

# Improving Worker Well-Being



**MAMMUT**



First Edition November 2023

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**Disclaimer**

This booklet is aimed to inspire factory owners, managers, supervisors, and team leaders to implement best practice standards of health, safety, ergonomics, and leadership to benefit the business and the workforce.

The advice is based on European and American standards but is neither comprehensive nor definitive. It is very important to know and respect the relevant national laws on workplace safety.



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# INTRODUCTION

## Why should we promote worker well-being?

Management guru Simon Sinek advises to always start with “Why?”, so that is where we will start. We want to identify and share best practice to improve the lives of all workers in our supply chain.

Mammut has 867 direct employees worldwide. Mammut has no own manufacturing and products are made to Mammut designs by Own End Manufacture (OEM) suppliers. We estimate that there are approximately 86,000 people employed in the supply chain at Tier 1 level. 78% are women. If we take into account leverage, the equivalent of 5,000 people work on Mammut products.

Mammut suppliers operate in thirteen countries including Vietnam, China, Bangladesh, Switzerland, and Taiwan. Our staff regularly visit factories and have observed that there are huge differences in facilities and culture. Contrary to expectations, new factories in developing countries often have better workplaces and cultures than older factories in more developed countries. Mammut has been organising social audits at factories since 2009. Each audit creates a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and the serious faults are discussed and corrected. However, this approach does not promote best practice or continuous improvement.

We are experiencing a dramatic reduction in the working age population, due to low birth rates in developed nations. In many countries, an increasing proportion of workers are older and many have health issues that cause them to take time off. All businesses are struggling to recruit and retain healthy skilled workers. There are many things that can be done to alleviate these problems.

We want to inspire you to implement best practice standards of to benefit the business and the workforce. We will use **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** to structure this booklet. The initial steps of workplace improvement

projects are to examine and improve the physiological and safety aspects of the workplace. This starts with risk analysis to identify safety hazards and then implementing solutions to mitigate or, better still, eliminate them. Even minor accidents reduce efficiency and motivation of all employees. Appropriate guards, barriers and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will reduce accidents and lost working days. Workplace safety can be improved, not simply to reduce accidents but also, to improve employee motivation and pride. Floor markings and clear signage encourage cleanliness and tidiness and can also improve workflows. Improving the environment will also improve the culture.

Ergonomic seating and workplace design reduce fatigue and muscle strain. Noise, air quality and temperature also make a big difference to comfort. Improvements in physiology and ergonomics promote long term health and reduce sick days. With the increasing average age of workers, ergonomics and good lighting has more relevance. Optimisation of the workplaces improves efficiency and quality. Toyota's 5S approach is an excellent way to review and optimise workplace layouts. The majority of employees in sewing industry are women and many will have children. Flexible hours, and assistance with child care, can enable mothers to work successfully rather than being forced to drop out of the workforce. The pandemic showed that many administrative jobs can be achieved by home working.

The next step is to look at the company culture. A clear purpose for the company produces a shared vision. When supervisors and team leaders understand the strategy it enables them to make better decisions daily. Together purpose and strategy help to build team spirit. A healthy culture and strong team spirit motivates employees and boosts both retention and recruitment.



# CODE OF LABOUR PRACTICE

To support Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), Mammut has been a member of Fair Wear Foundation since October 2008. Fair Wear covers Tier 1 sewing factories. Mammut policy is to apply the same HRDD principles to all products. All suppliers to Mammut are expected to follow both the labour laws in the relevant country and the code of labour practice. Mammut actively cooperates with other customers at each factory to encourage resolution of problems found in audits.



*The Fair Wear Code of Labour Practice poster includes a phone number for worker complaints. This should be displayed at all sewing factories.*

*Ever Sun, Vietnam 2023*

The Code of Labour Practice (COLP) is based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, in particular the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998). Many other organisations have similar codes.

Here is more detail about the eight points including the references to the ILO conventions that they reflect. There are also some comments on problems that have been found in our supply chain.

## **1. Employment is freely chosen**

*There shall be no use of forced, including bonded or prison, labour. (ILO Conventions 29 and 105).*

Forced labour is possible in all countries. There are serious concerns with factories that employ foreign migrant workers. Some employment agencies charge migrant workers high fees, which could lead to debt bondage. There are also reports of passports being held by employers.



## 2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining

*The right of all workers to form and join trade unions and bargain collectively shall be recognised. (ILO Conventions 87 and 98). The company shall, in those situations in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining are restricted under law, facilitate parallel means of independent and free association and bargaining for all workers. Workers' representatives shall not be the subject of discrimination and shall have access to all workplaces necessary to carry out their representation functions. (ILO Convention 135 and Recommendation 143).*

In some countries, Unions exist but they are not independent as they are often headed by factory managers. Sometimes, there is antagonism between unions and factory management, which can result in threatening behaviour and even violence.

## 3. There is no discrimination in employment

*Recruitment, wage policy, admittance to training programmes, employee promotion policy, policies of employment termination, retirement, and any other aspect of the employment relationship shall be based on the principle of equal opportunities, regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, political affiliation, union membership, nationality, social origin, deficiencies or handicaps (ILO Conventions 100 and 111).*

Discrimination can take many forms including age, caste, disabilities, gender, political views, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

Sewing factories often have 90% female workers. In male dominated societies, verbal abuse and even physical abuse is very common. Fair Wear offer special training to combat gender based violence.

## 4. No exploitation of child labour

*There shall be no use of child labour. The age for admission to employment shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, not less than 15 years." (ILO Convention 138) "There shall be no forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of*

*children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour. [...] Children [in the age of 15-18] shall not perform work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm their health, safety or morals." (ILO Convention 182)*

Child labour, meaning under the age of 16 is quite rare in the countries where Mammut produces. However, there are often young workers (16-18) in factories. Young workers should not engage in shift work, heavy work or overtime.

## 5. Payment of living wage

*Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week shall meet at least legal or industry minimum standards and always be sufficient to meet basic needs of workers and their families and to provide some discretionary income. (ILO Conventions 26 and 131). Deductions from wages for disciplinary measures shall not be permitted nor shall any deductions from wages not provided for by national law be permitted. Deductions shall never constitute an amount that will lead the employee to receive less than the minimum wage. Employees shall be adequately and clearly informed about the specifications of their wages including wage rates and pay period.*

There are several issues with wages. The first is compliance with the legal minimum wage (LMW), which is respected in most countries. The second is compliance with legally specified uplifts to hourly pay for overtime, which are often ignored in countries where factories have piece work. There are often problems with late payment of wages or even non-payment of allowances and holiday pay.

In Bangladesh, the LMW is very low compared to Living Wage benchmarks. In China, LMW is set by each province, and payments less than LMW are rare as workers are free to move to other factories. Turkey has very high inflation which rapidly erodes wages. In Vietnam, LMW is set by the government according to 4 regional classifications and is increased annually.

Payment of a Living Wage is a huge problem in most countries. There are many different



benchmarks for living wages and often they are disputed. Inflation is a major problem as it erodes the wages overtime.

### **6. Reasonable hours of work**

*Hours of work shall comply with applicable laws and industry standards. In any event, workers shall not on a regular basis be required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and shall be provided with at least one day off for every seven-day period. Overtime shall be voluntary, shall not exceed 12 hours per week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated at a premium rate. (ILO Convention 1).*

Many apparel factories have very strong seasonality so there is a risk of overtime, particularly in peak season. Overtime is considered excessive if the total hours are 60 hours per week or if employees are working seven days a week. Excessive overtime and seven day working in peak season is a very common and serious issue in the apparel industry.

### **7. Safe and healthy working conditions**

*A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided, and best occupational health and safety practice shall be promoted, bearing in mind the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards. Appropriate attention shall be paid to occupational hazards specific to this branch of the industry and assure that a safe and hygienic work environment is provided for. Effective regulations shall be implemented to prevent accidents and minimise health risks as much as possible (following ILO Convention 155). Physical abuse, threats of physical abuse, unusual punishments or discipline, sexual and other harassment, and intimidation by the employer is strictly prohibited.*

Serious problems such as inadequate fire and building safety are usually found in the first audit of a factory. Sometimes these can be very expensive to remediate.

Every factory audit produces a long list of non-compliances, but most of them are easily fixed. Typical examples are lapsed test or training certification, non-functioning fire sensors, missing machine guards, missing

item in a first aid kit and improper labelling of chemicals.

In places where workers live in dormitories, there may be a poor standard of hygiene and fire safety.

### **7.b Building & Fire Safety**

Bangladesh has a poor reputation for fire and building safety following horrible accidents. Many Bangladeshi and Indian owned factories in Bangladesh have very poor safety standards in terms of building construction, electrical wiring, fire safety and machine guards. Proper PPE is expensive, so home-made PPE is common. Factories with Korean or Taiwanese owners are usually much better.

