

Institute of Organisational Psychology (IOP) Core Competencies

| Competency name | Definition |
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| Absenteeism | The practice of regularly staying away from work. Also includes presenteeism, the practice of coming to work despite illness, injury, anxiety, etc., often resulting in reduced productivity. |
| Abuse or Harassment | <p>Abuse includes physical assault, sexual violence, emotional abuse and controlling behaviour. It is often a pattern of ongoing behaviour but may also refer to a one-off incident. Abuse can result in physical and mental health consequences for victims, perpetrators and children who are witnesses.</p> <p>Harassment is a pattern of behaviour that is directed against another person, including specified acts (for example as defined in the Harassment Act 1997) that causes the other person to fear for their safety (or that would cause a reasonable person in the circumstances to fear for their safety). In common use this can also extend to fear for the person's health.</p> |
| Advanced Systems Thinking by Design | The design of work systems and parts of work systems to optimise health and safety of workers and productivity of processes. Design focus may be on task processes, workplace layout and relationships, the functioning of items of plant and equipment, the knowledge and skills required by operators for optimal system functioning, the usability of equipment/software, and/or cognitive/psychological aspects of performance. Work system design is likely to include assessment of worker population function in existing systems. The knowledge gained from assessment may inform the selection/procurement of plant, furniture and equipment. A wide range of assessment methods and a team approach may be utilised. |
| Ageing Issues | Age is not a barrier to work but ageing can mean the workplace has to manage a worker with a number of degenerative processes, from arthritis to dementia. |
| Ageing Workforce | <p>The average age of people in the New Zealand workforce is becoming older (and more female), and will stop expanding by about 2030. This will affect the labour market as ageing will affect the size, characteristics and possibly the productivity of the New Zealand workforce.</p> <p>Issues that may affect workers include vision, hearing, mobility, speed, agility, memory and strength, anxiety due to retirement. Also ageing workers can have more sleep issues if doing rotating shift work. This will have implications in the way organisations will have to operate in the future in an environment where they can support their workers, and optimise productivity.</p> |
| Bullying | <p>Repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or a group of people that can lead to physical or psychological harm.</p> <p>Repeated behaviour occurs more than once and can involve a range of actions over time. Unreasonable behaviour are actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstances would see as unreasonable. It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person. Bullying may also include harassment, discrimination or violence.</p> <p>Common bullying behaviours fit into two main categories - attacks that are direct and personal or those that are indirect and task-related.</p> |
| Compliance with Legislation | Working with organisations to ensure that they are aware of and take steps to comply with relevant health and safety laws and regulations. |
| Data Reporting and Analysis | Collecting data and/or analysing and interpreting actual health and safety performance compared with specific objectives, targets or standards. |
| Depression | <p>An illness that can affect how people feel and behave for weeks or months at a time. Depression is a state of a lasting low mood and often an aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings and sense of well-being, and impact sleep, relationships, job and appetite.</p> <p>Some specific areas of depression include post-natal depression, depression in the elderly, physical illness (some symptoms of physical illness are difficult to distinguish from those of depression), and depression in children and adolescents.</p> |
| Hazard or Risk Assessment | Hazard identification, risk assessment and management: A systematic process to identify hazards and assess/quantify the likelihood, consequence/severity of harm and put in place appropriate controls. |
| Health and Safety Advice | An opinion or recommendation about managing a business' health and/or safety risks. |
| Health and Safety Assessment | <p>A health and safety assessment evaluates risk generated in the workplace or in the work process with objectives to remove, reduce and replace the source of risk with safer equipment or processes, or to lessen the risk to the health and safety of the workers</p> <p>This may include assessment at an organisational, business unit or site specific level.</p> |
| Health and Safety Assurance | Evaluating health and safety management system effectiveness to provide confidence to management on whether the system is fit-for-purpose. |
| Health and Safety Benchmarking | Assessing an organisation or work group's health and safety performance against other similar work groups, organisations or industries. |
| Injury / Illness Management / Treatment - Injury and Discomfort Prevention | Workplace and system design, education, or procedures to reduce injury or discomfort to workers. |
| Job Demand Analysis / Task Analysis | Evaluating task or job requirements to assess the physical, functional and/or cognitive demands on workers. This can be used as a pre-requisite for developing a physical, functional or cognitive capacity evaluation or to set baseline requirements for a task/job. |

