

Workplace health promotion – basic tool for small businesses

When it comes to **workplace health promotion (WHP)**, small businesses have big advantages:

1. They are **close** to their employees
2. They are **flexible** in their actions
3. They are **versatile** in finding solutions

What is WHP? The aims of workplace health promotion (WHP) are to prevent illnesses and accidents at workplace, boost physical and mental health and to improve (overall) well-being (of all employees) in the workplace. In short, **looking after the most valuable resources.**

Small wheel, big impact: WHP can be carried out pragmatically and without any major use of resources. The key elements are structuring the organisation of work, open communication and a sense for detecting and managing positive and negative aspects.

This **basic tool** was developed with the involvement of experts **from science and practice**. It helps you to recognize where your business stands in terms of WHP and which additional measures you can take. Who knows, perhaps you are already doing many of these things without realising? Do the health check!



Statement of a manager: «Andrea dropped out for more than a year. That was really difficult. We don't want to experience that again.»



Video tip: Back pain or headaches, insomnia or a bad mood, absences or concentration issues? Watch three video short stories at www.artisana.ch (Page only available in German).

Health check – self-assessment

Complete this check and tick what you already do 😊, what partially 😊 what hardly 😞. In the next step, decide together with your team which measures you want to implement in the future.



WORK ORGANISATION



We **divide the work** so that nobody is **over- or underchallenged** over a longer period of time.

We facilitate **independent working** and individual **workplace design**.

We provide **safe work tools, helpful materials** and **ergonomic workstations**.

We offer incentives for a **healthy diet and physical activities**.

We **log working hours** and ensure that any necessary overtime is **compensated**.

We consider **individual work time and holiday wishes**.

We plan **shift work and shift changes carefully** and always ensure enough **recovery time**.

We have a **person responsible** for safety, health protection and workplace health promotion. It is **actively supported** by the management.

We have **established frameworks** and **rules** on how to deal with specific problems internally and who can be consulted **externally** if necessary (e.g. in case of an accident, psychosocial issues, addiction, etc.).

We regularly analyse **stress factors** and **risk** for accidents, illnesses and psychosocial issues, and take concrete measures when we see a need for action (e.g. investment in new work tools, «bike to work» campaign, training in stress management).

We regularly review and analyse the **impact of the implemented measures** (e.g. with key figures, situation analysis with the team, etc.).



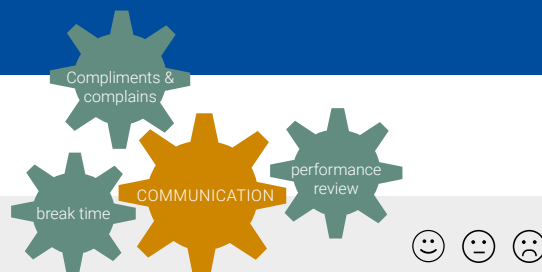
Statement of a manager: «We actually have a good ritual: we meet daily at 9 a.m for a coffee. Then everything that concerns the day comes up for discussion. Sometimes we are asked: «What kind of face are you making today?»... There is also a lot of laughter.»

Statement of a manager: «A friend-in-chief told health promotion is worth it, especially because of mental health. And that small businesses have advantages. That's when I thought: it's true!»



You can find the online check at www.artisana.ch (Page only available in German)

COMMUNICATION



We have regular **team meetings**.

At least once a year, all employees have **one-to-one meetings** in which they can share **feedback** and **concerns** with their line manager.

Common breaks and **spontaneous short conversations** in between are common practice with us.

We promote a **constructive** and **appreciative feedback culture**.

We encourage a **corporate culture** where employees are **allowed to make mistakes**, discuss their own **limitations** and have fun.

SENSOR FOR THE SPECIAL



Whether it is a **pleasant or problematic situation**, we **react** to something special.

We are **proud** of small and big **successes** and are not stingy with **praise** and **thanks**.

We celebrate **special occasions** (with **after-work drinks**, **parties** or **company trips**, etc.).

If **stressful periods** last longer than 3–4 weeks, we **take action** and discuss how the persons involved can **be relieved**.

We **talk** to our employees if we notice a **change** in their **performance**, **motivation** or **behaviour** and **offer support**.

If someone has **frequent or longer absences**, we arrange a **return to work conversation** in order to discuss possible work-related causes and how we can provide support.

Conclusion of the health check

Based on your answers discuss this list in a team and determine specific measures to be implemented over the next two years.

Topic

Measure

First implementation steps

1.

2.

3.

Tips for workplace health promotion

Respond immediately to positive as well as negative behaviour. This will reinforce positive habits while improving motivation and team spirit. An early reaction to problems can prevent illnesses and absences.

! «Well done!» Avoid assumptions such as: «If I say nothing then it's good» or «Giving praise once a year during the employee interview is enough». **Appreciation and recognition** have a positive effect on health and performance. Giving honest praise or saying thank-you cost nothing but can have a massive impact!

? «What's the matter?» In difficult situations, avoid assumptions such as: «At some point it will sort itself out» or «Saying anything will just make it worse». Long-lasting, difficult periods of stress can **result in physical and mental health problems**. Find the conversation and **ask!**

? **Do you notice inexplicable changes in an employee?** Has there been a change in the employee's performance, motivation or behaviour? These may be indicators of mental health problem. **React early!**



Statement of a manager:

«Today we systematically pay attention to the topic of health. My employees are my capital. So I am more than willing to invest in them.»



1. Find conversation and address the problem

Talk about the problem in a one-to-one meeting without any time pressure:

- Describe the observed problematic behaviour and the impact this has on the company.
- Express your concerns about the employee and ask if there are work-related reasons for this behaviour.
- Do not make diagnoses.
- Do not expect any insights and do not try to counter any resistance of the employee.
- Explain clearly what changes you expect.
- Offer support and discuss possible solutions.
- Arrange another meeting.

2. Adapt the work situation and support measures

Of course employees must also do their part to improve the situation. However, additional adjustments to the work situation may be appropriate:

- Reduction of workload and working time.
- Hand over responsibility.
- Adjust work location or workflows.
- Strengthening knowledge and skills through training.

3. Involve external support

If the situation does not improve or improves only insufficiently after discussions and work adjustments: Recommend to the employee to call in external support or let yourself be advised. Do not wait too long and react sooner rather than later. There is no ideal point of contact, and sometimes it takes more than a phone call:

- General practitioner or psychotherapist
- Disability insurance advisor or case manager for daily sickness allowance insurance
- Industry or trade association
- Coach or advisor of a specialized company
- Cantonal specialist department or labour inspectorate

Information on support: www.compasso.ch (information portal for employers), www.bgm.gesundheitsfoerderung.ch (BGM check for small businesses), www.helpy.ch (expertise for SMEs), www.helsana.ch/sme-toolbox (business health), www.psyatwork.ch (SECO information portal)