The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh was created after the collapse of Rana Plaza in 2013. The accord audits factories for fire and building safety and ensures that required safety upgrades are completed. In 2021, the International Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry was established and this will extend cover to additional countries. Mammut joined the International Accord on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

### **8. Legally binding employment relationship**

*Obligations to employees under labour or social security laws and regulations arising from the regular employment relationship shall not be avoided through the use of labour-only contracting arrangements, or through apprenticeship schemes where there is no real intent to impart skills or provide regular employment. Younger workers shall be given the opportunity to participate in education and training programmes.*

Every worker should have a written contract and suitable explanation so that they understand the content. Mammut has received complaints relating to unfair dismissal and also non-payments of bonuses when workers resign.

## **Encourage Social Dialogue**

To ensure harmony in the workplace it is necessary to have a functioning dialogue



between workers and management. This is described as social dialogue and should be a two way communication about work related issues within the business. Good communication will improve the business performance and working conditions to benefit both parties.

All factories need a functioning grievance mechanism so that worker complaints are noted, investigated and remediated. For normal day to day issues, workers should be able to discuss problems with their supervisor and the supervisor should try to solve the issue or escalate to higher management.

Best practice is for managers to encourage workers in each department to elect worker representatives and form a worker committee. The committee can discuss common issues and raise issues with management. This can and should include a union if they are active in the factory. Union staff are trained in employment law and to negotiate on behalf of the workers to solve problems.

Fair Wear has a Worker Education Programme which provides training to improve social dialogue. They also provide training for supervisors and managers.

*The Fair Wear Code of Labour Practice poster includes a phone number for worker complaints. This gives workers an independent way to complain. The Fair Wear Complaints line is a last resort if workers feel unable to solve their complaints through the internal systems. Mammut works with about 75 factories and receives on average 3 complaints via the Fair Wear system each year.*



If you want more information, or feel you have not been treated correctly:

- 1 Talk to your supervisor, if possible
- 2 Talk to your representative if there is a worker committee
- 3 Get advice from your union or from a charity

If these don't work, you can email [Fair Wear](mailto:complaints@fairwear.org):

[@ complaints@fairwear.org](mailto:complaints@fairwear.org)

Fair Wear will always treat your complaint confidentially. If you wish to file a complaint, we will investigate the issue. If possible, we will help you to solve the issue you have raised. Fair Wear is an independent, nonprofit organisation. You can learn more at [www.fairwear.org](http://www.fairwear.org)



# WORKER WELL-BEING

## Definitions of Wellness and Well-Being

The terms Wellness, Well-being are often used interchangeably but this can cause confusion. The Oxford Dictionary defines 'wellness' as 'the state of being healthy, especially when you actively try to achieve this.' Wellness is used commercially to describe a very wide range of activities that promote physical and mental health. Wellness activities include physical exercise, movement, meditation, sleep and nutrition. The Oxford Dictionary defines "Well-being as 'general health and happiness, a state of emotional/physical/psychological well-being'. The difference between the words can be explained as action and result. In simple terms, wellness activities lead to a state of well-being.

## Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

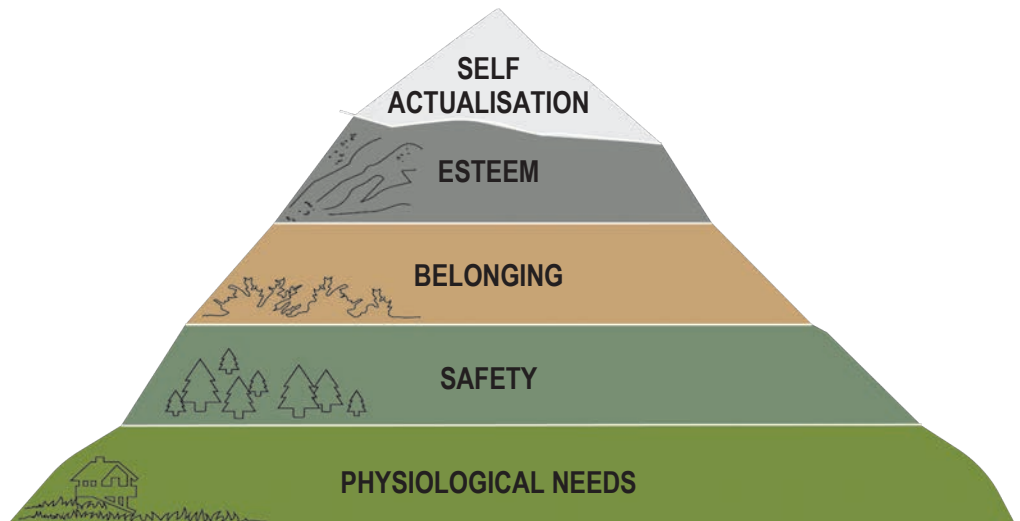
American psychologist Abraham Maslow wrote a paper in 1943 called "A Theory of Human Motivation". This theory is widely

used in psychology and management studies to explain human behaviour in many situations.

Maslow's theory is often explained with a pyramid diagram. The most basic needs are physiological – food and shelter. Once a person has covered these needs, the next priority is safety and security. After that comes social needs to have friends and family. When the first three levels are achieved and stable, the person seeks esteem i.e. recognition for their accomplishments. The top of the pyramid is called self-actualisation. This can take many forms such as academic studies, creative arts, sport and travel.

Knoll is an American office furniture company who developed a holistic approach to workplace wellness. Knoll used Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to explain wellness and wellbeing in the workplace.

We can interpret Maslow as a mountain called **Mount Well Being** that we will all climb together.





# PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

*Air quality, dust, lighting, movement, noise, nutrition, temperature.*

## Climate of the Workplace

Workers are at their most efficient when they have clean air, comfortable temperatures and appropriate humidity. According to the location the workplace may need heating in winter and cooling in summer.

Air conditioning can take many forms, according to the climate. In northern Europe a simple fan may be sufficient in summer but in Vietnam a more sophisticated solution is needed.

Inhaling dust from natural fibres like cotton and wool can cause damage to respiratory (breathing) function. Workers should be issued

masks to guard against inhaling fibres in textile mills. Dust extraction should be used on workstations that create dust or lint, such as overlocking fleece with an underbed trimmer.

Footwear factories use a lot of adhesives and many of these contain solvents which can cause headaches. Fume extraction fans will improve the air quality at the workplace.

Noise can be a severe problem and is often subject to national workplace laws. Long term exposure to high levels of noise will damage hearing. Weaving looms and knitting machines, and embroidery machines are very noisy and operators require hearing protection.



*In a rope factory, safety is provided by cages around the moving parts of machines. However, it is a noisy environment, so ear protection is necessary. Teufelberger, Czechia 2023.*



## Lighting

Good lighting is essential to enable workers to work to high quality standards. This is more important when the workers are aged over 40. Lighting solutions should consider both the ambient light in a room and also the specific lighting of the work.

## Mental Health

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.

Managers and supervisors should be aware of the symptoms of stress and early signs of depression. The company should develop procedures to prevent and mitigate excessive stress on their employees.

## Movement

Movement is important for general health. People who do moderate exercise live about four years longer than people who are sedentary. Exercise does not need to be intense sport, as simply walking from place to place benefits longevity.

Workers can be encouraged to change position every now and then or to stretch their neck, back, shoulders. This will reduce fatigue and muscle pain.

## Nutrition

Most facilities have a canteen or break room where workers can eat and drink. In urban environments it may be possible to buy lunch locally, but industrial locations are often far from the shops, so employers should provide clean facilities to prepare and eat food.

Larger factories may provide a canteen and food. Care should be taken to provide a healthy nutritious food that takes into account local religions and taste preferences.



*Nutritious lunch. Spectre, Vietnam 2023*



## Unhealthy Habits

Many people have habits which are unhealthy. They may smoke, take recreational drugs, drink too much alcohol or eat an inappropriate diet. These bad habits may not have adverse effects when the person is young, but by middle age the consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle become obvious.

Drinking alcohol in moderate amounts is not dangerous, and most countries regard 100g per week as safe. Regularly drinking 200g of alcohol per week reduces expected lifespan by a year and drinking 350g per week reduces expected lifespan by four years.

- A bottle of beer (300ml, 3% ABV) contains 8 grams of alcohol.
- A bottle of wine (700ml, 12.5% ABV) contains 69 grams of alcohol.
- A bottle of whisky (700ml, 40% ABV) contains 221 grams of alcohol.

Weight has a big influence on health. The Body Mass Index (BMI) is the body mass in kilograms divided by the square of the body height in metres. A BMI of 18 to 25 is healthy. Being obese with a BMI 30 reduces expected lifespan by 18 months. A BMI 35 reduces lifespan by about three years.

Smoking even small amounts is dangerous. 20 filter cigarettes per day reduces lifespan by about ten years. Vaping is less harmful than smoking but it is not safe.

