Analyse and present research information

Learner Guide

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1. Gather and organise information

1.1 - Gather and organise information in a format suitable for analysis, interpretation and dissemination in accordance with organisational requirements

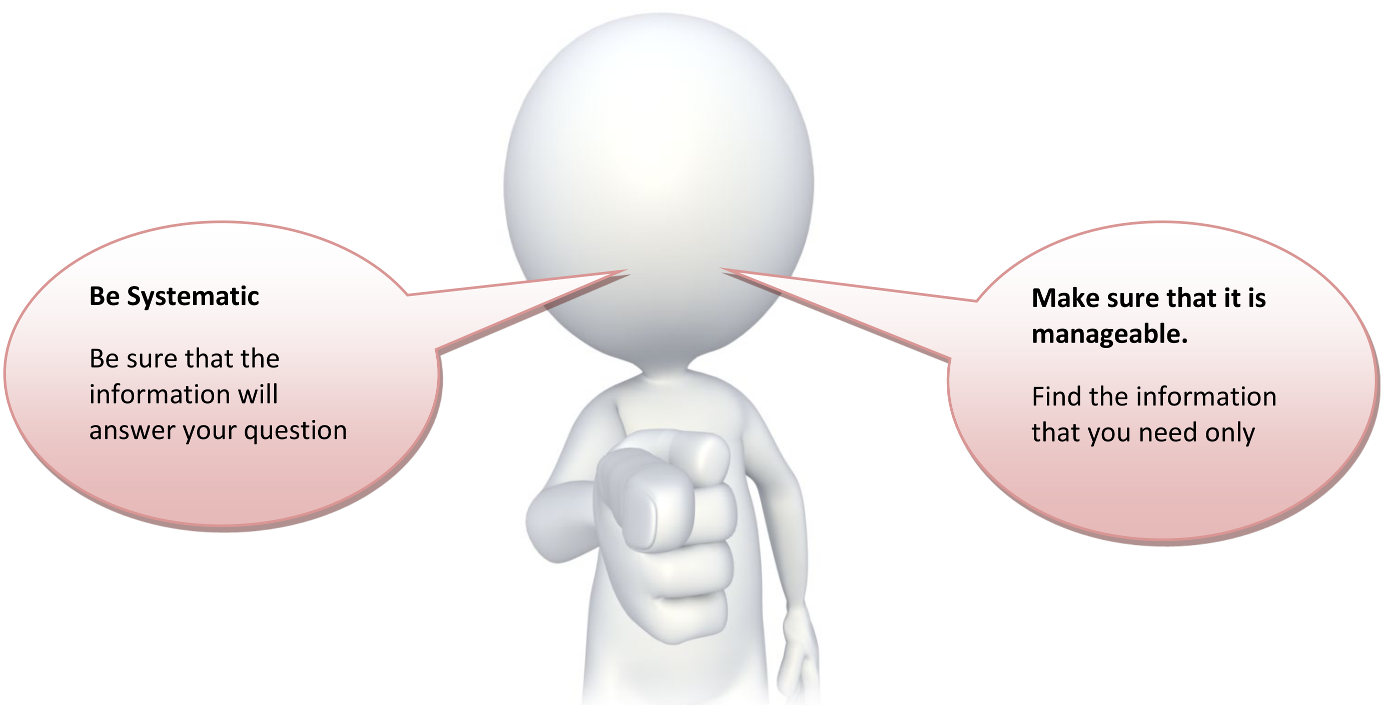
When you work in a business environment, it is important to ensure that you have the ability to research, analyse and present information in a manner that is appropriate for the recipients of the information. If the problem that you need to resolve is about work health and safety, you should provide the workgroup and any other stakeholder who is impacted or influenced by the proposed change with information on what they will be consulting about and what information that will need to be reviewed.

This is called dissemination of information. Dissemination of WHS is a requirement of law. As per the Work Health and Safety Coordination, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice, you are required to share information with workers and anyone impacted by a hazard or risk. At this point, workers and others do not need to have a detailed knowledge of your work; they just need to be aware of your activities and outcomes.

Some of your actions may require that you consult with personnel or gather information about the issue. By creating awareness, you will ensure that these personnel are aware of what you are doing and can prepare in resolving the issue

Do not collect all information to sort through. Instead, only collect the information that you need. If you collect too much information, you risk the chance of information overload.

Information overload is when you have so much information that you are unable to resolve your problem. To avoid information overload, you need to make sure that your information is:



Failure to collect the correct information means that you will be exposing yourself to information overload. Information overload occurs when there are no clear paths for collecting information and you collect all of the information with no real goal. This would make the information hard to sort and this would make you confused due to the ambiguity.

To avoid information overload, find out exactly what information you need to collect information for and why? Check historical records to view previous reports and if you are still not sure ask the person who requested the information, what they need the information for and what information they need?

Organisations will usually have set procedures in regards to collecting information. Before you collect information, it is essential that you have a clear objective. To assist in the development of your objectives, use SMART goals, especially if you require direction.

Turn your goals into SMART goals so you are very clear on what you are trying to do and the time in which to complete an allocated task.

Goals that are:

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Realistic

Time focused

1. Specify the results that you require. Consult with both your internal and external customer.
2. Ensure that the desired results from your goals will contribute to the organisations results.
3. Prioritise the goals in the form of ranking, percentages, time spent.
4. Outline the measures used to evaluate if and how well the desired results are achieved. Without measures, you are unable to evaluate the results. Measures

include timeliness, cost, quality and quantity. For example, to measure whether the customer service representative consistently met its 150 calls a day average.

5. Identify more specific measures for the first-level measures if needed from the measures in point 5. For example, if the customer service representative consistently received calls, were they processed in two minutes? If so, what percentage was processed in this time period?
6. Identify standards for evaluating how well the results were achieved. For example, did the customer service representative meet expectations?
7. Document the performance plan. You must include the desired results, measures and standards.

http://www.managementhelp.org/perf_mng/prf_plan.htm.

Once you have clear objectives, it is important to not only consider the information that you need to collect, you also need to identify the organisational requirements that will impact on your research, the way you present the information and the procedures you may need to follow to access the information.

Information may include:

Demographic data

Demographics relates to the background of your customer. It tells you about the type of people that you have as a customer or even a staff member. By understanding the people that you associate with, you will be able to market your products or sell your ideas by targeting to their needs.

Australia's estimated resident population at March 2011 was just over 22.5 million, an increase of 1.4% over the previous year. The growth of Australia's population has two components: natural increase (the number of births minus the number of deaths) and net overseas migration. The growth rate has been declining since the peak of 2.2% for the year ended 31 December 2008 and was the lowest growth rate since the year ended 30 September 2005. All states and territories experienced positive population growth for the year ended 31 March 2011. Western Australia recorded the fastest growth (2.2%) and the Northern Territory the slowest (0.4%).

http://www.about-australia.com/facts/australia-demographics/

Service delivery records

Service delivery records record the services provided to customers. Service delivery requires a systematic assessment of services in terms of:

- Acceptability – that considers the success of failure of the delivery of the services offered

- Affordability – whether the client has the ability to pay for the services – of which data can be collected in interviews or in demand for the service
- Availability – whether people have access to the service and are they reachable.

Consideration should be made as to whether the customer would use the service also. How many persons use the service again?

Computer databases

In the wake of the harmonization of work health and safety legislation, it is important that personnel are given access to information that will assist them in compiling information to ensure workers and others understand their obligations under WHS Legislation and Regulations. Many organisations will use database's to monitor the incidence of accident/incident reports, changes to processes and the success or failure of those changes.

Microsoft has database management systems called Access which can provide templates that are downloaded from the internet or can allow an organisation to develop its own data base to meet the needs of the organisation.

Computer files

Depending on the size of your organisation, you will have a computer filing system made up of departments, with folders and within the folders there will be files. For example, information on workers training, tax file number, home and telephone numbers, insurance and superannuation, experience etc, will be held in storage under the Human Resources Department.

Each department will also have files on how much budget they are allocated, reports on the allocation of resources and the costs of training within the organisation. To bring order to potential chaos, these files will be placed in folders. By understanding the filing system in the workplace, you will be able to find the information that you will require.

Correspondence

Faxes, memos, letters and emails are raised to communicate information to other members of the organisation. Some correspondence is a requirement of the law and copies of the records must be retained for a specific amount of time. For example, under the Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice, you are not required to keep records of the consultation process. However by maintaining records of correspondence, you will be able to demonstrate in a Court of Law that you were performing functions that can be used as evidence that you were following your duty of care under the law.

Financial figures

Financial figures can be found in tables, in Microsoft Excel, Windows or power point. These tables can be made more user friendly and easier to understand by placing the information in the tables in graphs. It is important to make sure that when information is communicated within the organisation, that you take the time to communicate at a level appropriate for the audience so that they will be able to share information.

Forms and personal records

Organisations have many forms that they need to complete. For example, when a new worker is employed, the forms that they may be required to complete include:

- Application Form
- Tax File Sheet
- Insurance Form
- Superannuation Form
- Account information form, so that they can be paid
- Authorisation Form – to generate a pass that allows them access to areas of the organisation, especially those organisations that contain sensitive information
- Union application

An organisation will also be required to complete forms. Some of the forms may include a form that needs to be completed when the organisation has to report a notifiable incident under their duty of care to their State or Territory Regulator

Information on training needs

With the introduction of the new harmonised work health and safety legislation and regulations, workers will be required to undergo training so that they will know and understand their legal requirements in regards to work health and safety and how failure to follow the legislative requirements will impact on them.

To maintain a record of this training, training files are raised such as the one shown below. The record demonstrates the training that workers are required to undertake. The crosses in the table demonstrate the amount of training each worker requires and the blank spaces show the training that is required.

These records assist team leaders in keeping up to date with who requires what sort of training. In some instances, an organisation may replace the cross with the date so that there is an accurate record of when training took place so if there is an incident the organisation has evidence to demonstrate that the worker was trained.

Training Records

	Consultation	Duty of Care	Job Description	Hazard Identification	Participation
Sam	x			x	
Fred		x	x	x	
Alex		x		x	x
Tamara	x				
Aman	x			x	

Other information that may be included in the training folder is a list of what type of training staff require, their skill levels, knowledge and experience. Many organisations have trainees who are undergoing training. A record of this training is maintained and information on the training may be found in the organisations financial or budgetary database.

Invoices (from suppliers, to debtors)

Invoices are commercial documents issued by the supplier/ seller to the debtor who is usually the buyer. Invoices will usually show the Supplier and debtor information, who made the sale, the product name or number, its unit price and the total price of the item/s purchased.

Invoice

YOUR LOGO HERE

[Your company slogan]

Date [Enter a date]
Invoice # [100]

[Your Company Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code
Phone [000-000-0000]
Fax [000-000-0000]
[e-mail]

TO [Name]
[Company Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]
Phone [000-000-0000]
Customer ID [ABC123]

Salesperson	Job	Payment Terms	Due Date
		Due on receipt	

Qty	Description	Unit Price	Line Total

Marketing reports

A marketing report is a document that is used to capture all of the research about the marketing performed by the organisation including the amount allocated to the marketing department, the allocation of resources, the returns on investment, what caused a marketing plan to fail. For example; a marketing plan aims to demonstrate the steps the organisation took to meet its business objectives. It will describe the current market position of a business and its strategy to meet its business objectives. Market demand may change causing the expected projected sales to decline. Marketing experts are required to monitor the market, identify the cause of a decrease in sales, and make adjustments to ensure that targeted outcomes are met.

Production targets

A production target is the amount of units that a business is expected to produce. Production targets are usually set based on the performance levels of the equipment and workers. When production levels are considered, work health and safety is maintained.