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| Mental Health Issues in the Workplace | <p>In any organisation there will be a range of mental health experiences across employees and this will change over time. This range includes people experiencing optimal/'positive' mental health, people who are mentally unwell (and/or have a diagnosed mental illness which may or may not be being treated), people who lack general mental wellbeing (usually disengaged and unmotivated people who lack meaning or purpose in their daily lives), and people who don't meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental illness but may be highly stressed or distressed due to home or work life or a traumatic event.</p> <p>Health issues can manifest in a variety of ways in the workplace. The two most significant ways in which workplaces experience poor physical and mental health of employees is through increased absenteeism (when workers are off sick), and increased presenteeism (when workers are at the workplace but not mentally engaged with work).</p> |
| Mental Overload / Underload | <p>Consideration of the overall mental load of operators performing tasks. Mental workload includes expertise, memory, attention, situation awareness, and social and organisational factors as well as other internal and external factors. Work performance may be impacted by both mental overload and underload.</p> |
| Mentoring | <p>Providing a learning partnership between an experienced professional person (mentor) and a less experienced person (mentee) for the purpose of sharing knowledge and information.</p> |
| Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) | <p>PTSD is a psychological reaction to experiencing or witnessing a significantly stressful, traumatic or shocking event. PTSD manifests as persistent mental and emotional stress occurring as a result of this injury or severe psychological shock, and typically involves disturbance of sleep and constant vivid recall of the experience, with dulled responses to others and to the outside world.</p> <p>Without treatment PTSD can lead to depression and suicidal thoughts. Anxiety, panic attacks, eating disorders, and substance abuse are also common elements of PTSD.</p> |
| Remote / Isolated Work | <p>Advising on remote or isolated work. Work can be remote or isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time, or the nature of the work. Work can be isolated without being remote, and be remote without being isolated.</p> <p>Remote or isolated work includes working alone or separated from colleagues, working in a geographically isolated or inaccessible area - where the nearest emergency help (e.g. fire service or hospital) is some distance away, working outside normal business hours or shift/night work, and working in locations where communication is difficult.</p> |
| Sedentary Work | <p>Non physically-demanding work activities (usually in sitting), that do not require large range changes of position or place much cardiovascular load on the body.</p> |
| Stress and Anxiety | <p>Stress describes the physical or emotional response to demands or pressures that people may experience from time to time. Common causes of stress include work, money, relationships and illness. Symptoms may include irritability, difficulty sleeping or relaxing, headaches and muscle tension.</p> <p>Anxiety, particularly ongoing, all-over anxiety or Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), is where the level and frequency that people experience stress, distress, dismay, and worry is greatly increased. It is common for people with GAD to have other conditions such as depression, or other anxiety-related disorders like panic attacks and obsessive-compulsive disorder.</p> |
| Training / Education | <p>Providing education, training or facilitation in health and safety-related topics.</p> |
| Traumatic Injury | <p>Physical harm arising from a single accident or event and defined by the degree of physical incapacity.</p> |
| Wellbeing and Work-life Balance | <p>Wellbeing, welfare or wellness is a general term for the condition of an individual or group, for example their social, economic, psychological, spiritual or medical state. A high level of wellbeing means in some sense the individual or group's condition is positive, while low wellbeing is associated with negative happenings.</p> <p>Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation).</p> |
| Workplace Assessments - General | <p>A scoping assessment to identify when to bring in a specialist.</p> |
| Workplace Assessments - Specialist | <p>An in-depth assessment of worker, work tasks, techniques, workload, equipment and environment. The scope and nature of a workplace assessment can vary considerably depending on the needs of the business.</p> |
| Workplace Design | <p>The designing of workplace physical environments, work processes, work methods, and tools/equipment/plant to maximise productivity and reduce injury and health risks. (See "Work system design" for more complex requirements).</p> |