Employers may decide that personal habits are not in the remit of their business, but they will eventually have less efficiency and higher costs as a result. Workers with unhealthy habits tend to have more time off sick and are more likely to leave the workforce early. These increase the cost burden on medical insurance and pension plans.

Factory managers should consider engagement with workers to encourage healthy activities. Programs to assist people to give up smoking are a good idea.

## Working Hours

Historically, workers lived within walking distance of their employer. Over the past 50 years, it has become increasingly common to

commute to and from work. This is exacerbated by property prices in developed countries which mean that long commutes are normal. Travel time adds to the working day. It is possible to work on trains but driving is unproductive time. Driving on dark winter nights or in bad weather is particularly tiring. Flexible working hours help people to reduce the stress and cost of commuting.

If workers are required to work more than 60 hours in a week, they become progressively more fatigued. This impacts their quality and their health. Working for seven consecutive days is particularly draining. Workers need at least one day off per week to recover, even in peak season. Most countries have employment laws which prohibit excessive working hours.

Overtime is a problematic feature of the apparel industry. Brands have to deliver summer and winter collections on particular dates to all of their customers in the northern hemisphere. Often several brands are purchasing from the same factory so the peak loading is extreme. The solution to overtime lies more in the business relationship between the brand and the factory than in the management of the factory. Brands should be encouraged to book capacity months in advance and to spread production over several months rather than placing orders only in peak season. Suppliers should consider whether they actually need customers who only place orders in high season.

## Working Women

The majority of employees in sewing industry are women. Mammut estimate that 78% of workers in Tier 1 suppliers are women. Therefore, providing a healthy and safe workplace as well as adequate personal and professional resources for women is essential.

In many countries and cultures the mother is still the main caretaker for the child. Mothers can continue to work, if they live near to their parents or if they pay for day care. In urban environments, child day care is very expensive and as soon as there is a second child it is no longer affordable. This causes



mothers to drop out of the workforce. Flexible hours and assistance with childcare, like a company run creche or kindergarten, enable mothers to work successfully. This also benefits the employer because skilled and experience workers are retained.

Young mothers who decide to return to work need a private space for breast feeding or expressing milk.

Team members should be educated that before and during the menstruation some women experience premenstrual syndrome (PMS) which can include, among others,

severe pain, headache, mood swings and depression. It is important to have clean bathrooms with sinks, soap and hygienic waste bins or hygiene bags in each toilet to ensure an easy and hygienic handling of the women's menstruation.

Menopause is the change in women when they cease menstruation. This typically occurs between 45 and 55 but can start earlier. During the perimenopause, periods become irregular and can be very heavy. This is accompanied with mood swings, sudden temperature changes and sleep problems.



Private space for women. Ever Sun, Vietnam 2023



## Blue Zones reveal the secrets of a long healthy life.

In research funded by National Geographic, physician Gianni Pes, demographer Michel Poulain, and journalist Dan Buettner identified five places where a high proportion of people live fit and healthy lives into old age. Pes called these places Blue Zones and they are Sardinia, Okinawa, Costa Rica's Nicoya peninsula, Ikaria in Greece, and Loma Linda in California.

People in Blue Zones suffer less from Alzheimer's, cancer, depression, and dementia. Many remain fit and mobile in their 80s and 90s. Some live 100 years or more to be centenarians. The researchers found that long lived people have many things in common.

1. Community – long lived people keep old friends and make new ones. Participating regularly in social activities protects against the emotional consequences of isolation.
2. Family – long lived people tend to marry and have children. They maintain close family ties and help aging parents and grandparents.
3. Purpose – Volunteering offers vital help to people in need and provides a sense of purpose that can improve your health and happiness.
4. Eat plants – long lived people eat a mostly plant based diet combining vegetables, pulses, fruits, and nuts. Sardinians eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, goat's milk, and olive oils. People in blue zones eat very little meat, typically only 100 grams, once per week. They eat very little processed food.
5. Eat less - They often eat their smallest and last meal of the day in the late afternoon or early evening. Okinawans practice to stop eating when they are 80% full.
6. Alcohol – most long lived people drink a small amount of alcohol every day. Typically this is a glass of red wine. They do not drink to excess. They also drink plenty of water.
7. Movement – long lived people walk and do light exercise such as gardening with hand tools
8. Relax - Stress is part of life. To live a long time, build stress-relieving rituals into daily routines.
9. Faith – The vast majority of centenarians are members of faith communities. The researchers noted that ceremony, ritual and devotion to a higher good were instrumental in living a well life.

Dan Buettner has written many books and television programmes about Blue Zones. In America, there are several community projects to improve living conditions by following the healthy habits of the Blue Zones.



# SAFETY

*Accident prevention, ergonomics, fire safety, PPE, signage*

## Accident Prevention and Risk Analysis

Risk analysis is a key step in accident prevention. Identification of possible accidents leads to a plan to introduce precautions to avoid them as much as possible and to mitigate the effects if they occur. Every department runs different types of machinery and processes, each of which create different types of risks.

The following are the lists of accidents that are most likely to happen in a sewing factory.

### Anywhere

Possible accidents that can occur anywhere include -

- Fire
- Electrical short circuits
- Breathing problems
- Building damage (e.g. broken windows, leaking roof).
- Health emergency such as a heart attack
- Slips and falls

### Generator Room and Boiler Room

Possible accidents in the Diesel generator or Boiler (steam generator) rooms include -

- Accidents due to the mishandling of equipment and machinery.
- Heat strokes.
- Risk of fire due to the presence of fuels.
- Health risks of the persons working mostly from fuels and smoke.

### Knitting and Weaving Departments

- In machine based sections there is a significant risk of accidents from contact with machinery. Operators risk having their fingers, hands or arms stuck in machinery. This may lead to serious crushing and tearing injuries, including loss of body parts, bruises, cuts and/or burns.
- Inhalation of fibres (lint) in the air
- Noise

### Material Warehouse

Possible accidents in the fabric warehouse include -

- Strain injury from handling heavy objects.
- Fall while loading and unloading heavy fabric roll, accessories cartons, etc.
- Fabric rolls slipping from racks.
- Fabric rolls falling or rolling during inhouse transport.

### Cutting Department

Possible accidents in the cutting room include -

- Injury from cutting equipment like in straight knife, round knife or band knife.
- Breathing problem due to flying lint.
- Improper handling of fabric roll can lead to muscular injury.
- Health risks of the persons working mostly from fuels and smoke.



- Burns due to sudden steam leakage and accidental boiler touch.
- Bursting of the boiler due to faulty or improper usage.

#### **Production Floor/ Stitching dept**

Possible accidents in the stitching floor include -

- Personal injury due to needle while needle breakage, machine usage, needle changing, etc.
- Personal injury due to scissors, trimmers, or any sharp object on the production floor.
- Inhaling of loose fibres (lint) during stitching fleece or cotton jersey with overlock machines.
- The electrical shock on a faulty machine.
- Damage to eye on needle breakage.

#### **Washing Department**

Possible accidents in the washing department include -

- Risks due to exposure to chemicals used in the washing department.
- Slipping due to the wet floor.
- Electrical shock on wet contact with electrical equipment.

#### **Finishing & Packing Departments**

Possible accidents in the garment finishing department include -

- Injury due to steam leakage or burns on pressing.
- Personal injury with mishandling of scissors, trimmers, etc.
- Mishandling of cartons can cause muscle strain or any other injury.

#### **Chemical room/ Spotting room**

Possible accidents in the chemical room include -

- Continuous exposure to chemicals can cause health risks.
- Direct contact with chemicals
- Inhaling of fumes.

#### **Maintenance Workshop**

Possible accidents in the maintenance workshop include -

- Dropping tools and equipment.
- Mishandling of tools and equipment.
- Strain injury from handling heavy objects.

#### **Kitchen and Canteen**

Risks of accidents and illnesses include

- Injuries from knives
- Burns from stoves
- Poor hygiene resulting in food poisoning.

## **Data Security & Financial Awareness**

Young workers will benefit from basic financial advice such as how to budget so they learn to allocate money for rent, food and other necessities. They should also understand the importance of social insurances, pensions and reputable banks.

We live in an increasingly complex world where financial and data security is threatened. It is a good idea to teach all workers computer security with good use of passwords etc. This is important to protect both the individuals and also the company from fraud and theft.



