

What Ergonomics Can Do For You

er·go·nom·ics \,ûrg-go-'näm-iks\ -

The science of work.

Ergonomics removes barriers to quality, productivity and safe human performance by fitting products, tasks, and environments to people. (Here is a link to TheZenith's [Office Ergonomics](#) page).

While it is true that computer and some other office tasks are thought to contribute to repetitive activity injuries as tenosynovitis, and carpal tunnel syndrome, any repeated, stressful actions can result in injuries. (i.e. tennis elbow)

Risk factors for repetitive or cumulative trauma disorders include:

- force
- posture
- repetition (or frequency)
- duration and recovery time
- vibration
- contact pressure
- temperature
- velocity/acceleration
- lighting and noise

It is obvious that several of these factors such as force, posture, repetition, and vibration clearly apply to non-office jobs, as well. In fact, many athletes, dancers, carpenters, truck drivers, and service techs incur cumulative trauma injuries.

How can these be avoided by car dealerships?

Watch for signs that employees are redesigning to make certain jobs more comfortable for them. Altered or modified tools, pallets or boxes being used for work platforms are indications that changes may be needed to prevent injuries.

Watch for subtle signs of injury. An employee may report to work with a self-procured elbow or back support, for example. This is a situation that should get the attention of the supervisor so that the injury can be evaluated (it may not be work-related). If there appears to be a possible connection to work conditions or practices, that should be examined. You may discover relatively simple corrections that will prevent serious injury to several employees.

Encourage supervisors to monitor and positively address any and all signs of employee injury. Encourage employees to report all injuries immediately, or as soon as they realize they may have an injury. The sooner injuries are discovered, and treated, if necessary, the sooner the employee will be able to work at full capacity. You can also use this information to improve your workplace and prevent more injuries.

Educate yourself, your supervisors and other employees about the principles and use of practical ergonomics. In addition to the information provided on TheZenith's web site, contact a Zenith safety and health consultant. All have received "state of the art" technical, industrial and office ergonomics training and are ready to help you.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com**[®]

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