



taylor'd ERGO TIMES



Nearly 101 ways to ask for an ergo assessment (and why it matters)

If you've ever asked an ergonomist for a quote for an "ergonomics assessment", hopefully s/he asked you a few questions before the quote was prepared. How we assess a job, and the outcome, can vary quite a bit, depending on your goals. Here are a few very different ways we have been asked for help:

"A bunch of employees are reporting discomfort on one particular job and I want to know **whether I should change it.**"

What you are asking for is a risk assessment to distinguish "nice to do" from "need to do". This is also the type of assessment that is done in response to a work-refusal or MOL order. The assessment results in a risk index – a single number that represents whether a task or specific demand is likely to cause an injury. A high risk index indicates a need for change.

"One of our employees was hurt on a job and we need to know if she can **return to that job.**"

What you need here is a demands-abilities evaluation, which objectively compares the employee's capabilities with the job's demands. The job demands are first quantified with a physical demands analysis.

"I'm thinking of making a change to this job, or installing a new machine, and I wonder if there are ways that I could **improve the design** so people will be more comfortable and productive."

A design review would provide suggestions to optimise a new design, developed in consultation with your design team, using our ergo design guidelines.

"I have **three different ideas** to improve this job, but I don't know which one will best address the hazard that I've identified."

A "what if" assessment would allow you to compare risks with each scenario. (cont'd>)

SAVE A TREE, and DON'T MISS a THING!

Over the next year, we'll continue to reduce our hard copy distribution, and increase our e-news. If you enjoy our articles, you'll get more info, more often, if you **convert to e-news**. Just send us an email at info@taylorordergo.com, call 519 623 7733, or fax 519 623 9164. to provide your email address. And please remember to update us when you move!

Our mission:

Inspiring, building, and supporting partnership between your organisation and our innovative team to advance ergonomics excellence.



Our team

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Follow us on:



All of our ergonomists are members of:





“One person on this job is having difficulty. Can you help him to **improve his technique**?”
Job coaching will help to identify and encourage best practices.

“I have an **office employee** whose family doctor has suggested an assessment, and another who has requested a sit/stand station.”

An office ergo assessment will help an individual employee to adjust and use the furniture available, and will identify any repairs or purchases that are needed. If a sit/stand workstation would be beneficial, the office ergo assessment will also ensure that employees can “sit” and “stand” effectively.

“I want to implement an **ergo program** but I don’t know where to start, or how to evaluate what has already been done.”

An ergo audit will help to sort out what you’re already doing well, and what aspects of your “program” need help. We’ll provide you with recommended objectives for the next year, and we can help you to meet those objectives with our “on-site ergo” program.

“We had a lost-time injury and the WSIB has requested a **PDA**.”

A physical demands analysis, or job demands analysis, summarises the demands of a job so that decisions about claims and job suitability can be made objectively. Sometimes the WSIB will also ask for an ergo assessment, which usually means that they want an assessment of the fit between an injured worker and a specific job, including recommendations to optimise the fit.

“One of our **drivers** has been complaining that the seat is uncomfortable.”

A sit-fit will optimise the adjustment of an existing driver compartment, encourage the use of best practices for driving, and identify any corrective actions needed.

“One of our **drivers** wants us to upgrade his lease vehicle but we don’t know if that’s necessary, or if it would even help.”

We typically start this process by completing a sit-fit, because often the complaint can be resolved by adjusting the seat appropriately. If not, then we can compare the suitability of a selection of different vehicles, by observing the fit of the employee in each model.

“The MOL ordered us to provide MSD hazard recognition and prevention **training**.”

Our one-hour face-2-face training is available with a driver, office, industrial, or manual handling focus. It’s a competency-based program. (There’s a quiz and certificate for accountability.) And it’s hands-on and “fun”! You don’t have to wait for an order to provide training....use this program to meet this year’s ergo training objectives!

If we can help you to answer any of these questions, please give me a call. I look forward to hearing from you!