Sales records (monthly forecasts, targets achieved)

Sales records define the cycle of the business in terms of sales targets and projections. Monthly forecasts are made and target sets based on those targets. In turn, demand for the product or service will influence the production targets for the month.

Just as important as the information that you collect, are the organisational requirements. Organisational requirements will include legislation and other organisational policy and procedures that will impact on the way in which you collect information. Organisational requirements may include:

Anti-discrimination and related policy

When gathering information under Anti-discrimination it is essential that you understand the two different Acts that Anti-discrimination is covered in. Anti-discrimination refers to law that ensures that all people in Australia are treated equally.

- Discrimination can relate discrimination relating to age, sex, marital status, and religion, political and cultural beliefs. This is covered under the Discrimination Act 1991.

- WHS law (S105) relates to discriminatory conduct through the dismissal of a worker, termination of a contract or the alteration of a worker’s position to their detriment, or if a particular individual is refused a position and is treated less favourably than others, then the employer can be found to be discriminating against the potential or current worker.

Each type of discrimination is illegal and you can be fined if found guilty of breaching these laws.

Business and performance plans

A business plan is aimed at making sure that the business attains its business goals and your personal goals. Business plans are essential in helping your business succeed as it assists you in making sure that your goals and objectives are met. Performance plans are part of a business plan and assist in planning and working with employees to ensure that they meet the objectives of the organisation so the objectives in the business plan can be set out.

The employee's performance and performance appraisals should be geared to not only ensure that the employee's goals are met, but to also ensure that the goals and objectives of the organisation are obtained by working with employees to increase their skills and knowledge so that can meet the organisations objectives.

Codes of conduct and ethics

The code of conduct sets out the acceptable standards of behaviour of workers found in the workplace. It gives the worker a guide into the personal and ethical decisions they are required to make during the course of their employment. Ethics is the course of action that personnel are required to take. For example, as a worker you owe your employer a duty of care. Even if you take away the fines that you would receive by failing in your duty of care to report a hazard, you should report a hazard because you know that if you do not, and someone may be injured or killed in the workplace.

Defined resource parameters

Defined resource parameters takes into consideration the amount of resources available to complete a task. For instance, your organisation has a low rate of return. This means that resources, such as budgetary, equipment and human resources is low. In the case of a risk in the workplace, you may not be able to afford to buy a new piece of equipment, but you can afford to buy ear muffs to dampen the noise that a piece of equipment is making.

Ethical standards

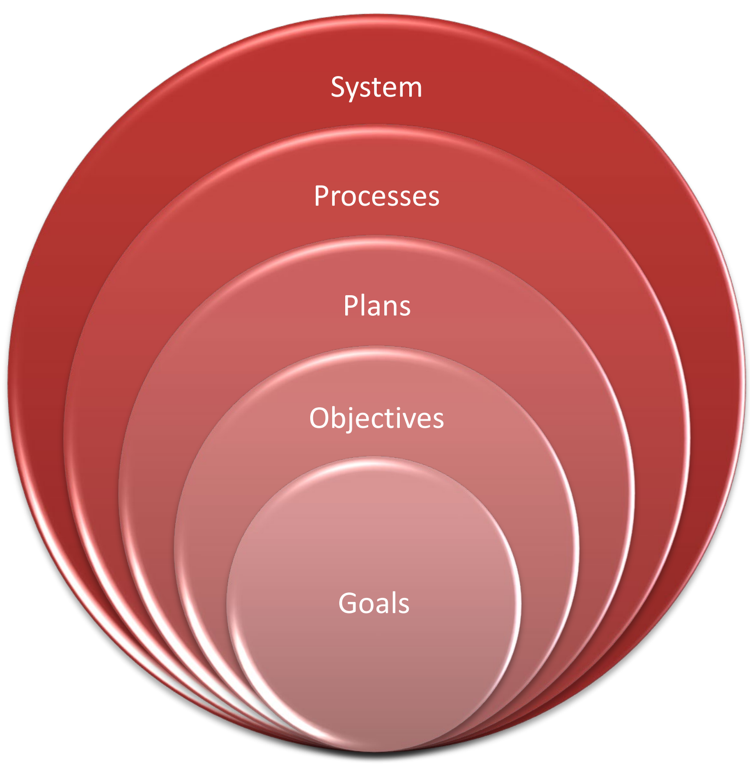
Ethical standards highlight what is considered right and wrong and promotes the principles and values of good behaviour, fairness and trust. Breach of any of these can have a negative impact on any worksite, so it is important to make sure that you can identify each and take steps to minimise the impact on the work environment.

Goals, objectives, plans, systems and processes

A goal is a desired outcome. An objective is the specific measures used to determine whether a goal is reached or not. For example; the goal is to lower the level of incidents in the workplace. By training staff and giving them the skills they require to avoid the risk, you are reaching your goals. Plans are used to determine how the objectives will be executed. For instance, when and how will workers be trained and what will they be trained about.

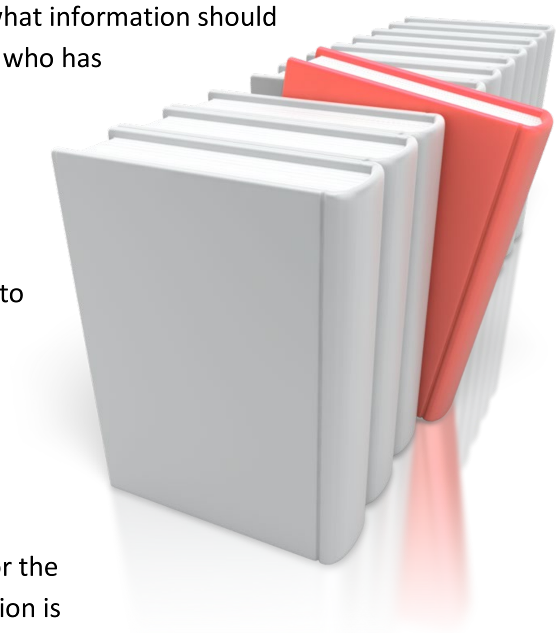
A system is a set of interconnected things that aim to form part of a whole and will include processes. A business process is a collection of related, structured tasks that produce a specific goal. This means that:

- **Goal:** To minimise the incidence of injury in the workplace
- **Objective:** Training will be performed to create awareness of incidents and how to avoid them
- **Plan:** When, where, how and what will be trained and by who
- **Processes:** What are the procedures that you need to follow to arrange for the training to occur. For example, are you required to obtain authority to authorize the training or can you just implement it.
- **System:** Is the sum of all of the parts required to ensure that the goal is reached.



Information protocols

Information protocols cover the official procedures put in place to information people within the organisation. What rules are in place that you can use to identify what information should be shared with personnel, how that information is transmitted and who has authorization to access the information.



Legal and organisational policies, guidelines and requirements including HS policies, procedures and programs

An organisational has many legal requirements. Under the law, an Act is a legislative Act of Parliament that organisations must follow to be compliant with the law. Regulations are the way in which legislation is applied. They are regulated by State and Territory Regulators, formerly known as Safe Work or Work Cover. Codes of practice will provide you with practical guidance in meeting your legislative obligations.

Legislation, Regulations and Codes of Practice set the foundation for the organisational policies, guidelines and requirements. This information is distributed between departments of a large organisations or sections of a small organisation.

Organisational documents include:

- Policies which guide organisational practice and help ensure that you comply with the law, statutes, regulations and government requirements and are usually long-term, requiring regular updates.
- Procedures tell us how to and who will implement the policy. Procedures highlight the steps required to perform a task
- Guidelines guide your actions in specific areas.

Some of the work health and safety policies and procedures that you may use include:

- WHS Consultation process
- Maintenance of plant and equipment
- Manual lifting
- Emergency procedures
- Handling hazardous substances
- Use of protective clothing.

Management and accountability channels

Management can be held accountable for the actions of their staff. Globalisation has led to a more dynamic workplace. People working need to be held accountable for their assigned tasks. As a manager, legislative requirements are now moving to ensuring that management can be held liable for the actions of their workers. However, when workers are trained correctly as per the requirements of their job roles and responsibilities, they can also be held accountable for their actions.

For example, in the WHS Act, Section 19 states:

> *"A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of—*
>
> *(a) Workers engaged, or caused to be engaged, by the person; and*
>
> *(b) Workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person,*
>
> *while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking."*

This Section makes management accountable in ensuring that workers are provided with the tools that will enable them to work safely in the workplace. This includes making sure that workers are provided with a safe workplace, training to perform their tasks and their roles and responsibilities.

Management must also be clear on their responsibility to their organisation. They are also accountable for reaching their goals and objectives. The legislative requirements, including the legal obligations as a worker in an industry would also have to be addressed when developing procedures.

Procedures for updating records

Nearly every organisation maintains records in the same manner. Some organisations maintain records using a database. Others maintain records using a manual system. In most instances, whether the system to maintain procedures is electronic or manual, the general procedures for updating records include:

- Identification of a change, such as an update in legislation.
- The current file is reviewed against the changes that should be made to the system.
- At times of copy of the proposed procedure is communicated to workers and members of management for a review. As with the Consultation process, workers are given an

opportunity to provide feedback and address concerns. Procedures should be in writing and must demonstrate that the organisation is complying with the law.

- If the proposed procedure is an update of a work health and safety procedure, then health and safety representatives and/or the committee may be asked to review the procedure.

- Proposed changes to procedures should also be reviewed to ensure that a change in one procedure minimises a risk in one area, but does not escalate a risk in another. If you identify a risk, it may be necessary to change that procedure as well. If the level of severity for the risk is high, you may need to determine whether the proposed change is feasible. It will always depend on what your employer perceives as "reasonably practicable" meaning how much money the organisation is prepared to spend on the change before they are negative gearing.

- The proposed change will usually go to the appropriate manager to approve and sign off on the procedure. This manager must have the level of authority to sign off on the procedure.

- Once the procedure has been approved, you should communicate when, how and why the procedure is implemented.

- Procedures must be updated in the organisation's data base or manually.

As part of quality assurance, many organisations use version control. Version control is when documents are provided with a number each time the document is updated. The aim of version control is to ensure that a history of the development of a document is maintained. A file registry is usually provided so that workers can confirm that they are reading the most recent version of a document.

Versions demonstrate that the organisation has been continuously improving and updating their procedures as part of their legal obligation under the WHS Act.

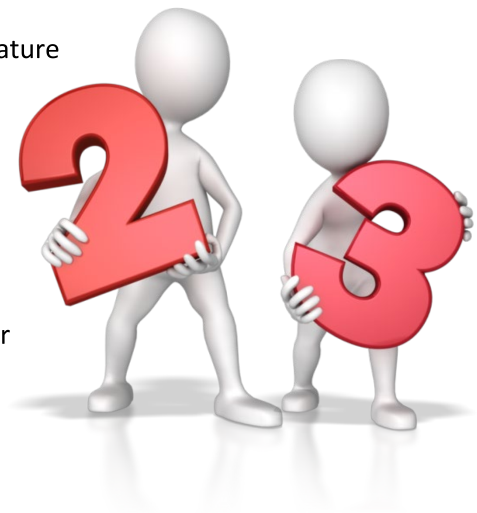
It is also important to note that WHS Regulations have minimum requirements in regards to work health and safety procedures.

