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Monitoring what matters

Are you confused about what to monitor in health and safety? The hard work has been done with readily available guidance material to help.

WITH THE CHANGE in legislation and the introduction of due diligence, it is a no-brainer to say that, as CEOs and business leaders, you need to monitor how your business performs in health and safety. You are not alone, however, if you don't know what it is you should be monitoring and evaluating.

Common concerns

Many CEOs and business leaders from all size of organisations - have similar questions about monitoring health and safety:

- Am I doing the right things?
- Could I do better things?
- Am I doing things right?
- Could I do things better?

Get specific to your business

Some leaders copy what others are monitoring. Blindly copying others is not the best thing to do, though. It doesn't work because what you monitor needs to be specific to your business. It needs to be specific to:

- the risks in your business - your risk profile
- the activities you undertake - what your business does

- the people who work with and for you
- your business's maturity in health and safety.

When it comes to monitoring health and safety, there is no one size fits all approach. However, this doesn't mean that you need to overcomplicate it.

Three pillars

The Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, in partnership with WorkSafe New Zealand, has identified three key pillars of performance to help you to identify what to monitor. These are risk, relationships and resources.

Risk

Good risk management is fundamental to good health and safety. If you don't understand the risks in your business, you have little hope of effectively managing them.

By understanding your risks, you will be better able to control them in a proportionate way. You will be better able to reduce the risks to people, while maximising opportunities that ensure business growth and success.

Good risk management means that, together with your workers, you understand the acute, chronic and catastrophic health and safety risks in all business activities.

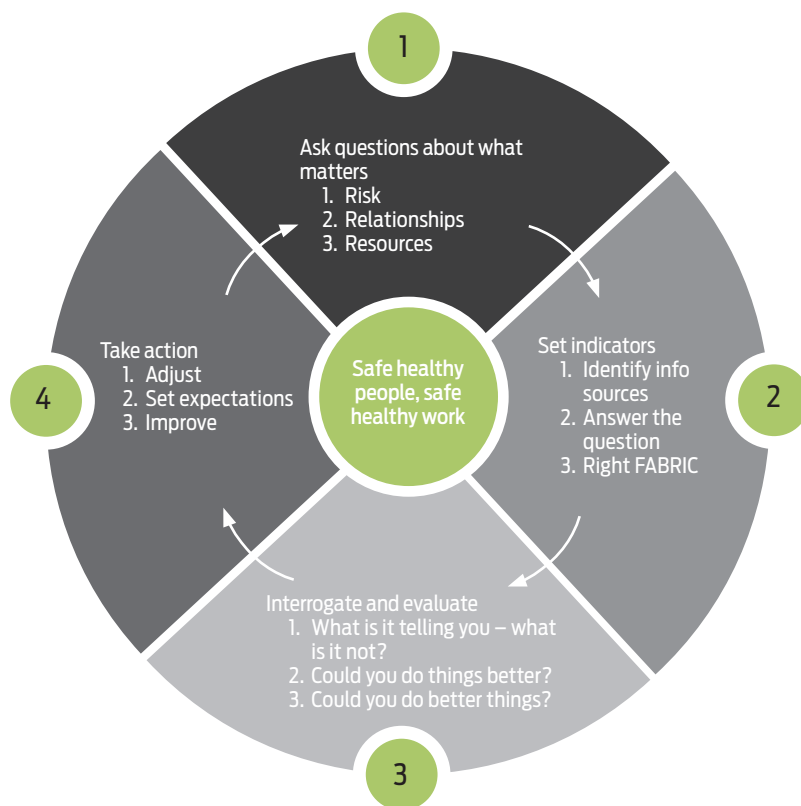
This understanding must span your supply chain and procurement activity and consider those you work with and alongside, for example, contractors, people on the same site, service delivery partners and funding partners.

When you understand your risks and, most importantly, your risk controls, you can monitor whether the key controls are in place and are working effectively.

Relationships

Successful business depends on people. It is built on a myriad of relationships and includes those between:

- leaders and workers
- leaders and the board, if you have one
- the business and contractors, suppliers and service delivery partners
- the business and those who work alongside you on site
- your workers and each other across teams and locations.



Healthy relationships are based on truth, trust and transparency with effective communication between the parties, effective engagement and involvement.

Understanding the health of key relationships, both internal and external, will help you to understand whether your commitment to health and safety is understood and shared. It will also help you know whether roles, responsibilities and processes are defined and being managed and to learn about and act early on emerging or existing ideas and issues.

Resources

Resourcing broadly covers the three Ps - people, process and plant. Focusing on resourcing will help you to understand these things:

- Whether you have the people with the knowledge, skills, physical and psychological capacity and overall capability to perform their roles. This includes whether you have access to the right specialist support when needed.

- Whether your processes support good health and safety activity - whether they are tailored to the needs of your workers, understood and followed. By focusing on this, you will also be able to consider your internal infrastructure for health and safety. This includes use of technology and ease of access to information.

- Whether your physical assets like plant, structures, buildings and equipment are fit for purpose and well maintained.

Understanding these things will help you to establish whether you are appropriately investing in health and safety.

Process to identify what to monitor

A guide for CEOs, *Monitoring what matters*, has four steps to identify what to monitor to understand the presence and maturity of the three Rs (risk, relationships, resources) in your business. ◀

For more ▶ The guide can be freely downloaded from www.zeroharm.org.nz.