## Fire and Building Safety

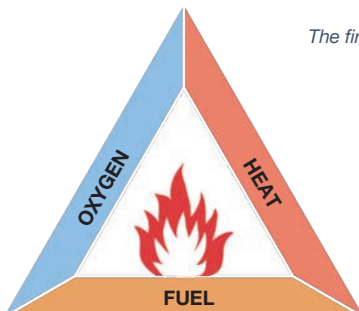
- Fire Extinguisher mounting and signage
- Exit routes and fire doors
- Fire escapes

A fire in a factory could injure or kill hundreds of people. Sewing factories are particularly high risk because most of the materials are flammable. Fire safety is therefore a priority. Fire safety measures will be mandated by national laws and measures will depend on the number of workers and the materials processed in the facility. Factories should have appropriate firefighting equipment

which may include a sprinkler system, fire hoses and extinguishers. Multi story buildings will require water tanks and pumps to supply the sprinklers. Fire fighters will use pipes, called risers, to pump water from ground level to each floor. The building will need fire doors to prevent spread and safe escape exit ways that may include an external staircase.



*Workers gather at an assembly area while the fire brigade spray water during a fire drill. Pung Kook, Vietnam 2023*



*The fire triangle shows that a fire needs oxygen, heat, and fuel*



Fires require oxygen, heat and fuel. Oxygen comes from the air around us. Heat can come from many sources, such as faulty electrical wiring or devices, welding equipment or heat generating machinery such as irons, taping machines and boilers. In a textile factory, fabrics and trims are a very good fuel and must be stored carefully away from sources of heat.

Every supervisor and team leader must be aware of the risks of fire. Keep the workplace tidy and avoid piles of fabrics and trims near hot machinery. Report faulty electrical devices to the mechanics for checking and repair.

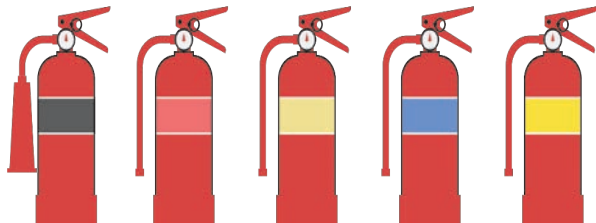
A fire safety plan must include evacuation of the workforce in a short time. Escape ways should be clearly marked and lead swiftly to a muster point the outside of the building. Escape paths should be regularly checked to ensure that they are not blocked by equipment or WIP. Fire escape routes should be clearly marked and kept free from

obstructions at all times. Exit doors should be easily accessible and should never be locked or obstructed. Multi story buildings are often required by law to have external metal fire escape stairways.

Fire extinguishers and fire hoses must be easily visible and accessible. Fire extinguishers are available in different types according to the type of fire that is likely to occur. Extinguishers and hoses should be checked periodically to ensure that they are in good condition and are functional. A suitable proportion of the workforce should be trained in fire safety. All workers should participate in fire evacuation drills at least once per year. In some countries the law requires factories to organise fire drills every month.

Fire safety equipment should be clearly signposted. If the workforce speak different languages, it is a good idea to have signs in each language or to use the ISO fire symbols or both.

### Types of Fire Extinguisher



| Class | Fuel                                  | CARBON DIOXIDE | WATER | FOAM | POWDER | WET CHEMICAL |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------|-------|------|--------|--------------|
| A     | Flammable Materials e.g. Paper & Wood | YES            | YES   | YES  | YES    | YES          |
| B     | Flammable Liquids e.g. paint & petrol | YES            | NO    | YES  | YES    | NO           |
| E     | Electrical Equipment                  | BEST           | NO    | NO   | YES    | NO           |
| F     | Cooking Fats - Fat Fryers             | NO             | NO    | YES  | NO     | YES          |



*Checking for heat in electrical circuits..  
Pung Kook Vietnam 2023*



*Fire Safety signs, extinguishers and fire  
hose.Spectre, Vietnam. 2023*



*External metal staircase provides a smoke free  
fire escape path Ever Sun, Vietnam. 2023*



*Generator with exhaust and fire sprinkler  
system, Ever Sun Vietnam 2023*



## First Aid Kits

- First Aid Kits
- Eye Wash Bottles
- Defibrillators

Every factory is mandated by law to have some people trained in First Aid and to provide suitable first aid kits. The content of these kits is often specified by national laws. It is a good idea to have first aid kits available in each department so that they are close if an accident occurs. Usually, first aiders are not allowed to give medicines.

In departments that are using chemicals or have dust, then Eye Wash stations are a good idea. In most cases simple eye wash bottles with sterile water are sufficient. In case of departments handling toxic chemicals, most sophisticated wash stations and showers may be required.



*Emergency Eye Wash Bottles. AB Utenos, Lithuania 2023*

It is becoming increasingly common to have In the case of a heart attack, first aiders can use CPR to keep the patient alive until medical help arrives. In some countries first aiders are also trained to use defibrillators to restart the heart defibrillators located in workplaces and public spaces like airports, shopping centres, community centres, and train stations. A defibrillator may also be called an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) or a PAD (Public Access Defibrillator).



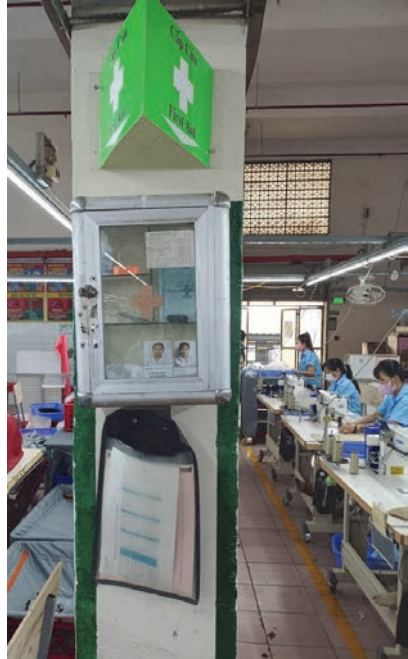
*First aider with portable AED (Automated External Defibrillator) QVE, Vietnam 2023.*



*Emergency eye wash station. QVE, Vietnam 2023*



*First Aid Signage. Spectre Vietnam 2023*



*First Aid Kit in Sewing Room. Note the sign can be seen from two sides. There are photographs of the department first aiders and records of when it was checked. Pung Kook, Vietnam 2023*



## Machine Guards & Housings

Ideally, in production areas that are used daily, machine housings and guards should be sufficient that workers do not need to wear additional PPE.

Measures that can be considered include -

- Dust extraction
- Emergency stop switches
- Housings and cages to keep workers away from moving parts.
- Needle guards
- Sensors which stop the machine in hands are in a danger zone
- Two button system for presses



*Transparent Perspex eye guard on a bar tack machine protects the operator if the needle breaks.*

*QVE, Vietnam 2022*



*Overlock machine with vacuum to remove dust and lint. QVE, Vietnam 2023*



*Diesel Generator with complete safety housing.*

*SLN, Turkey 2023.*



## Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment PPE is necessary when machine housings, guards and barriers do not provide adequate protection. PPE is also necessary for work that is transient in a location i.e. during building, machinery installation and maintenance. Most workers in a sewing factory will not need PPE.

There are many variants of each PPE item according to the hazard type and level of risk. Typical PPE items are

- Helmets
- Hearing Protection & Ear Plugs
- Eye Protection Glasses
- Harness for working at heights
- High Visibility Clothing
- Protective Clothing
- Gloves
- Footwear

To choose the right personal protective equipment (PPE) for workers, it is important to consider the specific hazards they may be exposed to. Here are some common PPE options for workers:

- Head Protection – Helmet is necessary in situations where an object may fall from above (e.g. on a building site). A helmet will also protect workers from banging their heads into if working in confined spaces.
- Eye Protection: Safety glasses or goggles should be worn to protect the eyes from flying debris, dust, or chemicals.
- Hand Protection: Depending on the tasks performed, workers may need gloves made of materials such as leather, Kevlar, or nitrile to protect against cuts, punctures, or chemical exposure.
- Hearing Protection: If workers are exposed to loud noise levels, they should wear earplugs or earmuffs to protect their hearing.

- Respiratory Protection: If workers are exposed to airborne particles or chemicals, they may need to wear respirators or masks to protect their lungs. The specific type of respiratory protection will depend on the level of exposure and the type of hazards present.
- Clothing: Workers should wear appropriate clothing that covers their skin and protects against potential hazards. This may include wearing long sleeves, long pants, and aprons made of flame-resistant or chemical-resistant materials.
- High visibility clothing (e.g. a waistcoat) may be needed if working near moving vehicles e.g. unloading materials.
- Harness- Full body harness and lanyard may be necessary for working at heights of more than 2 metres above the floor.

Foot Protection: Safety shoes or boots with slip-resistant soles should be worn to protect against potential foot injuries from heavy objects or sharp tools.