Regulation 23

Section 81(2) of the WHS Act writes that:

> *"The parties must make reasonable efforts to achieve a timely, final and effective resolution of the issue in accordance with the relevant agreed procedure, or if there is no agreed procedure, the default procedure prescribed by regulation."*

Regulation 23 covers a default procedure. When a procedure is commenced, each party



1. Must be advised that an issue needs to be resolved and the nature and scope of the issue
2. Must meet or communicate with each other to attempt to resolve the issue
3. Must have regard to all relevant matters including:
   - The degree and immediacy of risk to workers or other persons affected by the issue;
   - The number and location of workers and other persons affected by the issue;
   - The measures (both temporary and permanent) that must be implemented to resolve the issue;
   - Who will be responsible for implementing the resolution measures
4. May be assisted or represented (HS Representative) by a person nominated by the party
5. If resolved the details of the issue and resolution must be set out in a written agreement if any party to the issue requests this
6. If a written agreement is prepared all parties to the issue must be satisfied that the agreement reflects the resolution of the issue
7. A copy must be given – to all parties to the issue and – if requested, to the health and safety committee for the workplace
8. Nothing in this procedure will prevent the worker to bringing the health and safety issue to the attention of the worker's health and safety representative.

Regulation 22

If a person conducting a business or undertaking at a workplace fails to follow the steps in Regulation 23, set out the procedure in writing and communicate the procedure to all workers who agreed to the procedure, they can be fined $3600.00 as an individual or $18 000.00 as a body corporate.

Quality assurance and/or procedures manuals

ISO (International standards organisation) is a set of standards used for assessing a firm's quality assurance system. The system will usually entail a standardised procedure that documents the agreement and ensures that staff and third parties can view it at their own discretion if they have clearance to do so.

Files are usually stored in a specific order and the pages of the files usually have the name of the party who created the document, the date, month and year that the agreement was made. The quality of the ISO9000 quality assurance is measured by the ability of the organisation to standardised forms. Australian firms are adopting ISO or rather AS9000 (Australian standards) to ensure that the operational systems put in place will assist the organisation in being competitive on a global standing.

The aim of AS9000 is to assure the organisations customer that the organisation has the ability to deliver on what they have promised. Some organisations use AS9000 as a guide to benchmark their own ability and to show the supplier that they can meet the requirements of their contracts. To increase their standing with their customers, organisations will be audited by a representative that will show that the organisation is maintaining the acceptable standards.

For this reason, it is important to not only note that the document that the agreement is on is correct and that it has not been changed, the negotiator needs to make sure that AS9000 procedures are met. Further the presentation of the document needs to comply with the organisations policies and procedures.

Presentation of the document can include the use:

- Of a letterhead and logo
- Of a specific font
- Of a specific format
- Of a specific program.

There may be times when you will be required to note the number of the agreement on a registry. This means that you may be called upon to use more than one computer program to complete an agreement. For instance, your organisations procedures may specify that all agreements are placed in word documents. However, the agreement may not be processed until it is registered on the data based registry.

Security and confidentiality requirements

The Privacy Act 1988 contains the National Privacy Principles that cover Confidentiality requirements in the workplace. These principles apply to:

- Personal information – information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion.
- Sensitive information – personal information about an individual's records, including racial or ethnic origin, political opinion, membership of a political association, religious beliefs, health status and memberships.

Section 271 of the WHS Act, states that "if a person obtains information or gains access to a document in exercising any power or function under the Act."

If a person obtains access to confidential information they must not disclose any information or the content of the document. This also means that if you are given access to a document, you must not give anyone else access to the document or use the information or document for any other purpose. If you obtain access to the information or use the information in the document, you cannot disclose the information without the person's consent; or perform your power or function under the WHS Act.

Once you have determined the information and organisational requirements that you need to consider how you will gather the information. By determining the information and organisational requirements, you will save time because you will not be collecting information that is not needed. This will avoid the risk of information overload.

Learning Activity One

What information should you collect or the organisational requirements you will need to consider for the following scenarios? What method/s would you use to collect this information?

Scenario	Information	Organisational Requirements	What are you trying to do?
Peter reported that productivity was slowing and that someone changed the way in which they were working which in turn took others to compensate for the change. If the cause of the changes			
There was a fire in the building. Fire-fighters identified two chemicals were mixed together and became a flammable.			
Jodie complained that she is unsure of where to access information she needs for her job. Who should she ask, and how?			

1.2 - Access information held by the organisation ensuring accuracy and relevance in line with established organisational requirements

Accessing information can be efficient or you may be faced with constraints.

Note:
When you gather information, it is essential that when you gather information that you provide relevant, accurate and unbiased information that can be used to solve a problem. This means that you should also make sure that you include the advantages and disadvantages or positives and/or negatives in the information that you provide.

General information may be available at your fingertips, depending on your level of authority and the relevance the information you are trying to access is to your position.

The **level of authority** relates to the level of responsibility. Responsibility is the duty to which a person is bound through their status or task. It usually relates the obligations of a party to perform a task that is assigned to them.

When a person is delegated a level of authority, they are given the authority to act in another's stead and this in turn empowers them to take control of their work area. Through the consultation process, management gives employees information about a hazard and they use their skill and knowledge to voice concerns, and share their opinions and ideas. This information is then considered as part of the final decision to implement a control in the work area. When a worker is provided with feedback in regards to the final decision they become further empowered and then take ownership of the task.

For every project, whether it is work health and safety or a project to complete a task, all members of the organisation will be given a clear indication as to their level of authority. When a problem arises, however, parties are rarely clear as to the authority that they have. This in turn can cause more problems.

Sometimes problems arise because issues are not communicated clearly and the level of collaboration between parties is insufficient.

Problems can arise when the organisation or an individual communicates that they have a specific level of authority, but it turns out that they do not have the level of authority that they claim to have. This means that expectations attached to the job do not match and workers can become dissatisfied.

The level of **relevance** relates to your job roles and job responsibilities. If you work in one department, the information you require is not automatically available to you within another department. For example, during a recent audit, it was identified in the accident/incident reports that workers were becoming ill over a period of time.

To identify the cause of the problem, you may need to review what the possible cause of the incidence of illness stems from. This may require that you access workers personal files. You would need to obtain permission from not only the person whose files you want to access, you would also need to obtain authorisation to access the information.

Accessing information due to your level of authority is usually constrained to the department that you operate in. This authority may not however relate to other departments. It is essential that you take the time to find out the procedures for obtaining access to this information.

Accessing files: -

1. Make an appointment with the appropriate personnel
2. Go prepared – Make sure you know what information you need and why
3. Email – At times, an email is a sufficient request to obtain access. Make sure that you obtain an email permitting you to access the information you require.
4. Special authorisation to obtain department databases – Your Login User Name and Password is controlled by the administration or IT department. You will still need to obtain permission from the authorised personnel in that department, but you will require them to email the appropriate department or sign an internal template authorising the appropriate department to update your accessibility to their database via the intranet.

Once you have gathered the information, obtained the appropriate authorisations and access, you need to review all information to ensure that it is in line with established organisational requirements. The questions that you need to ask are:

Is it relevant?

Information is always changing. This means that information has a limited life. Once information is out of date, it is becomes obsolete and in most cases is archived. Some information such as financial records must be kept for seven years. The way in which the information is archived will be found in your organisation's policies and procedures.

If you need to gather information, it is important to make sure that it is relevant. Remember when we discussed ISO (international standard organisation). Nearly all organisations will have version control in some form, even if they are not a registered member of ISO. Check your organisations document registry to confirm to find out the latest version of a document and where the information you require can be found. By obtaining the latest version you are not only determining if the version is relevant, but whether it is also current.

To determine whether information is relevant, check the document for the:

- Time and date = Soft copy documents (as opposed to hard copy – printed documents) such as electronic documents will show the time and date in which the document or file was developed.
- Signature – Check to make sure a document has to be signed to be valid. An unsigned document may not be the most recent document.
- If the document is checked and verified, then it has the document been copied, stamped and signed to confirm that it is authentic and valid.

Is it accurate?

Information that is not accurate can be dangerous. Inaccurate information can mean that inaccurate decisions are made that can place workers at risk. This may end up being very costly for the organisation, especially if inaccurate decisions are made based on the inaccurate information.

Out of date information can place staff at risk. For example; from 1 January 2012 the Work Health and Safety Act was introduced to the Australian Workplace. From this date, progressive codes of practice and regulations will be introduced. Failure by an organisation to keep up to date with these changes can leave an organisation open to risk. This risk can be detrimental to workers who have a duty of care to their employer. If they are not trained correctly about the changes they may take action that can be very costly to the organisation and can cause a loss of productivity when staff become stressed due to lack of information.

When you search for data, take the time to make sure that you choose the information that is current, especially when you need to make an informed decision.

If there is a problem with the information, then you need to follow up and reconfirm procedures or find out why the information is not accurate or relevant.

If information is not relevant to solving the problem or providing information then you need to make sure that you return the document to the appropriate department. If you signed the document out of an area, make sure that you take responsibility and return it. If you do not, someone, somewhere will follow up and force you to waste time looking for the information.

1.3 - Ensure that methods of collecting information are reliable and make efficient use of resources in accordance with organisational requirements

Reliability in research is concerned with how consistent information is. With any reliable information, the results should have a certain level of consistency at different times. In research the more consistent the information, the more reliable the information. For example, you are researching WHS (work health and safety) websites and come across important information. You can have one of two reactions. You can either

- Accept the truth of the information; or
- Check another web-site to make sure that the information that you have received is accurate.

It is also essential that you make sure that you check the reliability of the web-site. Reliable sources of information for work health and safety and industry information can be found through:

- **WHS professional bodies** can give you industry advice regarding a specific industry. When your workplace does not have staff with the correct skills and knowledge, WHS professional bodies will be able to provide you with names of external consultants who can provide you with:
    - Safe systems of work and their improvement
    - Identifying, eliminating and controlling hazards

- Taking samples or measurements of workplace environments such as whether the workplace has a high level of air borne contaminants.

The type and source of advice will be determined by your needs and the need to ensure that you met your legal obligations under the WHS Act.

- **WHS specialists** may found from specific Societies within a specific industry. Some of these societies include:

    - **Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of Australia for Ergonomist Specialists** http://www.ergonomics.org.au/membership/cpe/cpes-ohs-specialists.aspx

    - **Toxicology in Australia for Toxicologist Specialists** http://healthengine.com.au/search_interest.php?q=Toxicology

    - **Audiological Society of Australia for Audiologists** http://www.audiology.asn.au/

- **Regulatory authorities (for codes of practice, legislation)** Regulation in Australia is developed by government bodies. A list of regulatory bodies in Australia include:

    - Australian Bureau of Statistics
      http://www.abs.gov.au

    - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
      http://www.accc.gov.au/

    - Australian Industrial Relations Commission
      http://www.airc.gov.au/

    - Australia New Zealand Food Authority
      http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/

    - Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority
      http://www.apvma.gov.au/

    - Australian Securities & Investment Commission
      http://www.asic.gov.au

    - Australian Taxation Office
      http://www.ato.gov.au/

    - Australian Workplace
      http://www.workplace.gov.au/

    - Competitions & Markets Advisory Committee
      http://www.camac.gov.au/

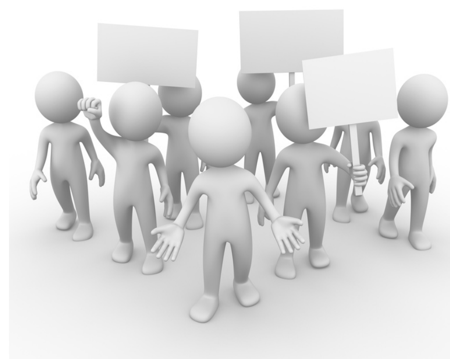
    - Consumer & Employment Protection, Governments of Western Australia
      http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au.

