

Institute for Work & Health Organizational Performance Metric: Follow-up questions to further identify areas for improvement

This document is a companion to the Institute for Work & Health Organizational Performance Metric (IWH-OPM), an evidence-based, eight-item questionnaire developed and validated by the Institute for Work & Health (in collaboration with health and safety professionals in Ontario) to help organizations assess and improve their health and safety performance: www.iwh.on.ca/iwh-opm.

This document includes follow-up questions organizations can ask when they score low on a particular IWH-OPM item. The questions were developed by IWH with the expertise of representatives from Ontario's health and safety associations (HSAs), and with evidence from research validating the IWH-OPM tool. For further assistance, Ontario organizations are advised to contact their HSA, and firms in other jurisdictions are advised to contact organizations with similar OHS expertise. Ontario HSAs include:

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA): www.ihsa.ca
Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW): www.ohcow.on.ca
Public Services Health and Safety Association (PSHSA): www.pshsa.ca
Workplace Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) www.whsc.on.ca
Workplace Safety North (WSN): www.workplacesafetynorth.ca
Workplace Safety and Prevention Services (WSPS): www.wspss.ca

When answering the follow-up questions, be sure to consider everyone who completes work at your organization (e.g. workers, temporary workers, contractors, interns, students, etc.).

IWH-OPM Item 1: Formal safety audits at regular intervals are a normal part of our business.

Does your workplace conduct health and safety audits* at least once per year?

If not, here's why you should consider conducting regular audits:

- To ensure deficiencies are identified in order to reduce workplace risks and prevent injuries and illnesses
- To ensure compliance with legislation, standards and guidelines
- To ensure continual improvement within your organization

For help in conducting a safety audit at an Ontario organization, contact your HSA.

*Audits can be defined as formal comprehensive/thorough processes of evaluating and reporting how an organization manages health and safety in accordance with a recognized standard (e.g. CSA Z1000, OHSAS 18001, an HSA audit or an approved corporate standard).

IWH-OPM Item 2: Everyone at this organization values ongoing safety improvement in this organization.

- Do managers and supervisors correct and/or report health and safety problems when they see them?
- Are workers encouraged to report and/or correct health and safety concerns/problems where applicable?
- Are inspections for health and safety hazards regularly conducted?
- Is everyone encouraged to look proactively for safety improvements and offer suggestions during health and safety inspections?
- Are there ongoing opportunities to learn more about health and safety (e.g. special health and safety events, news, extra education/training)?

IWH-OPM Item 3: This organization considers safety at least as important as production and quality in the way work is done.

- Does work stop if a health and safety problem or hazard is identified?
- Is health and safety incorporated into your performance metrics?
- Is health and safety considered when setting organizational goals?
- Is health and safety considered when making changes to improve production or quality?
- Do managers and supervisors ensure that health and safety remains a priority even when deadlines are tight?
- Is health and safety important in all departments of the organization?

IWH-OPM Item 4: Workers and supervisors have the information they need to work safely.

- Have workers and supervisors been trained/educated to identify and control hazards in their work?
- Have workers and supervisors been trained on safe work practices and safe operating procedures?
- Do workers know who to report health and safety concerns to?
- Does new worker orientation include health and safety training and/or mentorship?
- Are organizational changes that affect health and safety (e.g. changes in procedure or materials) communicated in a timely manner to others?

IWH-OPM Item 5: Employees are always involved in decisions affecting their health and safety.

- Is health and safety the first thing discussed at regular meetings?
- Are brief pre-shift health and safety awareness talks held every day?
- Is everyone in your company responsible for health and safety within their authority and ability?
- Does everyone in your workplace have the knowledge, skills and abilities to solve their own health and safety issues?
- Do opportunities exist for employees to participate in discussions and decisions on aspects that affect their health and safety (e.g. hazard assessments) or the health and safety of others (e.g. contractors)?
- Is the joint health and safety committee (in workplaces with 20 or more employees) or health and safety representative (in workplaces with 5-19 employees) active and visible to employees?

IWH-OPM Item 6: Those in charge of safety have the authority to make the changes they have identified as necessary.

- Are identified hazards or health and safety concerns addressed in a timely manner within your workplace?
- Are barriers to correcting identified hazards acknowledged and dealt with?

IWH-OPM Item 7: Those who act safely receive positive recognition.

- Are employees recognized (formally or informally) for working and acting safely?
- Does good health and safety performance count in performance reviews and promotions?

IWH-OPM Item 8: Everyone has the tools and/or equipment they need to complete their work safely.

- Are safer tools, when available (e.g. tools that further reduce exertion, vibration or dust), used to do the same job?
- Is equipment modified, when possible (e.g. guards or steps added), to make the equipment safer?
- Is regular maintenance done on tools and equipment to ensure health and safety?
- Is appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. safety glasses, respirators) provided and used when needed?
- Are health and safety standards upheld for personal protective equipment (e.g. fit tests, maintenance, training on use)?



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