*Worker using a hot forging press to make carabiners. Note the PPE – safety glasses, ear muffs, gloves and safety shoes. Also note the emergency stop switch is highlighted with a yellow ring. Carabiners Inc, Taiwan 2023*



*Chain mail glove to protect workers using reciprocating knife cutting machine. Spectre, Vietnam 2023*



*Ear plugs are essential when working in noisy environments such as embroidery rooms. These rubber ear plugs are available in different sizes have a lanyard. Spectre, Vietnam*



*Covid mask. Spectre Vietnam*



## Warning Signs & Floor Marking

Signs are very important to warn about hazards, identify safety equipment and remind people to wear PPE. There are two different concepts in signage. The ISO system uses a graphical language with very little text, in a similar concept to road traffic signs, and hence overcome language limitations. American OSHA signs use more text to emphasise the hazard, its severity and the required actions.

### Sizes of Signs.

When choosing signs, the size is related to the distance from which they can be seen. A large factory hall needs bigger fire exit signs than in a small office.

| Shape     | Size to be visible from 5 metres | Size to be visible from 10 metres | Size to be visible from 15 metres | Size to be visible from 20 metres |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Round     | 100mm Diameter                   | 200mm Diameter                    | 300mm Diameter                    | 400mm Diameter                    |
| Square    | 100x100mm                        | 200x200mm                         | 300x300mm                         | 400x400mm                         |
| Landscape | 200x100mm                        | 300x150mm                         | 400x150mm                         | 600x200mm                         |
| Portrait  | 100x150mm                        | 200x300mm                         | 300x400mm                         | 400x600mm                         |

### International Standards ISO

The International Standards Organisation ISO is an independent non-governmental organisation which oversees standards covering technology and manufacturing. The ISO has 24,500 standards and these are accepted by 167 countries. ISO warning signs are mostly graphical, using shape, colour and symbols to communicate the message which helps overcome language barriers, especially in multi-language situations.

**ISO 3864** specifies international standards for safety signs and markings in workplaces and public facilities.

[Wikipedia.org/ISO 3864 Safety Signs & Markings](https://www.iso.org/iso-3864-safety-signs-and-markings)

**ISO 7010:2019** is an International Organization for Standardization technical standard for graphical hazard symbols on hazard and safety signs, including those indicating emergency exits.

The shape and colour of signs defines the meaning. Round signs are Prohibited (must not do), or Mandatory (must do). Warning signs are triangular and coloured black and yellow like a wasp.

Square signs are Safe Condition and are mostly green except Fire Safety which are red.

[Wikipedia.org/ISO 7010 Warning and Safety Signs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISO_7010)

Here are a selection of signs that may be relevant in a textile factory

### Prohibition

These signs instruct what you must not do. These signs are circular with a red border and diagonal line against a white background.



No smoking



No flame



Do not enter



Unsafe Water



No Food Here



## Mandatory

These signs instruct on things that you must do. These are used to show which personal protective equipment is needed. These are Blue circles with white symbols.



Be Safe



Ear Protection



Eye Protection



Electrical Ground



Safety Footwear



Gloves



Wash Hands



Wear Eye Shield



Wear Helmet



Wear Harness

## Warnings

These signs warn about hazards. They are yellow triangles with a black border and symbols.



General Warning  
Hazard



Laser



Magnet



Risk of Fall



Electrical



Fork Lift



Hot Plate



Fire



Chemical Burns



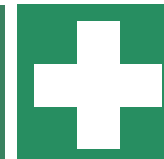
Press Injury

## Safe Condition

These signs indicate escape routes, safe assembly points and where to access first aid equipment. These signs are green squares and have a white symbol. For Islamic countries, these signs are available with a crescent rather than a cross.



Emergency Exit



First Aid Kit



Telephone



Assembly Point



Doctor



Defibrillator



Eye Wash



Clean Water



Escape Ladder



Emergency Stop

## Fire Safety

These signs indicate where to access firefighting equipment. These signs are red squares and have a white symbol.



Extinguisher



Fire Hose



Fire Alarm



Telephone



Large Extinguisher

## American Standards

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration OSHA is a US federal government agency responsible for safety in the workplace. OSHA creates and monitors workplace safety laws.

OSHA have a different approach to workplace safety signs than ISO. OSHA signs use symbols and text to make it clear what dangers are and the required actions. This fits with the US legal frameworks where litigation after accidents is normal and employers must demonstrate that they made risks and consequences clear.

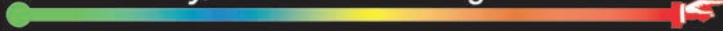
The American National Standards Institute ANSI oversees standards in the USA and

coordinates US standards with ISO standards.

**ANSI Z535** is an American standard that sets forth a system for presenting safety and accident prevention information. Identified by their use of the signal words "DANGER", "WARNING", "CAUTION", "NOTICE", or "SAFETY FIRST".

ANSI-style signs most often include specific details about the nature of the hazard, the consequence of interaction with the hazard, and avoidance procedures. Sometimes these also include the ISO symbols.

## Safety/Notification to Danger Level



| SAFETY FIRST                                                                  | NOTICE                                                                                                 | CAUTION                                                                                       | WARNING                                                                                     | DANGER                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicates and reminds workers of safety procedures and location of equipment. | Indicates a statement of company policy that relates to safety of personnel or protection of property. | Warns of potential hazards or unsafe practices that could result in minor to moderate injury. | Warns of hazardous situations or unsafe practices with some risk of severe injury or death. | Warns of hazardous situations or unsafe practices with high risk of severe injury or death. |



### Floor Marking

It is common practice and common sense to mark floors with lines to define walkways and hazard areas.

Solid lines are used to define walkways, work zones and material placement. Most factories will have yellow or white lines to separate paths from workplaces. Floor signs, such as arrows to exit points can also be added to increase understanding. Lines can

be made by painting or more easily with self-adhesive tape.

Diagonally striped two colour tapes are used to mark hazardous areas and keep clear zones.

Some organisations have sophisticated colour coding to define correct placement of raw material, finished goods, inspected goods and rejected products.



*Yellow lines separate walkways from workplaces at an apparel factory. Note the red arrows to show fire escape route.*

*Elegant, Vietnam 2023.*



Conventions for floor marking colours are similar for many countries and may be mandated by national workplace safety laws. The following table shows typical colour choices in Europe and USA.

|                           |                                                                |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Yellow</b>             | Aisleways & Traffic Lanes; Paths of Egress; Work Cells         |
| <b>White</b>              | Production; Racks, Machines, Carts, Benches, & Other Equipment |
| <b>Red</b>                | Defect/Scrap Area; Red Tag Area                                |
| <b>Orange</b>             | Material or Product Inspection; Energized Equipment            |
| <b>Green</b>              | Materials & Manufacturing: Finished Goods                      |
| <b>Blue</b>               | Materials & Manufacturing: Raw Materials                       |
| <b>Black</b>              | Materials & Manufacturing: Works in Progress                   |
| <b>Black &amp; Yellow</b> | Areas which present physical or health risks to employees      |
| <b>Red &amp; White</b>    | Areas to be kept clear for safety reasons                      |
| <b>Black &amp; White</b>  | Areas to be kept clear for operational purposes                |



## Workplace Ergonomics



*Well-designed workplaces with ergonomic chairs and clean modern tables. SLN, Turkey 2022*

Ergonomics is the science which combines physiology and psychology to understand and improve the way that humans interact with machines. It can be used to improve the cockpit layout in an aircraft, or to improve a product or to redesign a workstation. Ergonomics is sometimes human factors engineering. In the workplace, ergonomics can reduce human errors, increase productivity and enhance the safety, health and comfort of the workers.

Ergonomics involves considering factors such as posture, movement, and physical comfort to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders and improve overall efficiency. Look for awkward movements and postures and try to eliminate them. Bending, stretching to reach, repeatedly grasping, lifting, pulling and pushing can cause sudden trauma or cumulative strain, sprains, and tearing injuries to muscles, tendons, ligaments and other soft tissue. Carpal tunnel syndrome is a common overexertion injury caused by the type of repetitive tasks.

Using ergonomic tools and equipment, such as scissors with comfortable handles and sewing machines with adjustable controls, will minimize repetitive strain injuries and improve ease of use.

Organize the sewing factory in a way that minimizes unnecessary movements and promotes efficient workflow. This can involve arranging workstations in a logical sequence and providing sufficient space for workers to move around without obstacles.

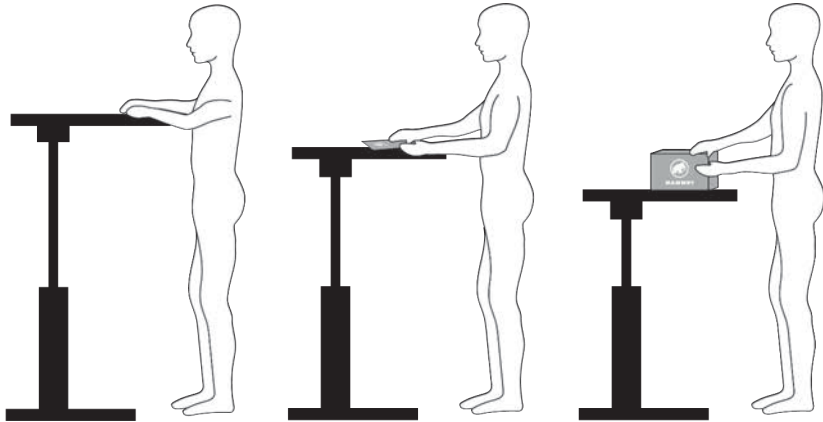
Workers over the age of 40 are more likely to have underlying health conditions and are prone to muscle pain and strains. These can be improved by ergonomic chairs, anti-fatigue mats and improved workstations.