- Department of Employment & Workplace Relations
  http://www.dewrsb.gov.au/
- Department of Treasury
  http://www.treasury.gov.au/home.asp?ContentID=521
- Insolvency & Trustee Service Australia
  http://www.itsa.gov.au/
- Legislative Assembly for the ACT
  http://www.legassembly.act.gov.au/
- National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme
  http://www.nicnas.gov.au
- National Occupational Health & Safety Commission
  http://www.nohsc.gov.au
- Ombudsman
  http://www.comb.gov.au
- Productivity Commission
  http://www.pc.gov.au
- Reserve Bank of Australia
  http://www.rba.gov.au
- Superannuation Complaints Tribunal
  http://www.sct.gov.au
- The Takeovers Panel
  http://www.takeovers.gov.au
- Victorian Work cover Authority
  http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au
- Workplace Health & Safety, Queensland Government
  http://www.whs.qld.gov.au
- Workplace Standards Tasmania
  http://www.wst.tas.gov.au

The strategic role of regulation is increasing due to the effects of globalisation and technological development. Regulation may be local, national, international and global and regulation is important to public policy. Each State/Territory has a regulatory body that has a large impact on people, organisations and the environment.

- **Unions** such as the Australian Council of Trade Unions (http://www.actu.org.au/Campaigns/HealthSafety/default.aspx Access Date 11.12.2011) see the implementation of the new WHSOHS laws as a chance to achieve the best standards in health and safety for the country. Trade unions played a large role in the development of OHS laws in place today and will assist in ensuring that standards are maintained. A list of unions that may be able to assist you can be found at the Unions Australia website at URL Address: http://www.unionsaustralia.com.au/unions.aspx Access Date 11.01.2012

- **Employer groups** represent a specific industry or type of business. The members of the employer group usually work with other businesses to build competitive to stimulate growth in Australia. Employer groups will ensure that their members are up to date with industry trends and will assist members in operating their business (industry) more effectively. Employer groups make sure that all employers have an opportunity to represent and promote their interests in the current and future markets.



- **Industry bodies** work with the government in the development of vocational education and training at both State/Territory and National Levels. The aim of industry bodies is to use experts who can assist on training needs and delivery to specific industries.

  The five main industry bodies in Australia include:

  - Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)
    http://www.acci.asn.au/
  - Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)a
    http://actu.asn.au/
  - Australian Industry Group
    http://www.aigroup.asn.au/
  - Australian Institute of Training and Development
    http://www.aitd.com.au/
  - Business Council of Australia
    http://www.bca.com.au

Information can also be obtained from Regulators for each State and Territory in Appendix Number One.

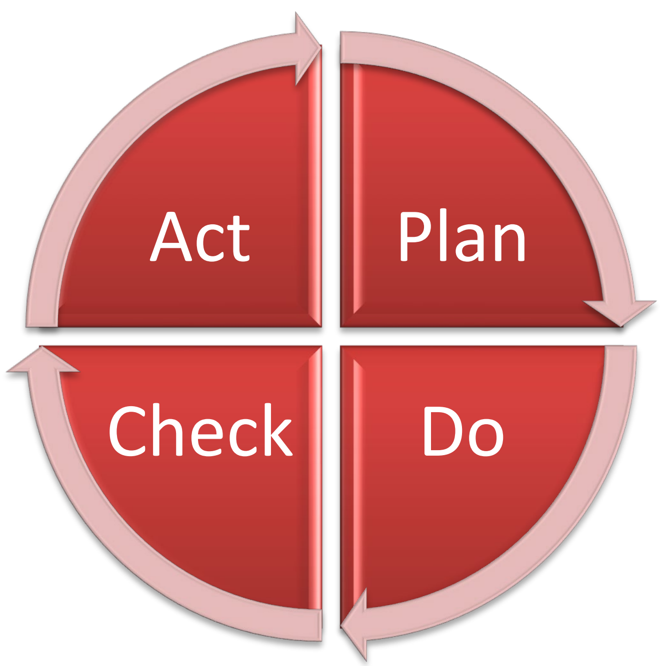
Effective information gathering is effective in that:

- It utilizes your time more efficiently
- Develops your critical thinking skills through the use of sorting and sifting techniques; and
- It can broaden your outlook and inform you understanding of the subject matter that you are gathering.

You gather information answer questions, provide information, to develop skills and widen knowledge so that you can make informed decisions. It is essential that you make effective use of your resources when you gather information. The scope and nature of your search and the allocation of human resources will impact on how much time you need to complete the search.

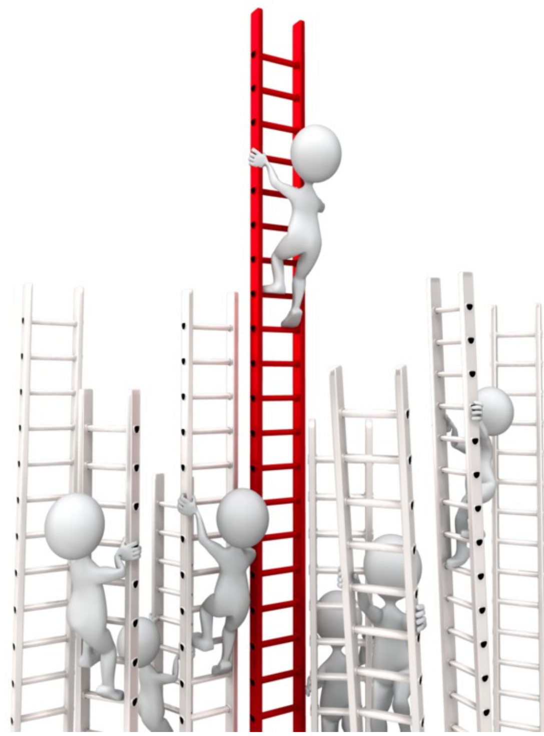
Information that is retrieved must be appropriate for providing information on a problem. To be effective it is essential that you plan your research. Know precisely what information that you need and the sources of data that the information comes from. It is important that you prepare and obtain the appropriate permissions so that when you gather the information, you are not wasting your time going back and double checking to make sure that you have missed any information.

To improve the effectiveness of your research skills, you should learn the Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle.



The four phases in the Plan-Do-Check-Act-Cycle involve:

- **Plan:** Identify and analyse the problem
- **Do:** Develop and test the solution
- **Check:** Measure how effective the solution is and analyse whether you can improve it; and
- **Act:** Implement the planned solution



This is ideally a way in which to in a production line. The cycle can also be called the Deming Cycle or Deming Wheel after the developer of the technique. Identifying the appropriate source of information, your organisational requirements that may impact on the information and the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of information is continuous, very like a production line.

Using this cycle will help you refine your research skills. The steps of the process can assist you in:

1. Identifying the problem.
2. Reflect on solutions and select the solution
3. Check to make sure that the improvement is working
4. Act to implement the solution

Section 1.1 is the plan part of Deming's Cycle. Sections 1.2 to 1.5 are part of Do.

Methods of collecting information may include:

- **Checking research provided by others**

  There are times in which you will not have time to collect information on your own. You may be required to delegate another member of your workgroup to collect information. You can never presume that they information that is collected will automatically be correct or viable. Other workers may have misinterpreted the information or the objective that you provided them with.

  When you check research, make sure that the information is:

  - Relevant to solving the problem
  - From a credible source

Referencing from websites such as Wikipedia cannot be considered valid and reliable. Anyone can claim to be another person and anyone can update the site whenever they want. This means that you cannot rely on the source of the information. When you research information make sure that the information or website that you research is from a reliable source.

For example, if you are going to research work health and safety information, you should refer to government or recognised industry related websites.

- **Checking written material including referrals and client files**

Files containing scanned documents can be used to assist in the decision making process. Referrals can also be used to assist in gathering information. For example, you are required to research work health and safety equipment for your worksite. A written referral from a supplier about the quality of various products can assist in the decision making process, especially if the supplier is honest and objective. Consider second opinions to ensure that the information provided is actually objective. If you take one supplier at face value when they have not been completely honest, then productivity may be affected when staff is placed at risk from inadequate information. In the long run, an incorrect decision may be detrimental to the health and safety of staff, which in turn can have a negative impact on the organisation's financial situation.

- **Individual research**

Literature reviews consists of a review of journal readings, exploration of websites, and marketing material and journals called secondary information. This information can assist you in determining the best way in which to perform a task or can inform you about what other organisations are doing. Individual research can enhance the decision making process and will ensure that you are up to date with what is happening in your field.

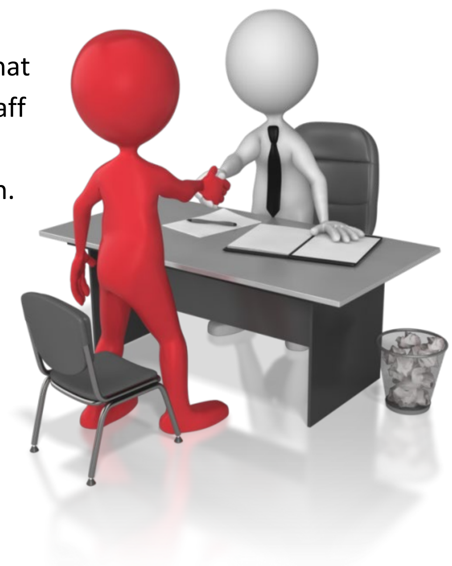
Care should be taken when you research a website. Make sure that the website is a recognised and trustworthy website. For example, SafeWork and/or Work Cover regulators in your State or Territory are government websites, so information will be maintained correctly and kept up to date. Conversely Wikipedia information is maintained by the general public. This information may not be maintained by fact, but by the personal opinion of the general public.

- **Information from other organisations**

  There will be times when you may be required to obtain information from other external parties. For example, you may need to contact an organisation when an employee is injured at their work site. This may include obtaining copies of internal accident reports and feedback from management if a member of your team is injured. You may also need to contact your insurance provider to confirm a claim or obtain information pertaining to a Workers' compensation claim.

  Remember to ensure that you follow information protocols and consult with the appropriate staff members before contacting external organisations, especially if this is not part of your normal job description.

- **Interviews with colleagues/customers**



  When a report is unclear or there are several reports that are conflicting, you may have no choice to interview staff or customers to clarify information. When you gather information, make sure that you clarify any information. To clarify information, it is important to use the following skills including:

  - **Questioning skills**

    Be clear and be prepared. Do not lead answers. Give your colleagues/customers time to form answers clearly. People are not always able to automatically answer the question automatically. For example, a person who has English as a second language may not only interpret the words in their language, think about a response and then re-interpret the answer to English before answering the questions.

    There are two primary types of questioning skills. They are:

    - Open-ended questions are questions where you are looking for explanations. These are usually questions that start with Where? How? What? Why? When?
    - Close-ended questions are the type of questions that require a yes or no response.

- **Observation and listening skills**

  Observation is about seeing. When you listen to a person, you interpret a lot of information not only from what they are saying, but from their tone of voice, their body language including hand signals, facial expression and the way in which they sit.

  It is important to actively listen to people. If you are a passive listener, you are showing customers and staff that you are not interested in what they are saying. Listening is an important communication skill. A good listener:

  - Uses positive and open body language (such as smiling and nodding their head to demonstrate they are listening)
  - Taking the time and making the effort to acknowledge what is said
  - Clarifying information by repeating what is said so you know that you have the correct information

- **Previous file records**

Previous records are also known as historical records. They can be used to identify problems in the workplace. For example, if there is an increase in the incidence of injuries in the workplace, checking previous records can assist you in identifying the cause of the increase. You may look at whether the incidents are happening in the same area, whether there were changes in work health and safety issues, if new staff or older staff are associated with the increase or whether the maintenance records are up to date.

