

The Effect Of Ergonomic Expertise On The Success Of Programs For Prevention Of MSDs

Andrew Reitzel (University of Waterloo) and Richard Wells (CRE-MSD, University of Waterloo)*

Ergonomic programs and activities have been shown to have high rates of failure, with some estimates as high as 75%. Knowledge of factors that contribute to ergonomic program success and sustainability is presently not clear. This study examined whether incorporating ergonomic expertise would help make ergonomic programs more successful. 185 companies in manufacturing were contacted by phone. A survey was sent out to worker and management JHSC co-chairs. What was found was that the size of a company, funding, the amount of time spent addressing ergonomic issues, training, knowledge and commitment were all influential in reducing MSDs, but that having access to ergonomic expertise influenced whether a company had a successful ergonomics program.

*CRE-MSD - Centre of Research Expertise for the Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders