

FUTURE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES



PREVENTING TOMORROW'S INJURIES TODAY

Ergonomic Tips for Management

I have been in management to one degree or another for 26 years (yikes), I have studied it, and I have worked with or known hundreds of other managers throughout my professional career. One quality that the most successful managers and outstanding leaders have is a profound sense of caring for the people working for them.

I learned a long time ago that if I worked hard at making sure my employees had everything that they reasonably needed to do their jobs well, *my* job became much easier. If I did that really well, all I had to do was stay out of their way. Focus is always on employees' production and what can be done to ensure it remains unencumbered.

Well this newsletter is for those above mentioned managers, who may not take the necessary time to ensure that THEIR needs are being taken care of.



We run departments, divisions, and maybe whole companies. We are valuable due to our education, experience and, innate skills that make us who we are. We had better ensure that OUR capacity to work and function is also unencumbered. Remaining healthy is a top priority and is a key to being effective as a manager as well as having a high quality of life.

Several years ago it struck me as odd that we spend our entire lives getting smarter, more knowledgeable through experience and formal education, yet most people have never been taught the simple skill of how to protect our bodies from preventable workplace physical stress that can shorten careers and at the very least affect how we feel on a daily basis.

Raise your hand if you know what each knob of your office chair does? Keep it up if you know what position your body should be in while sitting, keyboarding, handwriting, or speaking on the phone? Have you ever really been taught how to lift that box at work, or lift laundry, children, and groceries at home? Do you know what specific stretch to do if you start getting a dull headache while working on your laptop?

Amazingly we have never been taught basic life skills that could have a dramatic effect on our physical health and quality of everyday living. The following tips will help you to feel better during the day and after you go home. Our Sittingsafe® office workers ergonomic training has been called life changing for a reason.

After all, a keyboard does not attack, it is just how we choose to use it that can be the difference in how we feel.

Repetitive stress injuries (RSI's) per definition do not happen overnight. They are a series of innocent physical stresses that add up over time to cause fatigue, discomfort, pain, and for the very unfortunate, painful and life-altering injuries. The symptoms may be insidious as one may feel mental fatigue caused by tired and strained muscle groups then wrongly assign the cause to emotional work-related stress.

What a difference you will feel when you eliminate the source of tense neck and shoulder muscles and learn how to keep the tension away. If you suffer from dull headaches, fatigue, a feeling of being overwhelmed, and one day seems to run into the next, this info may be just what the doctor ordered.

Muscles are either in a relaxed state or contracting. Your biceps are relaxing as you read this, but if you were to "flex your muscles" you would be contracting them. Muscles are there to perform work for us. They do great if given time to rest and to recuperate. They protest in the form of pain when they stay contracted too long or too often without time to heal and recuperate. Your biceps in this case would ache if they stayed "flexed" all day without ample time to rest and recuperate.

Most people that work at a computer don't realize that unfortunately, due to a lack of some simple training, their neck and shoulder muscles are unknowingly being asked to stay "flexed" most of the day. These muscles will inevitably rebel in the form of discomfort or pain that can, if long ignored, lead to a chronic headache or overall malaise.

PHYSICAL STRESS RELIEF TIPS

The best solution of course is to prevent the physical stress from occurring and accumulating on your body. This is really simple to learn. There are postures that your bodies like better than others.

Head Position - An average head weighs roughly 12 pounds (if empty it may weigh less). If you look down or put your head forward when looking at your computer your body needs to engage muscles to support it. Keep your head neutral (not down or up or extended as to be closer to the monitor) and your muscles can relax and thus help you feel better.

Make sure your monitor is at a height that keeps your head from looking down or up while typing or reading. (For laptop advice go to our website www.backsafe.com and look at a past newsletter under the "Newsroom" tab - "Is Your Laptop a Pain in the Neck?").

Neck and Shoulders - Do not reach for your mouse or keyboard! This can lead to neck and shoulder discomfort. Your upper extremities weigh up to 15% of your body weight. Imagine walking around like Frankenstein with your arms straight out? Not only would you look weird, it would hurt in very fast order. When we keep our elbows by our sides while typing muscles do not have to work to support our arms.

You are in charge of how you feel. Adjust your mouse and keyboard so that your elbows may stay by your side. This little adjustment can make a world of difference.

I will leave you with these few tips for now. If you follow this advice you will feel terrific in no time. It is so simple and can prevent so much pain it is well worth your attention to make these adjustments.

We have had many examples of people that have long taken medication for headaches and neck pain, no longer needing these pills. We have had Carpal Tunnel surgeries cancelled due to people learning our concepts.

Repetitive Stress Injuries are really simple to prevent if people are correctly taught basic ergonomic skills. Having someone read a pamphlet or read a computer based training module seldom works to change behavior. The key is teaching body management principles in a fashion that arouses participation and gets people to immediately feel better.

Here comes the plug. We have 1200 Injury Prevention Specialists certified to teach our Sittingsafe® and Backsafe® training programs across North America. We also have a Corporate Licensing Program that allows you to own our proven and successful ergonomic training programs to implement and reinforce internally.

What good is ergonomic furniture if one doesn't know what adjustments to make that would result in them feeling better? You and your employees can now experience all the comfort and benefits of their office furniture and your company can save on workers comp for years to come.

Prevent Tomorrow's Injuries Today!

We're TWITTERing! Keep current on the latest in injury prevention by following us. Find "backsafe" at [twitter.com](https://twitter.com/backsafe)!

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About Future Industrial Technologies // Future Industrial Technologies, Inc. (F.I.T.) offers workplace safety and ergonomic training programs. Backsafe® combines biomechanics, ergonomics, stretching and discoveries in how to train employees, that results in a change of physical behavior at work and in life. Sittingsafe® teaches employees how to adapt any workstation to be ergonomically correct specifically for their body types and how to stretch away physical stress common with office personnel. F.I.T. has a network of over 1200 certified Injury Prevention Specialists across North America to provide on-site trainings no matter where you have a location. F.I.T. also offers a Corporate Licensing Option if in-sourcing is preferred.

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