All of these factors can contribute to an increase in the level of incidents in the workplace.

- **Recruitment applications and other forms**

  Employment application forms can inform you about the skills of workers. For example, a worker claims to have office health and safety training is employed during a busy period. You observe them during training and they are making novice office errors such as leaving file cabinets open for people to trip on. You can use the information on the recruitment application to find out if previous employers can vouch for the worker's experience. Remember that you should speak to the appropriate personnel and obtain the appropriate permissions to obtain the information that you require.

Once you have collected the information and organisational requirements, can disseminate the information by communicating the information to those people who require the information to assist in the decision making process. Change cannot occur, especially in Work Health and Safety issues without consultation with personnel. The way in which information is communicated will usually vary according to the audience and the requirements.

1.4 - Identify research requirements for combining online research with non-electronic sources of information

When you gather information, it is important to consider:

- The type of information that you require
- The authors that you are referencing
- Determining whether your sources are current

When you complete your searching, you will find that you will have many references that; even though they are useful, they are not suitable. Before you start collating and writing your research information into an appropriate format, you need to determine which information you will need to reinforce your recommendations.

When you check your resources, especially information from on line researches, it is important to choose which information is salient and which information cannot be used in supporting your recommendations.

Some suggestions that should be considered when performing online searches are:

- To determine whether the information in the document is appropriate. Headings can sometimes be misleading so that they may not provide information relevant to your problem.

- When was the information published? Consider how old the information is. When the law is considered, take the time to ensure that the information is up to date. However, there are times that personnel will need to research old material to understand the processes, the ideas and principles in place so that a clear picture on the evolution of the subject and its procedures.

- Consider the type of document. Information from trade, industry and legislation can be found as printed matter or on line. Journals and newspapers can provide up to date information.

- Remember if you are not sure about the information you have been provided with, confirm it by sourcing reliable sources.

- How is the media stored and how you can access it.

- The author's reputation will also impact the quality of your sources. If you are not sure about the source, consult with industry experts. If author does not have a reputation, then you should carefully consider whether or not you will benefit in using them.

Using the list of reliable sources used in Section 1.3 and that various types of sources shown above you can use an imaginative approach that may reveal interesting and beneficial results in terms of being able to produce a balanced insight in to the problem. When you present information, it is important that you provide the recipient with both the positives and negatives of each issue.

There are two distinctive advantages when you research data on line research.

They are:

- **Faster communication; and**

  To obtain information and confirm information found in printed matter, revert to the internet. Knowledgeable searches can allow you to target the information that you require to confirm the viability of your printed search.

- **Information resources**

  Use search engines such as Google and Yahoo to rifle through information ranging from government law and services, market information, new ideas and technical support.

Information from printed matter is drawn from many sources. An effective search and one likely to offer an increased benefit is one that takes into account diversity in sources so information is drawn from many sources rather than just the shelves in a library. The sources of data that can give that diversity include:

- Journals
- Texts
- Newspapers
- Internet (on-line information)
- Audio/video tapes

An important aspect of any document, whether it is from printed matter or from online resources, is the need to source and reference the information correctly. There may be times in which your recipients will want to research your information more. Referencing allows them to identify whether the information is from printed matter or from online electronic searches.

Your organisation may have several different types of reference for different types of sources of information. For example, in some instances the name of the Journal may be presented in Italics. It all depends on the organisations procedures in regards to referencing.

Electronic referencing from on line sources is presented:

SafeWork Australia

URL Address: http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx

Access Date: 14.02.2012

Name of the website – Name of the author

Use the name of the website. If you reference a quote from a writer, you should reference the author's name. For example: Lloyd, P. this author's name is P. Lloyd. Write the surname of the author and the first initial of their name.

URL Address:

The URL Address means (Uniform or Universal Resource Locator). It is usually pronounced Earl. The URL is the web address of the website. For example; the URL Address for Safe Work Australia is http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx . When you enter the URL Address on a document, the document will automatically underline the URL Address after you add a space when you type it in or cut and paste it.

Access Date:

The access date is important. Web addresses are always being updated. By providing the access date you are letting the reader of your information know that on this date, this information was current. When a file is moved or a website is renamed or becomes obsolete. It provides evidence that on the date the internet was accessed, the website existed.

Printed referencing of sources is presented:

Journal (Please note that these references are samples only)
Piper, P (2010) Alpha to Omega, Journal of Living Dangerously (55, 15) p.36

Book
Piper, P (2010) Management by Objectives, Andersons' Ltd. United States of America p.45

1. **Author**
   The author is presented as a surname of the author and the initials for his first name.

2. **Date**
   The date is the date in which the issue of the journal and the book was printed.

3. **Article Date**
   The article name is the name of the article

4. **Journal Name**
   The name of the journal that the article has been drawn from is called the Journal Name.

5. **Series and Printed Number**
   Does the article belong to a series? Many Journals will have a series number which will usually relate to the year of print. The article may also have a print number or version number.

6. **Page Number**
   Make sure that you always include the page Number Using p. for page and the number of the page.

7. **Book**
   For books that you are using as resource material, follow steps 1- 4. Step 4 should be the name of the text.

8. **Printer**
   Who printed the resource? Make sure that you put the name of the printer so anyone reading your report can purchase or find a copy of the book. In the book reference above Andersons' Ltd is the name of the printer.

9. **Country printed in**
   Enter the country where the book was printed. This makes it easier for personnel to find the resource. In the case of the book reference, the reference shows that the book comes from the USA

In the actual report, you site other authors as (Piper, 2010, p.36). This reference, advises all readers that in 2010, Piper wrote an article or text and the quote that you have taken can be found on page 36. If the author wants to read more about Piper, they refer to the References at the end of your report. They can look at the references and find the appropriate reference.

If you cite a reference in a reference, you can write (Piper, citing Jefferies, 2010, p.36). This means that you are citing Piper, who cited Jefferies.

So what do you do if you cite a journal entry that has been downloaded off the internet?

Your organisation may have different procedures in this case. You should use both forms of referencing so that personnel will be able to access the information on line. For example:

SafeWork Australia
Piper, P (2010) Alpha to Omega, Journal of Living Dangerously (55, 15) p.36
URL Address: http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx
Access Date: 14.02.2012

1.5 - Use business technology to access, organise and monitor information in accordance with organisational requirements

Technological innovation has ensured that information can be found at your fingertips. However, the ease in which you read the information is guided, by your understanding of the equipment in your workplace and its functions.

Business technology may include:

Equipment	Function
Answering machine	There will be times when you will not be able to answer the telephone. Meetings, client visits and other official business may impede your ability to take that all important call. An answering machine is an excellent tool used to ensure that you receive important information as soon as possible.
Computer	Depending on the type of job you have, there are two main types of computers that you may have. Personal computers (PCs) are the computers that are mainly referred to as desk tops. Laptops or netbooks are now in more and more demand as the price of laptops has decreased. The advantage of a laptop is that you can take it anywhere with you to perform your job.
Fax machine	Though the use of faxes has decreased over the years, there are still organisations and government's bodies who use them, rather than an email. Legal documents in many instances are sent by fax as a verification that the information has been sent by the correct party and to minimise the chance that internet hackers can obtain access to the information when they intercept official emails.
Photocopier	Photocopiers are used to make copies of reports. All organisations will choose photocopiers that meet their needs. Smaller organisations may have a facsimile machine and a photocopier and scanner attached to each other. These are called multi functional printers. Others may choose the photocopier for their speed or for how economical the photocopier is.
Telephone	Telephones are an excellent tool for gathering information. By using your interpersonal and communication skills, you will be able to consult with

Equipment	Function
	professional bodies, within and outside the organisation to assist you in the decision making process.

If you are not familiar with the technology in your workplace, obtain a copy of the owner's manual and read about all of its functions. The more that you know about your business technology; the more efficient and effective you will be in meeting your job outcomes.

Some of the equipment uses software to present information in different formats. Different software shall be discussed in more detail in Section Three.

1.6 - Update, modify, maintain and store information, in accordance with organisational requirements

A system does not only consist of records and documents, it also includes a series of actions, such as risk assessment when an incident occurs or that records are consistently updated, collected and stored.

Why update records?

Records are updated so that a true snapshot of the organisation can be obtained at a particular time. They are the historical records that can be used to establish that the organisation is meeting its legal requirements and that they are keeping up to the requirements of the law. For example, with the introduction of the harmonisation of Work Health and Safety Legislation, Regulations, guidelines and codes of practice, the organisation should be consistently updating its records and files to make sure that it is compliant with work health and safety legislation.

This means that for records to be accurately completed; they must be up to date. During this year 2012, work health and safety legislation will be continuously be going through the transitional process, where codes of practice will be updated throughout the year and any problems with the system re-evaluated to ensure that the law covers all contingencies and to refine the interpretations of the law.

You also have the States/Territories who were not able to meet the 1 January deadline. At the time that this learner guide was written, two States were not able to meet their legislative timelines. One state was unable to meet the timeline and another stated that it would not be implementing all aspects of the new legislation.

Regulators for each State and Territory and Safe Work Australia offer updates on the changes to legislation. In most instances, you can receive updates by applying for the updates to be sent to you by email. Every time an update or variation occurs, you should check it to ensure that it does not impact on your operations.

To keep record systems up to date

If your organisation is an ISO9001 organisation, then you know that all of your administrative processes are audited for quality assurance. The aim of ISO9001 is to ensure that a national standardisation (since globalisation – international) in your administrative processes occurs. An external auditor will come in to ensure that your organisation has standardised procedures. Once the auditor gives your organisation accreditation, your organisation will be assessed regularly to ensure these standards are maintained. Failure to meet the national standards will ensure that your quality accreditation is revoked.

Many organisations apply for ISO9001 so that they can apply for government contracts. One process that is popular with many organisations is the use of version control, both with ISO9001 organisations and organisations that choose not to use the process. The aim of version control is to provide evidence that the organisation is consistently and continuously keeping their information up to date.

As each form is superseded by a new file, it is usually stored on the computer in a specific file and the new file will replace the updated version in the main template file (Note: each organisation or department will have different names for each file).

If you are not sure that the template that is being used is the most recent, you can look it up in the file/record register to determine if the file is correct. This register should be updated each time a file is superseded.

You should also make sure that the document is completed correctly so that you have supported evidence when there is an action taken against you in regards to work health and safety.

Collection

By keeping your records up to date and by maintaining a system where records are signed in and out of the area, you can control the movement of data throughout the organisation. This also means that you will be more efficient with the collection of data within the organisation as you will be able to track it as you need it.

Storage

Records can be stored in several different ways. There are:

- Centralised filing systems – All files are sent to one location.
- Decentralised filing systems - Files are kept at their individual locations.
- Mixture of both – the original document is sent to one location and a copy of the information is kept at the office in which it was raised.

Several characteristics of a decentralised filing system include:

- Each department handles its own files and is responsible in maintaining them.
- Anyone using the file is responsible for the file that they use
- The way that the records are stored may vary from department to department (alpha, numeric or alphanumerical order)
- The management of the files may differ between departments

The characteristics that are common in centralised filing systems are:
All files are stored in the one area

- Specific staff are allocated with the job to create, file and keep a track of all of the records. This will mean that they will even need to arrange for old files to be destroyed.
- Specific staff will be responsible for looking after the files. This is particularly true for small organisations, whereas in a large organisation a whole department may need to manage records.

Understanding the filing system in your organisation will make the information more accessible.