Ensuring adequate and appropriate lighting in the sewing area to reduce eye strain and improve visibility of the work being done. Eyesight also weakens with age so good lighting becomes essential. Work instructions should use font sizes that are suitable for older workers.



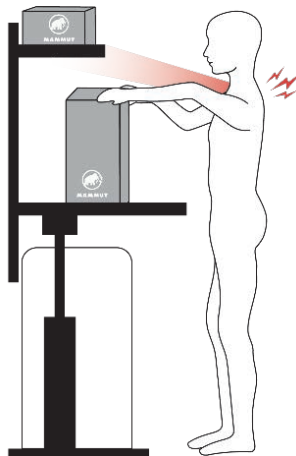
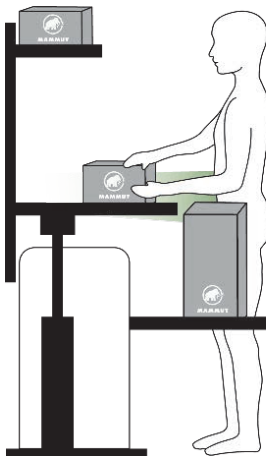
### Standing at a Workbench

Ensuring that sewing machines, cutting tables, and other workstations are adjustable and properly positioned to accommodate different body sizes and postures. People vary a lot in height. A short woman needs a lower table than a tall man. If the table is too low for the operator they have to work bent back, which will be uncomfortable. A workbench or sewing table height should be optimised upper arms should be relaxed and allowed to hang vertically.



Different tasks require different work surface heights:

- Precision work, such as writing or electronic assembly – about 5 cm above elbow height; elbow support is needed.
- Light work, such as assembly-line or mechanical jobs – about 5-10 cm below elbow height.
- Heavy work, demanding downward forces – from 20-40 cm below elbow height.



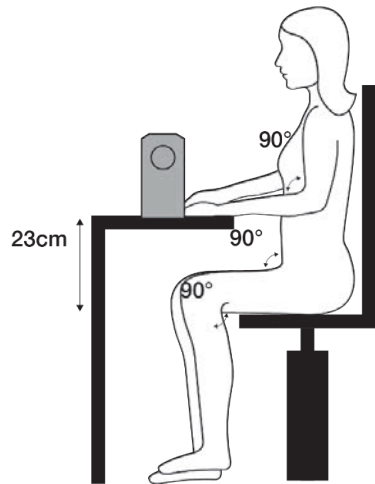
*Work at elbow height is much more comfortable than reaching above shoulder height.*



### Sitting at a Workbench or Office Desk

The sitting position should be as shown for sewing machines and office desks. The back is straight and the knees bent at 90 degrees. Thighs are parallel with the floor and the feet flat on the floor. The head is directly above the spine. The upper arms are relaxed and allowed to hang vertically. The workbench or desk height should be just below elbow height so that the upper arm is vertical and the lower arm horizontal.

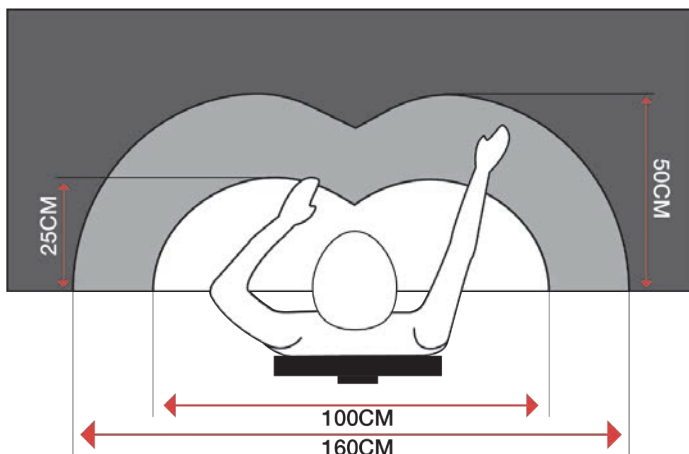
Providing ergonomic chairs with adjustable height, backrest, and armrests to support proper posture and reduce the risk of back pain or discomfort during long hours of work. An ergonomic chair which is height adjustable can be easily adjusted to give a good position for people of differing heights. This type of chair also supports the lower back which is better for long term health.



### Work Table Layout

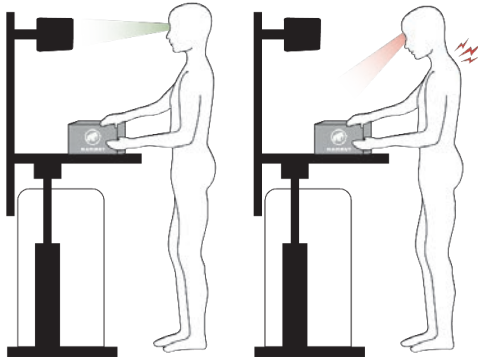
The layout of the work bench can be defined by the length of a person's arms. Just as with table height, a small woman has shorter arms than a tall man, so actual measurements will be different.

The usual work should be in an area defined by the radius of the elbows to the fingers. This is approximately a horizontal workbench area 100cm wide and 25cm deep in front of the operator. Occasional work, tool racks and component trays, can be placed further out at the radius of the outstretched arms. This outer zone is approximately 160cm wide and 50 cm deep on the workbench.





The workplace fixtures can also be built up vertically within reach of the arms, with multiple layers of tool racks and component trays. To save space the usual and occasional work zones should only contain tools, fixtures and components that are used every day. Tools that are only used once or twice a week can be stored on racks or tool boards further away from the working space.



*Instructions, test equipment and instruments are better at eye level so there is no need to work with the neck bent.*

### **Floor Mats**

Anti-Fatigue matting is recommended for standing workstations.

Workers who stand for lengthy periods on hard surfaces, can develop swollen or painful feet or legs. This can result in plantar fasciitis (inflammation of the connective tissue that

goes from the heel to the toe, supporting the arch), stretched Achilles tendon (tendinitis), heel spurs, varicose veins, knee problems, lower back pain and neck and shoulder stiffness. This can be improved significantly improved with rubber floor mats.



*Anti-fatigue mats for garment inspectors. SLN, Türkiye 2022*



## Using Toyota 5S to Optimise Workstations

After World War 2, America sent experts to Japan to rebuild the country's bankrupt industry. One Japanese company, Toyota, used these techniques very effectively and became world famous. In the 1980s, these techniques were brought to the west as a revolution in industrial management. The Toyota manufacturing system is the basis of modern theories of World Class Manufacturing and Lean Production.

### Toyota Lean Management and 5S

Five S is often written as 5S. It is a process to improve workplace layout which uses five principles which start with the letter "S". The principles of 5S can be applied to workplaces in an office or a factory, or to declutter your home.

#### 1. Sort (Seiri)

Start by removing any unnecessary items from the workstation. Identify and separate items that are essential for the work process from those that are not. This step helps to eliminate clutter and create a more organized workspace.

Sort the components and other materials in the same way as the tools. Frequently used items should be close at hand. Occasionally used items can be stored further away.

If you are not sure, put a red tag on the item and place it in a separate "red tag area" away from the workspace. If it is needed it can be moved back to the workspace. If it stays unused in the "red tag area" for more than a week, it can be put into storage.

#### 2. Set in Order (Seiton)

Once you have sorted the items, arrange them in a logical and efficient manner. Assign specific locations for each item based on frequency of use and ease of access. This

step ensures that everything has a designated place, making it easier to find and use items when needed.

Think of the flow of a workspace. What items get used the most and at what time? Who enters and exits this space? Recalling and analysing purpose is important when systematizing.

Tools used every day should be easily accessible at the workplace either on retractable lanyards, on bench mounted tool racks or on a shadow board. Tools used once a week can be on a shadow board shared by several workstations. Tools used once a month can be retained by the maintenance and calibration team.

#### 3. Shine (Seiso)

Clean the workstation thoroughly. Regular cleaning helps to maintain a safe and hygienic environment. It also helps identify any potential issues or defects that need attention.

#### 4. Standardize (Seiketsu)

Establish standard procedures and guidelines for maintaining the organized workstation. This step ensures that everyone follows the same practices, leading to consistency and efficiency.

