the person you are making the proposal to is on the director's board it may not be as simple as saying that your project will increase profits.

If your business is looking to grow, then your project needs to fit in with this. But if the goals are more conceptual – e.g. “Develop great leaders and realise potential” – then you may need to tailor your proposal accordingly. You could highlight options such as [Management Essentials](#) or [Safety Representatives](#), as these courses aid professional development.

Presenting the case:

4. Summing Up

Let's finish by summing up the key factors that will help ensure you get the boss to buy in:

- Do your research – this will help ensure you present a thorough and well considered business case
- Emphasize the risks
- Highlight the potential benefits derived from implementing the plan
- Link your proposal to the overall business objectives.

Tick all of these boxes and you stand the best chance of getting your boss to buy-in to health and safety.

“Good health and safety is good business sense”

About RoSPA

RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) is a registered charity and one of the UK's leading safety organisations. Through our [workplace safety training](#), [consultancy](#), [fleet](#), [awards](#) and [membership services](#), we work with organisations within the UK and overseas.

Why choose RoSPA training?

RoSPA offers one of the widest ranges of health and safety training courses and in-company safety training in the UK, from operative level right up to director and board level. We are one of the leading providers of NEBOSH and IOSH accredited courses, manual handling, safer people handling, auditor training and core health and safety training courses, covering a wide range of topics within the areas of risk assessment and the management of occupational safety.

We also lead the way in practical health and safety consultancy and audits. Tailored services provide a service that suits and ensures you're fully compliant and - above all - safe.

Which courses does RoSPA offer?

[NEBOSH Courses](#)

[IOSH Courses](#)

[Safer People Handling](#)

[Manual Handling](#)

[Core safety skills](#)

[Practical skills](#)

[Auditor training](#)

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