Be aware of the fact that some organisations also have both a centralised and decentralised filing system. Even though the files are controlled centrally, the records relevant to one or more specific departments may have the files in those departments. This allows easier access and increases productivity since staff will not have to travel between several departments to obtain the files.

Files can be made accessible to anyone authorised to handle them through a centralised filing index so that staff can find the information in a decentralised filing system.

Check to see whether you organisation has a centralised library where reference information is stored. The information may have a physical location or may have a specific storage area in your organisations intranet.

Classification of data

The classification of data refers to the way in which information and data is stored. Information and data may be stored in:

- **Numerical order**
  Some organisations received invoices that are numerical. These invoices may be file numerically. Some organisations files have serial numbers, so the files are sorted by the products serial number. This usually occurs if there are a lot of products that are in different sizes.

- **Alphabetical order**
  Some organisations using decentralised filing maintain separate files for accounts receivable and accounts payable. These files will usually be filed by the customer's last name.

- **Geographical or regional locations**
  Surveys of areas or offices in geographical and regional areas may store their information by those locations. This is especially true if the location is far apart and their customer has several locations.

  Keywords

  Large organisations may file things under a particular subject. The keyword may the subject heading for the file. For instance, all forms of environmental products used in product may be placed under wastage or recycling.

- **Chronological or date order**
  The most popular form of filing for emails is done through chronological or date order. Information pertaining to different subjects can be tracked through the email system because it files both incoming and outgoing emails in order from the latest at the top of the list.

- **Subject**
  Some files are arranged under different subject names.

In many instances records may have two classifications. For example, Pieter Fergusons file may be filed alphabetically the invoices that go into the file may be complete in either numerical or chronological order.

Deal with obsolete or non-conforming records

Over time information changes and the needs of your organisation changes with it. This may mean that laws for the storage of files may change or records will no longer conform to workplace practices. This means that you will need to make arrangements to dispose of obsolete or non-conforming records.

Organisations have different procedures in regards to the disposal of non-conforming records that are now obsolete. The ways in which the data is removed can include:

- Shredding the information
- Shredding the information and getting a sub-contractor to pick up the more sensitive to be burnt

Sensitive personal information is then protected from breaches of the Privacy Act 1988 and breach of Confidentiality under Section 271 of the WHS Act.

Archive files

Due to the length of time that an organisation needs to retain information, many are now storing their original files in secured storage facilities. These files are called archive files. If you find that information you require is more than twelve months old, you may need to find out where files are archive and obtain permission to access them.

Your supervisor may authorise you to obtain the files from the actual storage area or you may be required to apply for the files that you require using a form. Why? Organisation's purposely control the personnel who have access to the files to ensure that the information to be found in the files are secure.

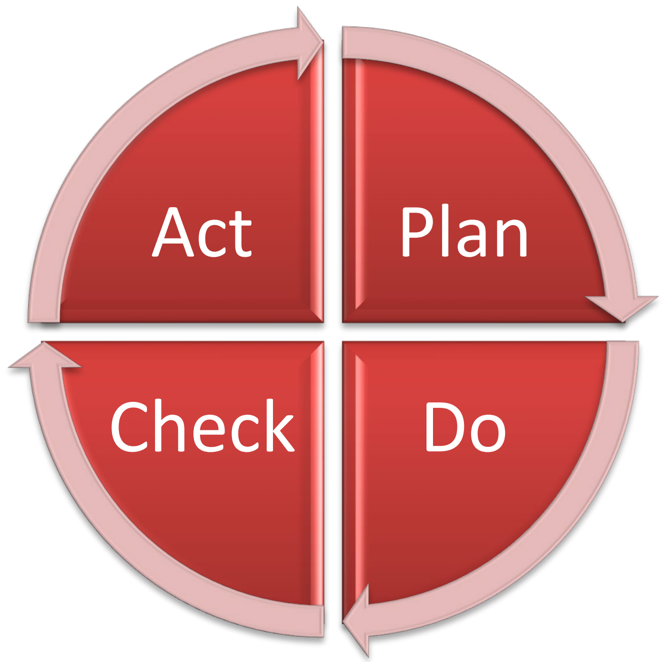
2. Research and analyse information

2.1 - Clearly define objectives of research ensuring consistency with organisational requirements

Remember that the four phases in the Plan-Do-Check-Act-Cycle involve:

- **Plan:** Identify and analyse the problem
- **Do:** Develop and test the solution

- **Check:** Measure how effective the solution is and analyse whether you can improve it; and
- **Act:** Implement the planned solution



At this stage, you have defined the problem and identified the sources of information that you required and have collected to solve the problem.

Now, you are required to "Do" part of the cycle. This means that you need to develop and test your findings for a solution. This means that you need to find out the organisations procedures for presenting the information in a format that will allow management or the decision makers to make a final decision on the problem.

This is called the objectives of research. Information is presented in a manner that allows management or the decision makers to identify the possible causes of the problem and to assess the information against organisational requirements to determine the manner in which the problem will be resolved.

The objectives of research that you may be required to address may include:

- **Comparative analysis**

  Comparison between two or more alternatives.

To complete a comparative analysis, you need to:

1. Identify a frame of reference. In the case of WHS, it will be the outcome and reason for performing the collection of information.
2. Make a list of similarities and differences between two or more points that you are comparing.
3. Present your findings. In most instances, information should be presented in a table.

- **Hypothesis testing**

Hypothesis testing is the use of statistics to determine the probability that a hypothesis is true. The four steps of hypothesis testing include:

1. The null hypothesis (the chance of a specific result) and the alternative hypothesis (the chance that the observations will show a real effect combined with a component of a chance variation
2. Use a test to assess whether the null hypothesis is true
3. Determine whether the evidence is true
4. Compare the p-value to an acceptable significance to determine whether the null hypothesis is true or not or whether the alternative hypothesis is valid.

Refer to URL Address: http://20bits.com/articles/hypothesis-testing-the-basics/ Access Date 13.02.2012 to find out more about hypothesis testing.

- **Identification of trends**

Trend analysis is the practice of collecting information and attempting to identify a trend within the information gathered. For example; an increase in accident/incident reports can be used to identify changes in the workplace, such as hazards not being identified, failure of personnel not to report a hazard or minimise a risk. A closer look at the accident/incident reports may show that only personnel who were trained a year ago are having incidents.

Your goal will be to find out the cause of these incidents. It may be that the staff are ignoring the training so are not following procedure, or they may require re-training to reinforce their knowledge of work health and safety.

- **Industry pricing policies**

The pricing strategy that is chosen will affect demand for your product or service. By

understanding pricing strategies, you will be able to make your business more affective.

When choosing a product and or service, you organisations requirements may be influenced by:

- The budget allocated for the product or service; and
- The specifications for the product or service

Consider the factors affecting the demand for your product or service that may be:

- Elastic where a change in price has a large impact on demand; or
- Inelastic where price change will have little effect on demand.

A number of factors will impact on elasticity and they are:

- Whether there are substitutes available? – cheaper prices and the same level of quality will make your product in elastic
- Whether there are any complimentary products? – when the price for one product goes down, another goes up (i.e. toothbrush and toothpaste)
- Whether the product is a necessity or a luxury – going out for dinner or toilet paper

Common pricing strategies include:

- Discount pricing – aimed at the budget end of the market where customers will buy at a lower price and is a difficult strategy to use over the long term since sales must be continuously high to maintain a profit
- Image pricing – customers buy due to how the item affects their perceived image. Marketing is usually targeted to the high end of the market and should communicate luxury as customers are usually prepared to pay the top dollar
- Loss leaders – when products are sold at a lower price when they make insufficient profit. Items are usually discounted.
- Penetration pricing – which aims for high sales at lower prices. It will usually discourage competitors due to the low margin of profit. It needs to have a large target market and high volume of sales to meet targeted goals.
- Skimming pricing which is usually used for new or emerging technology. The original price is high for those willing to pay. The price lowers after a while to appeal to the customers who are more aware of prices.

If the price is too high and exceeds the budget, you can either choose another way to resolve an issue, or you can find a short term strategy in which to minimise the hazard until the necessary part falls beneath the budget allocated for the product. Understanding different pricing strategies will assist you in identifying when a price decreases and the price is going to be within budget.

- **Process mapping**

Process mapping is a diagram that is used to demonstrate a clear understanding of a process or series of parallel processes. You usually draw a flow chart in this instance. The steps of the constructing a process flow chart includes the following steps

Steps	Method
One **Determine boundaries**	Where does the process begin Where does it end
Two **Steps of the process**	Use a doing word at the start of the description of the task The flow chart can be simple to outline the process flow or thorough noting each step and action
Three **Order of steps**	Post it notes can assist you in moving tasks around Consult with workers and other impacted by the hazard and are familiar with the work area processes

<table>
<tr><th>Steps</th><th>Method</th></tr>
<tr><td>Four
Appropriate Symbols</td><td>Standard Symbols include
<table>
<tr><th>Shape</th><th>Meaning</th></tr>
<tr><td>Arrow</td><td>Flow of the process</td></tr>
<tr><td>Box or rectangle</td><td>Show task or activities being performed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Diamonds</td><td>Show points that require yes or no answer to a question or decision</td></tr>
<tr><td>Oval</td><td>Show input at the start and end of the process.</td></tr>
</table>
Only one arrow should be pointed to the shape and away from it.

Make sure that the feedback loop is closed if you use one</td></tr>
<tr><td>Five
System Model</td><td>Draw charts using flow chart

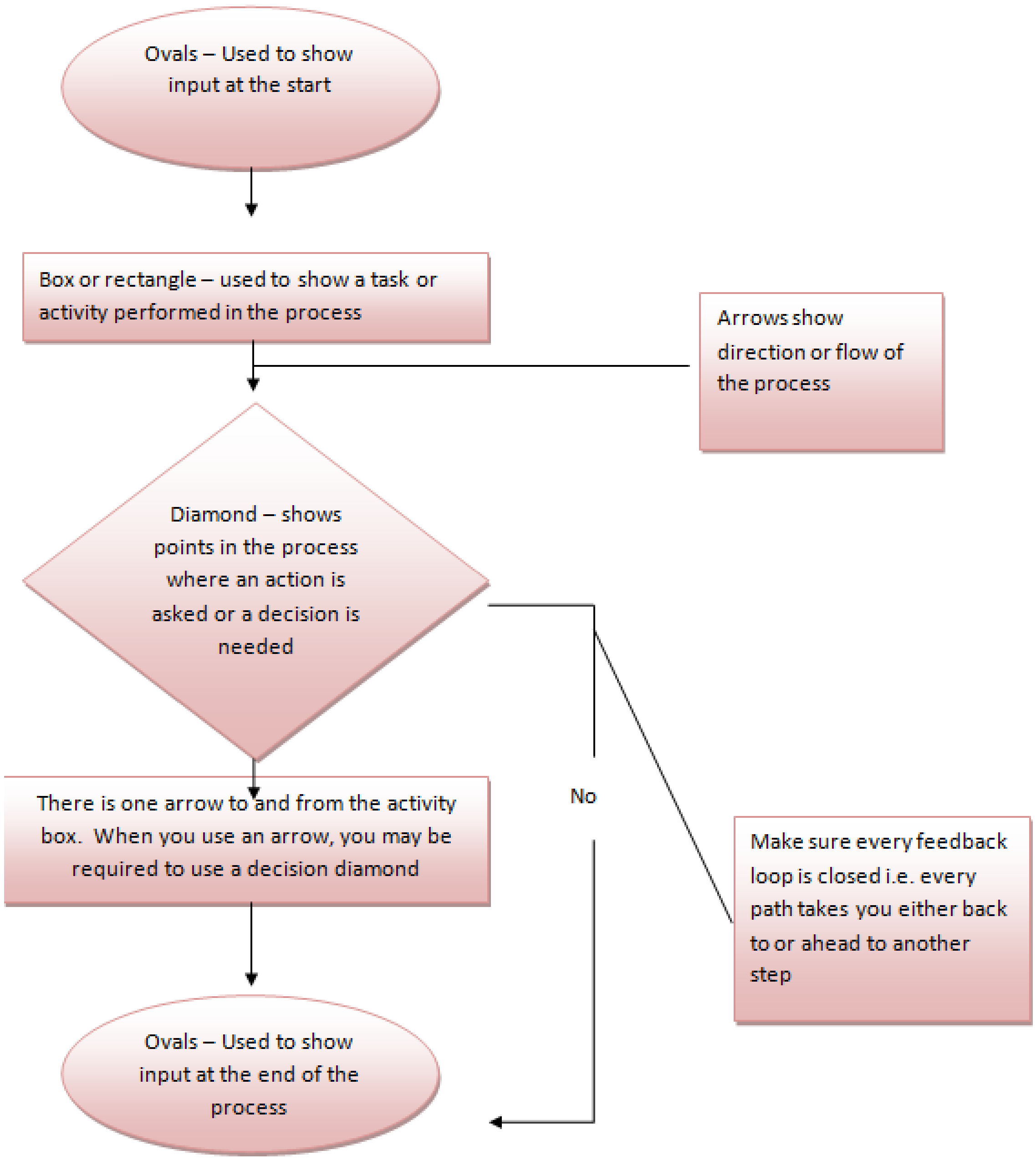
a. Control uses best in class business rules
b. Feedback uses information from surveys
c. Input uses information about people, machines, materials, the environment and methods
d. Output uses the desired results
e. Processes use subsets of processes in series.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Six
Check</td><td>Check the chart to make sure that it is correct</td></tr>
<tr><td>Seven
Finalise the flowchart</td><td>Consult with personnel to make sure that the flow chart is correct

