

Dear «First Name»

Welcome to the August Issue of the Ergonomics Consortium newsletter.

We always want to keep you up to date with issues and news involving Ergonomics and Human Factors. Let us know if we are getting it right or wrong:

Email your comments to enquiries@ergonomicsconsortium.com

Common Sense Approach to Risk At Work

The HSE have launched a new strategy and campaign to encourage a 'common sense approach to risk at work'.

The strategy is called '*Be Part of the Solution*' and has been based on months of research in UK industries.

Some of the findings include:

90% of business leaders agree that their people are their greatest asset but a quarter of these companies will also face pressure to cut H&S budgets in the recession.

65% of employees report that good H&S makes them feel valued.

Nearly 80% of business heads agree that it makes good commercial sense to spend money on prevention rather than costly changes or

litigation after an accident or industrial disease.

Many professionals in the fields of Ergonomics & Human Factors will have spent hours alerting customers to the value of people centred design and preventative measures such as systems reviews, staff development and postural health assessments. These are very often labelled as 'common sense' approaches and it seems the business world and the HSE are now recognising the value of this.

Companies serious about this view of H&S are being asked to sign up to a pledge through the HSE website:

www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/pledge

If you have customers who are concerned about negative

perceptions of H&S, get them to sign up to the pledge and come to the Ergonomics Consortium website to find professionals who can help with all these problems in the workplace.



For more information visit:

www.hse.gov.uk

If you have any questions, [Contact us](#) directly.

Or call on

0800 612 7970

Open University Ergonomics Resources

The Open University has long been the bastion of distance and part-time learning. It is now finding a much wider and more dedicated audience for its numerous and varied courses due to e learning and the opportunities this offers to new and returning students.

For any subject, the available materials might limit the choices of those wishing to learn. Now the web, coupled with the download speeds prevalent, have meant that audio, graphics, and video files can augment the previous data sheets and 'dry' text based learning. This in turn expands the range of people turning to the web to learn.

"CPD FOR ERGONOMISTS WITH OU ONLINE COURSE"

Professional development for Ergonomists can be difficult to find but a short course from the Open University, in their Technologies section, titled: 'Person Centred Design' is a great introduction to a topic we should all know, whether we are involved in product design, information design or the specification of equipment. There is also fascinating input from manufacturing, design and engineering perspectives to help us draw together the reasons for some particular design features.

The video files, interactive animations and short tests make this 12 hour section a valuable source of information for CPD records and to help us apply the requisite and vital Ergonomic approach to any

problem. The Ergonomics Society has, for some time, required its members to demonstrate their CPD but, with the move to Chartered status, this requirement will be enforced more vigorously and we will all need to find resources like this to comply.



Consultant Members [sign in](#) to find links on your section of the Ergonomics Consortium website.

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Workers Memorial Day - What do you think?

Work and Pensions Secretary, Yvette Cooper has announced that the UK will be officially recognising Workers Memorial Day, currently on the 28th April in many countries. For the last couple of years the HSE have supported this occasion with press releases and a multi lingual website.

The Department of Work and Pensions launched a detailed consultation in July to see how the public thought the day could be recognised.

Suggestions include a lasting

memorial, and there are calls for another Bank Holiday, bringing the annual total in the UK to 9 days.

180 people were killed at work last year, according to the HSE, and still hundreds of thousands more are injured or made unwell. The recognition of the day seems set but what do you think would be the effect of having another Bank Holiday?

Would workers spend the time remembering colleagues?

Would costs to business rise as productive time is lost and wages for working the day are increased?

Would rising costs reduce the budget available for important H&S at work?

Would people be motivated to change their safety behaviours by the annual reminder?

Have your say on the website [Your Opinion](#) page and the results will be forwarded to Yvette Cooper to help inform her decision on the topic.

Chen Guojun was sent as an interim Manager to Tonghua Iron and Steel factory in North East China, last month, prior to its take over by Jianlong group. He had to inform the workforce that 25,000 jobs would be cut from the current 30,000 at the government run plant. This was part of the privatisation process that is becoming common in China.

This announcement led to rioting by staff which resulted in the executive being beaten unconscious. He was then denied medical attention by workers at the site as they stopped police and ambulance crews rescuing him.

There are reports in the press

of various factors that led to this reaction by staff, which include Chen Guojun's 'high' attitude to workers and their situation.

Disparity between wages of the executive and the workforce are also highlighted, and we are reminded of the rows over banking bonuses in this country. At times of change and hardship, these types of differences can be a catalyst for dissatisfaction and stress reactions to turn explosive amongst staff.

Businesses must always make difficult financial choices to survive and thrive but management of outcomes through all levels of staff and

business partners, needs a specific understanding of the complex human behaviours in work, social and stressful situations.

This was not evident at the plant in China and many UK businesses are making the same behavioural mistakes.

Human Factors specialists have always known this and specialise in developing the approaches needed to keep staff working well, efficiently and mentally able to handle changes, of all sorts.

[Contact us](#) at the Ergonomics Consortium to see how our Consultants can help your business change and improve.

This is supposed to be the funny bit...

Something to consider when buying seating for schools?



NEXT MONTH - NEW SUPPLIERS,
BRITISH STANDARDS AND MORE...

To remove your name from our mailing list, please send a blank email to remove@ergonomicsconsortium.com