#### 5. Sustain (Shitsuke)

Continuously monitor and improve the workstation's organization. Encourage employees to adhere to the established standards and regularly review and update them as needed. This step helps to sustain the improvements made and prevent a return to previous disorganized conditions.

Implementing Toyota 5S sorting can lead to improved productivity, safety, and overall efficiency in a factory workstation.



*Before and after a Toyota 5S project. Courtesy of Creative Safety Supply.*

[www.leansixsigmadefinition.com/glossary/toyota-production-system](http://www.leansixsigmadefinition.com/glossary/toyota-production-system)



*Airbag release mechanism assembly line designed to Toyota principles. These five workstations are each dedicated to a step in the assembly sequence.*

*Each station is equipped with component bins, work holders, power screwdrivers on retractable cords. Lighting is provided above each workstation.*

*Payer, Hungary 2023*



# BELONGING

*Culture, diversity, equity, inclusion, team dynamics.*

## Culture

Every organisation has its unique culture. However, it is perceived as something rather intangible. Even so, the company culture has a strong influence on the employees working there.

### Definition of Culture

In a workplace setting, "culture" refers to the collective values, beliefs, attitudes, norms, and behaviours that define the work environment and shape the interactions and relationships among employees, management, and other stakeholders within the organization. It encompasses the unwritten rules, customs, and shared understanding that guide how work is performed, decisions are made, and employees relate to one another.

A positive workplace culture fosters a sense of belonging, cooperation, and mutual respect, which can lead to increased employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall organizational success. On the other hand, a negative culture characterized by toxic behaviours, lack of communication, and unhealthy competition can harm employee morale, hinder collaboration, and adversely impact performance.

### Influences on Culture

Workplace culture is often influenced by various factors, including the organization's purpose and values, employee engagement, company policies, employee diversity and equality, events, and the overall work environment. It is an essential aspect of the workplace that plays a significant role in attracting and retaining talent, as well as shaping the overall employee experience. Companies often invest in promoting and maintaining a positive culture as it can have a profound impact on employee engagement and overall business outcomes.

### Cultural Values

To create a feeling of belonging and loyalty the cultural values of the organization should be in line with the values of the employees. For this a company must analyse the current culture first to build on what is already existing. The aim is to maintain the good parts of the culture and improve the way of working together.

Mammut has implemented a Culture of Action Framework which is designed to guide all employees in creating a successful culture together. It builds on the rich, existing culture and heritage Mammut has and supports the organisation, the teams, and the individual to be more motivated and committed, adapt easier to change and drive the results better.

### Employee Engagement

Involving workers in decision-making processes and seeking their input on matters that affect them can help them feel more connected to the organization and its goals. The extend of decision-making power varies throughout the hierarchy. However, even little decision-making power can have a strong positive effect on the workers motivation and loyalty. If the worker's opinion also matters, they feel included and heard. As a best practise tool to foster employee engagement organizations or team leads can conduct surveys which include questions regarding employee well-being, employee engagement and opinions on specific, relevant topics. Following the survey there must be a follow up and optimally visible actions in order to maintain the positive effect of a survey. If no follow up is done, the tool can easily result in the opposite effect of frustration and demotivation.

Mammut make a regular employee engagement survey which includes several questions on the above-mentioned topics. Building on this baseline there are frequent pulse checks with recurring questions to



track the progress of the employees' well-being and engagement.

Employees' opinions on specific topics like office attractiveness, commuting, etc. are also collected. All survey results are shared openly, including decisions on measures which are going to be implemented.

### **Company Policies**

Company policies can create a supportive and inclusive workplace culture where employees feel valued and respected. Especially policies that foster flexibility and equality are known to have an impact on the loyalty and well-being of the workers.

### **Home Office**

The pandemic showed that many administrative jobs can be achieved by working from home. Therefore, many companies implemented a more flexible working policy for jobs were working from home is feasible. The benefits of home office include less commuting time and invested money on commuting or higher flexibility to balance work and private life. On the other hand, working from home has also some challenges, which include isolation and in consequence lower sense of belonging. Therefore, a good balance between working in the office and from home has to be maintained and the leaders have to be trained in how to include remote workers appropriately, so they also feel part of the team.

In 2022, Mammut implemented a Flex Work Policy which allows the employees to work 50% of their work time from home, with strong recommendations for dedicated office days like Tuesdays and Thursdays. Working from abroad is allowed in EU/EFTA states up to 20 days a year and working from public transport is also seen as working time. This policy allows the employees to schedule their work life more flexibly according to their needs.

### **Uniforms**

Uniforms can be a benefit in a workplace situation. It is easy to identify who does what and it can also support the feeling of belonging to a team or the bigger company. If the uniform is comfortable, easy care and practical it is beneficial in that workers do not

need to buy their own work clothing. There is a strong case for uniforms to be attractive, like sports teams, as this also increases engagement and belonging.

### **Culture Events**

A company can celebrate the culture with regular events for all employees. These events should be linked to the culture one company inherits or want to acquire. These events enhance the motivation among the workers, increase the network within the company and pay into the sense of belonging. A dedicated event team can be set up to organize these internal events.

Mammut plan at least two big events per year. One is the "Mammut Spirit Day" which is a global event, combining the outdoors with a sustainable action. Every country is planning this event individually but in the same week. For example, the teams went into the mountains, delivering mountain huts with goods, collecting litter on the paths or learning about sustainable energy gain in the mountains. Additionally, according to Mammut's culture many smaller events, like after-work gatherings or BBQ and sports events are organized on a regular basis-

## **Diversity, Inclusion and Equality**

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), as well as equality at the workplace received high attention over the past decade. The aim is to create a workplace culture that values and embraces individual differences, ensuring that all employees feel respected, valued, and included, regardless of their unique characteristics. Most companies have a D&I policy, including measure to improve the diversity, inclusion and equality in the workplace. Since this topic is highly important it will be discussed in detail in the following section.

Diversity in the workplace refers to the representation and inclusion of individuals with a wide range of characteristics, backgrounds, and perspectives. These characteristics may include but are not limited to age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual



orientation, religion, disability, nationality, and socioeconomic background.

Inclusion is the active practice of creating an environment where all employees feel welcome, supported, and empowered to participate fully in the organization's activities and decision-making processes. It involves breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of belonging for everyone.

Equality, in the context of D&I, means treating all individuals fairly and impartially, without any form of discrimination or bias. It ensures that everyone has access to the same opportunities, resources, and benefits within the organization, regardless of their differences.

Many women still face inequality in the workplace regarding opportunities and promotions. The widely discussed glass-ceiling refers to the metaphorical ceiling women and minorities face in the workforce. This invisible barrier holds women back from stepping into management and executive-level positions.

To overcome this glass ceiling, companies have several tools: e.g., recruiting without name and picture, setting diversity goals, especially for management positions or implementing bias and stereotype trainings.

### **Ethnicity, Religion and Sexual Orientation**

Ethnic diversity, religious diversity, and diversity of sexual orientations in the workplace is crucial as it brings a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and talents to the table, enhancing innovation, problem-solving, and overall organizational performance. Embracing a diverse workforce fosters a culture of inclusion and equity, which in turn attracts top talent and increases employee engagement. By recognizing and valuing the unique contributions of individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, businesses not only reflect the broader society they serve but also stand to gain a competitive advantage.

To overcome existing stereotypes also trainings, diversity goals and blind recruiting can serve as effective tools.

## **Team Dynamics**

The immediate team is an important factor in workers well-being as it surrounds them every day. Team dynamics teamwork and collaboration can be improved by the team leads. Possible tools are cross-functional projects, processes that require working in a team or by incentives or rewards for good teamwork.

Apart from the regular work, the leader should organize team-building activities to strengthen relationships among factory workers. This can help foster a sense of belonging and improve team dynamics. Examples for a team-building activity can range between a lunch or an after-work get together to an activity day, e.g. the mountains.

All teams at Mammut are encouraged to do at least one team event every year. The teams are supported by a Team Event Guideline for setting the frame, finding a suitable activity and managing the organisational tasks. Bigger offsites, usually in a larger group or on a leadership level can combine strategic discussions with team building activities.



*Worker Training. Spectre, Vietnam 2023*



# ESTEEM

*Appreciation, autonomy, communication.*

## Appreciation

Appreciation is one of the most important factors to create esteem, motivation, and employee-wellbeing. Being recognized for hard work and achievements shows that the supervisor pays attention to the employees work and supports their thriving. However, there is no perfect recipe for appreciation. Individuals value different ways of praise and recognition. According to the business psychologists Semmer and Jacobshagen (2003) there are three categories of recognition: Verbal recognition, one time recognition and improved working conditions. Ideally different forms of recognition are combined. For example, a verbal recognition with a “thank-you-note” could be followed by a monetary recognition like a bonus.