Profound questions

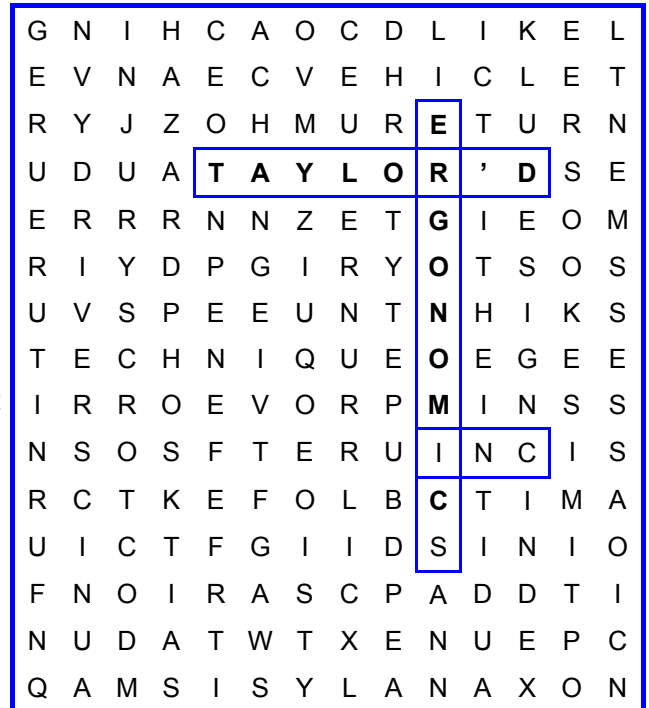
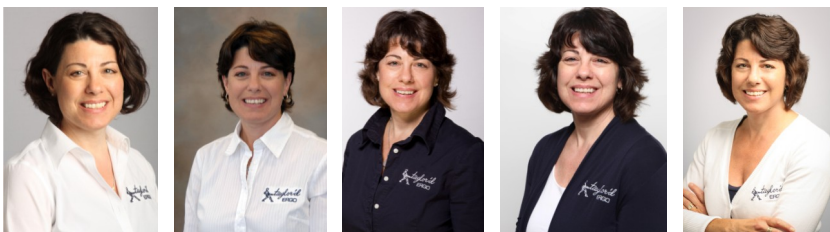
The article above includes words that are underlined. Find all of these words in the word search at the right, and then use the leftover letters (in order) to discover the value of questions.

Questions can be _____ A _____

Fran Peavey

Karen celebrates 20 years at TEI!

It’s hard to believe, but on November 11, 2016, Karen will have worked at Taylor’d Ergo for 20 years. We often hear people say that she hasn’t changed a bit in all those years, and we agree. We bet you’d have a difficult time choosing the most recent photo of Karen. (Check our website to be sure.)





Sit/Stand workstations: *Oversold or underused?*

Our team recently attended CRE-MSD's one-day conference on the topic of sit/stand rotation in the workplace. The ideas that we have been promoting amongst our clients were reinforced by the latest research. Here is a summary:

I'm sure you've seen the "sitting is killing us" headlines... but now many people are questioning whether standing workstations have been oversold. Employers are frustrated when they buy expensive sit/stands and then employees don't use them. Employers are bringing doctor's notes indicating that they need a sit/stand. We get calls every week from clients asking for help with some aspect of this new issue.

You've likely been told that sitting increases your risk of back pain, obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and even errors in your work. Recent research findings indicate that standing has *not* been associated with reduced cardiovascular risk. In fact, in some studies we heard about, cardiovascular disease was more prevalent amongst those who stood for most of their shift. (Although, not to fear, as long as you get the required amount of leisure time physical activity, your risk of cardiovascular disease seems to be reduced.)

In terms of preventing low back pain (which is why many people are interested in sit-stand in the first place), research findings now indicate that *prolonged* standing is no better than *prolonged* sitting... it can actually even be worse for some individuals! In response to these findings, these same researchers are also testing interventions to minimise low back pain in individuals who develop pain in standing postures. For example, they have found that:

- Specific exercises can change the muscles that are activated during standing in people who develop pain (as long as they are done regularly),
- Discomfort is reduced when people increase exposure to standing *gradually*, and
- Using a footrest to change postures periodically also helps (alternately raising the left foot and the right foot once every few minutes)