Add anything that is missing

Make sure that personnel reach a consensus based on the process.</td></tr>
</table>

Process mapping gives you a visualisation of a process so that you can understand the process and identify the possible impact that a change will have on processes.

Example – Process Mapping



Chris Ahoy, Iowa State University, Sept 1999

Situational diagnosis

A situational diagnosis is usually is usually performed to

- analyse the state of people and the ecosystem (including identify trends and pressures)
- identification of major issues that relate to personnel and the environment; and
- an analysis of key stakeholders

When you are unsure about who a stakeholder is in an event or project, you should perform a situation analysis. The situational analysis assists in identifying issues and problems and how they should be addressed.

There are many variations to the situation analysis. The type of situation analysis presented below is a simple model. The situational analysis includes:

Problem Identification	**What is the problem?** **Why is there a problem?** ➢ What are the possible causes of the problem and how severe are they? **Who is affected by the problem?** ➢ Who are they? Where are they located and what characteristics do they have? **What should be done to minimise or eliminate the problem?**

In problem identification, you should know:

- What outcomes you are trying to achieve – the level of participation in the process
- Resources – human, financial and other materials allocated to bring change.
- The results that the allocated resources are supposed to produce
- The level of access there is to the results – this varies when lack of barriers and geographic proximity impact on the problem outcomes.
- The environment – including the social, cultural and political changes

Information required	Type of information
Socio demographic	Staffing Where staff are
Economic activity	Budget Labour force participation
Socio-cultural and political	Political structure Relevant laws, statutes and policies Use of time Decision making process

Consider your target population which includes the physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment. You also need to include a profile about the workforce through the use of quantitative and economic outcome indicators as well as a descriptive analysis of cultural and legal settings.

Analyse information	Questions to be answered
Outcomes	What resources are needed to improve the outcomes? What resources are being provided? Are there enough resources?
Resources	Are the resources produced efficiently? Are they correct?
Expected results	Are the resources easily accessible? Are they sufficient? Are they used? Are they sufficient as opposed to the budget? – i.e. is the quality of the product appropriate?
Level of access	Is the impact of the access positive or negative?
Environment	What are the environmental conditions? How do these conditions impact on the availability of the resources

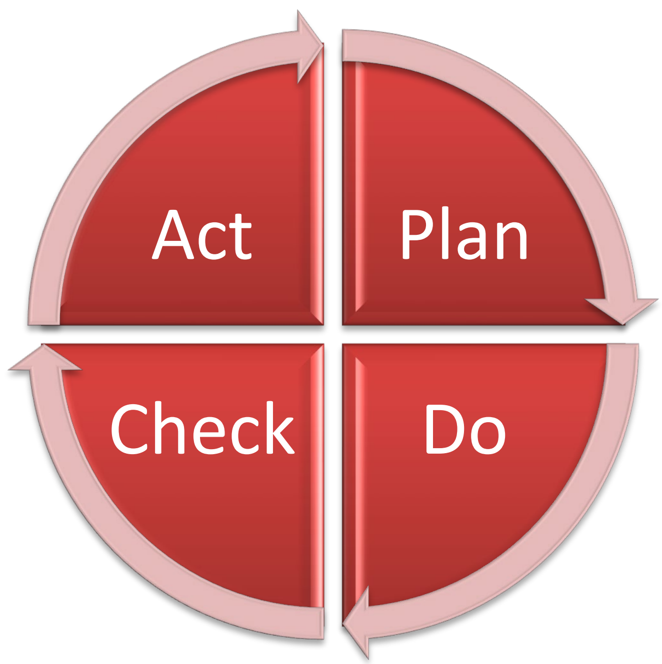
Consult with your workgroup and anyone impacted by the problem and obtain feedback to identify any areas that may you have not considered.

The objectives of research need to align with the objectives of how you are going to analyse the problem. These objectives or research will ensure that information and data is collated and gathered into a format that will allow you to make a decision or provides a clear and simple way in which to provide personnel with information to assist in the decision making process.

2.2 - Ensure that data and research strategies used are valid and relevant to the requirements of the research and make efficient use of available resources

2.3 - Identify key words and phrases for use as part of any online search strategy, including the use of Boolean operators and other search tools

Before information and data is released to workers and other stakeholders, it is essential to make sure that the research strategy used is appropriate for your needs and that you make efficient use of the resources available to resolve your problem.



At this stage of the PDCA Cycles check to make sure that your processes are effective to ensure that the solution used is appropriate. Assess the research strategy used and identify whether you have made appropriate use of the resources available. Review and identify how you can improve the use of resources.

When choosing a research strategy, it is important to make sure that the information being researched is valid and relevant in relation to the research and the resources that are available. Remember that relevance is related to whether the information is out of date, obsolete or archived. Relevant information is usually the most recent information that is used to ensure that the decision maker is making an informed decision.

If you are not sure whether or not the information you are viewing is correct, open the organisational file register and check the version control that is the latest and compare it to the document that is going to the be used to gather information.

You can also confirm whether information is relevant, check the document for:

- Time and date = Soft copy documents (as opposed to hard copy – printed documents) such as electronic documents will show the time and date in which the document or file was developed.
- Signature – Check to make sure a document has to be signed to be valid. An unsigned document may not be the most recent document.
- If the document is checked and verified – has the document been copied, stamped and signed to confirm that it is authentic and valid.

To determine the validity of information, you should check to ensure that you answer the following questions:

Is it clear?

When you gather information make sure that it is clear. If you are confused by information that you have gathered, then the chances are that the recipients of the information will be confused. You also should consider who the audience is. If you do not understand the information, consult with appropriate personnel to clarify your understanding of the information.

Is it current?

Version control can verify that you are handling the latest document. To refine the currency of a document, check to make sure that the document is relevant. The latest date and time can be used to ensure that a document is current.

For example, you have been asked to write a report for the Workers' compensation regulator in your state/territory about incident/accident trends within the organisation. You can check the document register to identify which versions you require to check which accident/incident reports are required.

You would also check the dates of the reports to refine your search. Version control and the time and dates of the accident/incident reports can be confirmed and then the information can be collated to form the report and identify the trends of the organisation.

Is it accurate?

Information that is not accurate can be dangerous. Out of date information can place staff at risk. For example; from 1 January 2012 the Work Health and Safety Act was introduced to the Australian Workplace. From this date, progressive codes of practice and regulations will be introduced. Failure by an organisation to keep up to date with these changes can leave an organisation open to risk. This risk can be detrimental to workers who have a duty of care to their employer. If they are not trained correctly about the changes they may take action that can be very costly to the organisation and can cause a loss of productivity when staff become stressed due to lack of information.

When you search for data, take the time to make sure that you choose the information that is current, especially when you need to make an informed decision.

An informed decision is a decision made based on relevant, current, current and clear in regards to facts that will assist yourself or management in making a decision.

The research strategies that you may use may include:

- **Data analysis**

  Data analysis is the gathering of information into a format that can be used to describe facts, detect patterns and develop trends. Data analysis may be either qualitative or quantitative.

  Qualitative analysis relies on the analysis of data in a descriptive format. Quantitative data analysis reviews to the use of numbers and statistics in the analysis of data.

  Qualitative data is collected in a systematic recording of information where a pattern or trends in sets of data are identified. The information in the trends is based on the interpreter's background knowledge and experience. As such the information should be written up and given to other parties to analyse and interpret so that a trend or trends can be identified and measured so that clear decisions can be made over time.

  Quantified data research is experimentation where one or more variables can be consciously manipulated and the outcome for the variable observed. Experimental methods are commonly applied to determine causal relationships or to quantify the magnitude of response of a variable. For example, at what level has the person got the skill to implement a control measure for WHS? The WHS Act is very clear on the roles that require a qualification, training or AQTF training qualifications. In other instances, the level of experience will affect the capabilities of a worker. It may take descriptive analysis to determine the characteristics and level of skill to perform a task competently.

For an explanation of the different types of data analysis refers to the website Address: http://www.drtomoconnor.com/3760/3760lect07.htm Access Date: 28.02.2012.

- **Documentation reviews**

Documents are reviewed to:

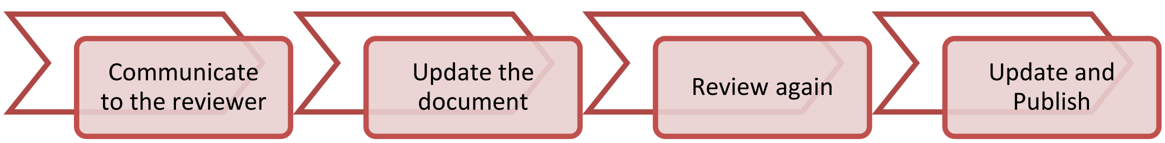
- Improve them
- Ensure that they are accurate and up to date
- Increase your organisations credibility

Documents need to be reviewed to ensure that they are:

- Technically correct
- Offer clear and correct information
- Timely
- Satisfying their requirements

To review a document you need to:

1. Review the documents objectives
    a. Make sure that the information is correct
    b. Improve the quality of the document
2. Review the expectations to ensure that they are still the same
    a. Make sure you have a shared view for workers and others to take ownership and follow the documents requirements
    b. Ensure legislative and regulative requirements are being met.
3. Keep all workers and those influenced or impacted by the document involved by sharing information and obtaining feedback on the information provided.
4. Keep everyone involved in the process. Use the consultation process as outlined in the Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice
5. Circulate the document for readability, English and technical content



6. After review, call a meeting to discuss
7. Publish the final copy.

- **Focus groups**

  Focus groups are a qualitative research method when information is gathered to determine whether the control measure implemented is appropriate for the needs of your group. Surveys are developed to determine the reaction of workers and other personnel to ensure:

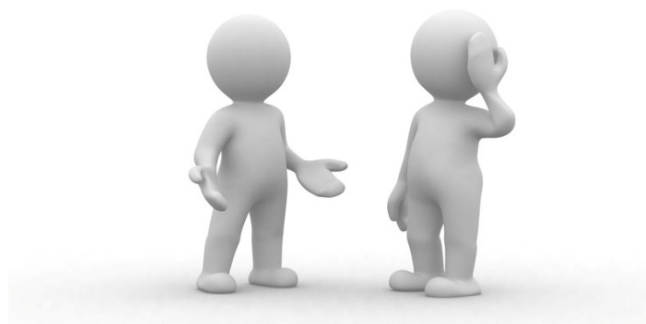
  - That the control measure has not raised any other hazards
  - Exacerbated the problem or minimised it
  - Reached expected outcomes.