### Verbal Recognition

Verbal recognition is the most used form of recognition, where supervisor praise and thank the employee verbally, either in private or in front of other people. This can either happen verbally or in writing. A brief “thank-you-note” even for small things is usually highly appreciated by employees.

### Onetime Recognition

As the consequence of a bigger achievement, it is common practice to give a onetime recognition to an employee. This should happen in a timely manner after the event. This type of recognition is usually expressed through presents, a bonus, team gifts or free days but there exist also more options.

### Improved Working Conditions

The last form of recognition are improved working conditions as a result of great performance. This could include a salary increase, de-termination, extended responsibilities, or new tasks.

## Autonomy

### Involvement

Involving workers in decision-making processes and seeking their input on matters that affect them can make them feel valued and increase their sense of ownership and pride in their work. Using tools like an Employee Engagement Survey (as mentioned before) gives employees a voice to raise their opinions on specific topics. Sharing information, e.g., strategic directions or company goals, with the team creates transparency and therefore trust. It also enables the employees to use the shared information to make decisions on their own or to adapt their way of working according to the company’s direction.

At Mammut, a monthly townhall meeting is held where all employees can either join in person or remote. In this meeting the General Management and other people from the organization share important information on business, strategy, our products, sustainability etc. with everyone. The meeting is also recorded for all those, who could not attend the session in person. This format increased the feeling of transparency and open communication significantly, which is shown by the results of the previous employee engagement surveys.

### Decision Making

To create esteem employees can be empowered by giving them the freedom to make decisions and take ownership of their work. Team leads can delegate tasks to their team members and provide coaching if needed. Also, the team leads need to provide the necessary resources to the employees and set clear goals to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

One key anchor of the Culture of Action Framework at Mammut is “Take Ownership”. This is the guiding principle for all employees, the team leads and the management team to take ownership of their responsibilities and create measurable impact. This is applicable



from daily tasks over big projects to managing a team or department.

## Communication

Create a culture of open communication where workers feel comfortable expressing their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. This should be possible without losing face and should be aligned with the different cultural values.

In all offices of the Mammut there is a physical feedback box as well as a designated e-mail address where people can (anonymously) give feedback and raise their opinions.

### Feedback

Feedback is not just about pointing out mistakes; it's a tool for continuous improvement and a testament to the commitment to drive better results. It fosters trust, enables open conversations, and allows the individuals and teams to thrive.

Giving feedback is an art that, when mastered, can truly transform a team. Here

7. the recipient's perspective and concerns.
8. Continuous Dialogue: Feedback is not a one-time event; it's an ongoing conversation.
9. Seek Feedback as Well: Encourage open communication by seeking feedback from your team members. Be receptive to their insights and use

are some techniques and best practices to provide constructive feedback:

1. Timeliness: Provide feedback promptly, preferably in the context of recent events. Timely feedback ensures the relevance and impact of your comments.
2. Balanced Approach: Balance your feedback by acknowledging achievements and addressing areas for improvement.
3. Specificity: Avoid vague feedback; instead, be as specific as possible.
4. Behaviour Focus: Concentrate on behaviours rather than personality traits.
5. Use the SBI Model: Start with the Situation, continue with the behaviour shown in the situation and end with the Impact this had.
6. Active Listening: Practice active listening by genuinely engaging with

them to improve your leadership skills.

Mammut has guidelines for all team leads to support them in giving and receiving feedback. Additionally, twice a year all employees have a review meeting with their supervisor to discuss the performance and the potential, measured with a questionnaire which is filled out form both sides to provide two-sided feedback.



# SELF-ACTUALISATION

*Creativity, empowerment, purpose, values.*

## Creativity

One cornerstone of empowerment and self-fulfilment is to express one's full creative potential in the workplace. Team leads should provide opportunities for workers to contribute their ideas and suggestions and execute them in their own style. To cultivate creativity a company needs to create a culture that values innovation and supports experimentation which also means to accept mistakes as part of a successful process. Team leads should encourage their team members to take risks and try out new paths

in order to find new solutions and to grow personally and professionally.

Referring again to the Culture of Action Framework, curiosity and adaptability are guiding principles in the Mammut. Curiosity refers to the eagerness to learn and to seek new opportunities for growth. Adaptability means taking risks and admitting failure as they happen. It is also about being creative to find new solutions in unexpected situations.

## Empowerment

### Learning & Development

Offering training programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities supports employees to enhance their skills and knowledge. This can empower them to take on new challenges, advance in their careers and grow personally.

Personal and professional development takes place on different levels. Around 70% of learning happens daily through learning by doing and training on the job. A further approx. 20% is covered by internal training, workshops, and lunch & learn events. It is in only around 10% of cases that external training is the most suitable way to develop an employee's knowledge and skills.

Learning and development can be differentiated between different types of training:

### Training

Training is defined as the initial learning of an activity. In terms of employment, this means the acquisition of all knowledge which forms the basis of a future occupation or an occupation that has been carried out without official training until now (catch-up training). The usual duration of such training can last from several months to several years.

### Targeted training

Targeted training is defined as when employees of a department or across departments are trained on a specific topic. These training courses are usually of a short duration. They often take place internally and occasionally externally.

### Further training

Further training is defined as when employees update the knowledge and professional skills acquired in their basic training to meet current and future requirements in their professional capacity. Further training also includes when employees undertake training to be able to take on more demanding tasks in their original position. Further training can generally take between several days to several months and it always takes place externally.

Mammut has a portfolio of training and development modules which are available for specific target groups. Some of the modules like soft skill e-learning and language learning are available for all employees. Specific modules like a talent development program are available for the talents and a leadership development initiative and coaching is offered to the team leads. With this, the individual development needs of different target groups are addressed.



*Mammut Spirit Day 2023 - The whole workforce in Switzerland carried food up to a mountain hut and joined with Protect our Winters to support a vote on climate change legislation. (Bernard van Dierendonck)*

## Purpose and Values

To create a feeling of self-actualization the purpose and the values of the organization should be in line with the values of the employees. Most of the bigger companies these days define their purpose which goes beyond making profit. The purpose. It reflects the broader societal impact and the contribution the organization seeks to make and is usually not meant to be communicated toward the outside or used as a marketing tool.

Values refer to the fundamental beliefs, principles, and guiding philosophies that define the core culture and identity of the organization. These values serve as the foundation for decision-making, behaviour, and interactions within the organization.

Mammut has implemented a Culture of Action Framework which serves as these guiding principles for every work situation. To implement the Culture of Action and to bring it to life, just having the framework is not sufficient. It needs constant effort and a variety of measures to anchor it in the company and in the everyday life of the employees. The measures can address the individual, team, or company level. Exemplary measures are guidelines, role models, team workshops and further training & education opportunities. At the end all employees should be able to feel their individual impact on the culture and the direction of the company. All of them create the culture together which in the end drive every situation and every project forward.



# FURTHER READING

## **Workplace Well Being**

Knoll is an American company which makes, among other things, premium quality office furniture. They promote the concept of workplace well-being and have published their research. [Knoll.com](http://Knoll.com) Workplace Well-Being Research

## **Blue Zones**

Blue Zones are places where a high proportion of people live fit and healthy lives into old age. Their habits can help you to live a long and healthy life. [www.bluezones.com/1-blue-zones-life-why-what-where-who-how/](http://www.bluezones.com/1-blue-zones-life-why-what-where-who-how/)

# GLOSSARY

|      |                                                     |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 5S   | Toyota method of organising a workspace             |
| AED  | Automated External Defibrillator                    |
| ANSI | American National Standards Institute               |
| CAP  | Corrective Action Plan                              |
| COLP | Code of Labour Practice                             |
| CPR  | Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation                      |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Area                            |
| EU   | European Union                                      |
| FWF  | Fair Wear Foundation                                |
| HRDD | Human Rights Due Diligence                          |
| ILO  | International Labour Organisation                   |
| ISO  | International Standards Organisation                |
| LMW  | Legal minimum wage                                  |
| OEM  | Own End Manufacture                                 |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration (USA) |
| PPE  | Personal Protective Equipment                       |

# SUPPLIERS

## **Signs, Floor Marking Tape**

Brady Corporation is an American company safety, identification and compliance solutions for a diverse range of workplaces. Brady Corporation has subsidiaries and distributors worldwide. They provide signs, self-adhesive floor tapes, arrows and floor signs. The websites have downloadable handbooks for safety signs and floor marking. [www.bradyid.com/](http://www.bradyid.com/)

Creative Safety Supply are an American supplier of safety signs, self-adhesive floor tapes, arrows and floor signs. They have a comprehensive website with downloadable guides and infographics. [www.creativesafetysupply.com](http://www.creativesafetysupply.com)



## Improving Worker Well-Being

This booklet aims to inspire factory managers, supervisors and team leaders to implement best practice to improve worker well-being.



To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Mammut in 2012, all employees climbed Tegelberg in Germany.  
(Photo: Rainer Eder)