Do you notice a theme here?... they all point to movement! Standing is not a simple solution, and the option of sit-stand alone does not reduce low back pain: **moving early (before pain develops) and moving often (changing posture frequently) are the keys to preventing discomfort.**

If you're thinking of implementing sit-stand options for one, some, or all of your employees, here are a few things that we (and our research colleagues) would like you to think about first:

- Employees need to have knowledgeable control over their workstation. They need to be trained (ideally hands-on, in person), and consistently reminded and motivated to switch between sitting and standing. They should be advised that standing for approximately half the shift (*not* the whole shift) should be the upper target .
- Ideally, employees should have a chance to "trial" a sit-stand option first. Unfortunately, there is not yet a "test" to determine whether the employee will be a "pain developer" in standing. A trial run can help determine if a sit-stand is the right solution, and if the employee is committed to frequent workstation adjustments (on top of regular "micro-breaks").
- Before you invest in a sit/stand option, ensure that the employee's seated posture is optimised. Many employees discover that their back discomfort is alleviated by work station improvements, and they no longer want a sit/stand.
- Make sure employees commit to a fair trial; they must be willing to harden to the task, by increasing standing duration gradually, and they must be willing to wear supportive low-heeled footwear (a fashion sacrifice some people are not willing to make!)
- Consider the 4 S's when choosing a sit-stand workstation: speed, sound, stability and style. All of these have an impact on whether the employee will be happy to use the equipment.

If you're seriously considering sit-stand workstations in your workplace, or you have sit-stands but employees aren't taking full advantage of the equipment, give us a call! We can provide your employees with face-to-face training on optimal standing *and* sitting posture, individual job coaching and suggestions for sit-stand intervals, posters, slides for your communication TV, and handouts (articles and puzzles to make people think more about sitting and standing). We can also help you source vendors for sit-stand workstations, or let you know if equipment that you've chosen will fit your employees. Our 2017 calendar will focus on this topic; to order copies for your office, call us at 519 623 7733.

Missed the e-news?

Here's what we've been talking about lately:

- Hollywood takes on ergonomics
- How to "celebrate" ergonomics
- Ergonomic landscaping products
- Inspired by Olympians: From couch to competition

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Build in-house ergo resources with Taylor'd Ergo training

For more details, or to register online, please visit our website www.taylordergo.com/workshop/.

Please register me for:



101 Ergo Solutions, Thurs, November 17, 2016

This course will invigorate your ergo or safety team by providing tons of ideas and case studies, and encouraging participants to look at problems with a different perspective. Learn to identify and train people to use best practices when appropriate. Learn about simply machines and how these basic mechanical concepts apply in work settings.

\$370+hst HST#89765 6377



Office Ergo, Thursday, November 24, 2016

This one-day session will allow you to identify MSD hazards at office work stations, and develop cost-effective recommendations to address them. Includes suggestions for using and carrying laptops, introducing sit/stand stations, and more.

\$375+hst HST#89765 6377



Physical Demands Analysis, January 4-5, 2017

This two-day session will allow participants, including ergo co-op students, nurses, safety coordinators, and return-to-work coordinators, to collect data and write an objective, concise physical demands analysis report for the WSIB, employee's doctor, physiotherapist, or for internal company use. Participants learn how to measure forces, quantify "repetition", and obtain useful workstation and task photos.

\$785+hst HST#89765 6377

ONLINE registration and payment is available at www.taylordergo.com. We're also happy to receive your registration the "old-fashioned way." Just complete and fax this page to 519 623 9164, with your purchase order number, or mail it with a cheque to Taylor'd Ergonomics, 38 Water Street South, Cambridge, ON N1R 3C5. Your registration will be **confirmed by email, 1-2 weeks before the course**. Register early, as space is limited. Cancellations within one week of the workshop will be subject to a \$100 charge, although substitutions are welcome at any time.

Name(s): _____ Company: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

e-mail: _____ P.O.# _____ (if no PO, please send cheque with registration)

Need in-house ergo training for your employees? Our hands-on, skill-based one-hour "face-2-face" sessions (driver, office, industrial, or lifting) can be provided for as little is \$275/group (4 sessions in one day), plus materials (\$5 per person), and mileage. Find more info under the "training" tab at www.taylordergo.com.



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