  The survey is usually in the form of a transcript that is used to stimulate group assessment of the control. The discussions are transcribed and in some cases taped or videotaped. The responses are recorded and analysed. Be aware that you need to acquire permission if you are going to video or record the focus group.

Confidentiality legislation as per the Privacy Act 1988 or in the case of a work health and safety issue, refer to Section 271 of the WHS Act as to your responsibilities under the Confidentiality of Information.

- **Interviewing colleagues and clients**

When you interview personnel, it is important to have the ability to walk in their shoes (show empathy) and take responsibility for what is being communicated and how it is being communicated and whether or not it is understood. The quality of the feedback that we obtain will allow us to determine the relevance of our feedback.



The principles of effective communication when interviewing colleagues and clients include:

- Demonstrate that you are listening to them through body language such as nodding and showing an interest in their responses
- Maintain eye contact – being aware that in some cultures this is a sign of disrespect
- Be open minded
- Do not make assumptions. Clarify the answers by asking questions
- Focus on the message being conveyed
- Note body language
- Do not interrupt them
- Respond to what is communicated rather than the message sent
- Refer to yourself with "I" rather than with you to minimise defensiveness and resistance to further communication
- Talk to rather than at the listener
- Be aware of your body language including:

- Facial expression
- Appearance
- Gestures and tone of voice

- Make sure that communication is a two way process.

Questioning techniques may include:

- Open ended (questions that require an answer) and close ended (Questions that require a single word response (i.e. yes or no)) questions
- Use clarifying questions so that you can understand what the client or colleague meant
- Confirm feelings
- Build on statements that speakers make
- Repeat a question if it is not being answered.

Diversity is a large issue in the workplace. It is important to acknowledge differences by being respectful of cultural differences and treating all personnel equally. This means that personnel should not be stereo typed and that you use non-discriminatory words.

- **Product sampling**

Product sampling gives you an opportunity to test different products and/or services to identify which product set or mix of products that will assist in resolving the problem. When there are several products that solve the problem, meet organisational requirements and no consensus can be made in regards to the appropriate product, then samples of the product can be obtained to determine which product is appropriate.

Once each product has been trialled, you may need to ask personnel questions to build consensus. Personnel have different needs and preferences. When it is hard to obtain a decisive answer in regards to a particular brand of product, you should be prepared with questions that will assist you in the final decision.

Ask questions relating to the feel of the product and individual experiences with the product. Questions may include:

Tactical questions	Experiential questions
How does the product feel? Is this feeling consistent over the period of the day? When were their variations? What happened? Were they positive or negative?	What has your experiences been about the product? Which product do you associate with? Why?

Once you have consulted with the workers or other personnel impacted by the problem, so then you can reflect and analyse the responses so that you can make a decision.

- **Online searching**
  - **Browsers' and**

    Depending on the depth of an online search, you should make sure that you are familiar with terms and methods about on line research. Online searching can include using a search browser and using a data base. Search browsers such as Google and yahoo make searches in browsers simple.

  - **Subscription databases**

    Subscription databases consist of published journals, trade and industry magazines, reports, documents, books, images, and more. Most of these databases are available online, while some can be accessed via CD-ROM or DVD within the library.

    These libraries are accessible to patrons who subscribe to them and are usually offered free to the public. Database contracts can be made through subscription databases such as Proquest, First Search. You do not search the web when you search the database; you are search pre-selected information that can be found in a printed format on a library shelf.

    These databases are easy to access many scholarly, professional and technical journals spanning across many industries. You will find that a search strategy can assist you in refining your searches so you do not expend too many resources accessing them.

When searching on subscription databases, here are some things to remember and helpful hints. They are:

- To be aware of cultural diversity and consider terms used for different regions
- Some search engines are derived from America so if you have trouble finding information, try to spell words the American Way.
- Use thesaurus to assist in your search

Boolean logic allows you to use AND, OR and NOT to search for items that contain certain terms, or only if it is used with another term. The links below and all Web Search engines “search help: have good examples of Boolean searches. Take care when you use words. For example, using the word NOT, for New York and you wrote, NOT “new”. The article or journal you want may be called To be or Not to be. As you asked it to exclude not, the article would not be found.

Capitalization

When searching for proper names, search syntax that will distinguish capital from lower case letters will help narrow the search. In other cases, you would want to make sure the search engine isn't looking for a particular pattern of capitalization, and many search engines let you choose which of these options to use.

Field searching

All database records are divided up into fields. Almost all search engines in CD-ROM or online library products and the more sophisticated Web search engines allow users to search for terms appearing in a particular field. This helps when you are looking for specific items.

Proximity

This means that you can search for terms only if the words are close to each other within words or paragraphs. This is tricky tool so make sure that you practice with this search.

Search for phrases

Make sure that your search engine allows the syntax for phrase searching. If you use the term black adder, you may get adder black, so you may obtain documents about both and not about black adder.

Wild cards and truncation

This is where symbols are used instead of letters so that the search engine will retrieve any word with a letter on that spot. For example, man and men (m*n), would be what you would add. This is a wildcard. Truncation can be good when you require a main word, but require a group of words safe, safety, you would use saf*.

The content found on the data base will impact on the search strategy that you use to retrieve documents. Some of the searches you may find online or in your library may include:

Full text of a document

Searching full text documents gives you a good chance of retrieving the document you want, provided you can think of some key words and phrases which would have been included in the text. You may find that you will get too many documents.

Index and abstract of a document

When a document like a journal article has been indexed and an abstract written, a human indexer has helped organize the document for easy retrieval. Note that you will need to follow the prompts to download the whole article.

Representation or summary of a document

If documents in a library catalogue only include the author, the name of the document and a brief description of the article, don't expect to find the whole article. A search will only come up with what is in the search catalogue.

.4 - Use reliable methods of data analysis that are suitable to research purposes

2.5 - Ensure that assumptions and conclusions used in analyses are clear, justified, supported by evidence and consistent with research and business objectives

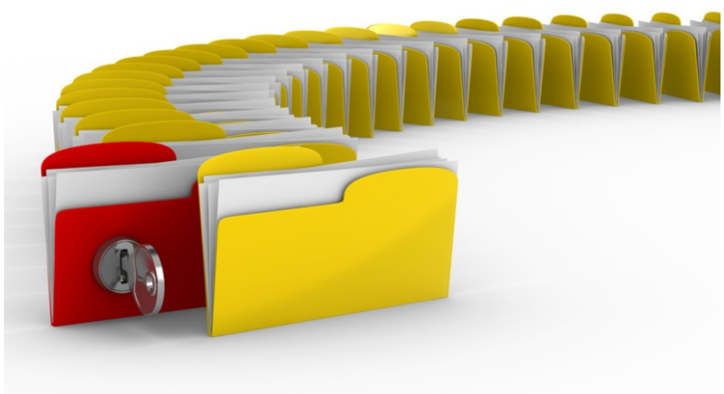
Care should be taken to consider the different types of analysis that are available once you have finalised your research. It is important to make sure that the method of data analysis used is appropriate for the research that you are performing. The relevance of the data analysis methodology needs to correspond with the goals of the business.

Operational research is more costly than randomised controlled trials, providing faster answers to questions and enables the standard evaluation of the intervention in real life situations in diverse settings. Randomised trials are more rigorous and can generate a convincing result. Operational and randomised trials can be considered when determining if the policies and practices that you are considering to implement will improve performance outcomes.

However in a period when resources are scarce fewer funds will usually be allocated for randomised trials in answering questions about updates in procedures. It is important to determine factors such as cost, speed of implementation and speed of change in practice. For this reason, it is important to learn what the different types of analysis do and what information you can be provided with. Methods of data analysis may include:

- **Data sampling**

  When you gather information, you do not want to waste your time gathering data about a whole population. Instead you can choose an appropriate sample of the population to represent that population as a whole. This is called random sampling by statisticians.



  Random sampling is when each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. The easiest way to describe a random sample is by using the simple random sample. It is like placing a list of names in a hat and predicting that the sample chosen randomly is a sample of the general population.

Other forms of sampling include:

- Stratified sampling where the population is divided into groups called the strata and then a sample is taken from each stratum.
- Cluster sampling when the population is divided into strata and then samples are chosen randomly from the strata.
- Systematic sample where a starting point is chosen randomly and then taking every nth (meaning a chosen amount such as 5th, 20th or 49th, etc.) from a listing of the population, such as within a telephone directory.
- Convenience sampling that involves the results that are readily available, such as the results found in a marketing survey.

When you sample data, do it carefully. If you are not careful, the results could be false. Taking a sample rather than using a whole area, saves money and attempts to minimise bias that may be rampant in the general population, so you have a true sample of client and colleague thought.

- **Feedback on results**

You gather information and then share it with the workgroup. In the consultative process, information is shared, workers are given an opportunity to address their concerns by asking questions and then you will be required to give them an opportunity to express their views and contribute to the feedback process. The feedback should then be used to assist in the decision making process.

- **Peer review**

A peer review is completed so that peers within a professional body can check each other's work. Peer reviews are an excellent way in which to speed up the process of identifying a mistake that should be corrected.

- **Review of previous research**

Previous research allows you to view previous consultation processes, including suggestions made and the reason why they were rejected. A suggestion rejected previously may now be a main contender to minimise risk due to changes in legislation or the working environment. Previous research can also provide you with information about technological innovation and the reasons why they were rejected in the past. The technology may have been too expensive or too new. Now you may have new versions of the technology and the attitude of industry may have changed.

- **Statistical analysis**

When experimenting, it is essential to be aware of the fact that results can be analysed. When you experiment, you need to plan your needs and requirements. Statistical analysis is a quantitative approach to research that allow for the possible cause of past events and observations or occurrence of future events of observations.

For a basic understanding of statistics, refer to the FAO Corporate Document Repository at URL Address: http://www.fao.org/docrep/W7295E/w7295e08.htm Access Date 27.02.2012.

In all data analysis it is important that the researcher and all participants align their assumptions and conclusions with your research objectives and your business objectives. This means that if your research aims to find ways in which to improve processes without compromising work health and safety, then the goal of the research is to identify processes and procedures that can improve productivity and have a proven record that the research objectives can be met.

In a time when resources are scarce, many organisations will refer to descriptive (qualitative research) techniques to establish whether the proposed process is viable. However, when there is no clear result, organisations may refer their researchers into using randomised trials to determine the viability of the proposed process. This, of course will only occur if the organisation has the resources and capability of performing the trials financially.

Research objectives should also take into consideration business objectives when finalising their objectives to ensure that the objectives are aligned and the need to review is not required.

Business objectives may include:

As a part of the new work health and safety legislation, "a person conducting a business or undertaking must consult, so far as reasonably practicable with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health and safety matter" (Section 47). One aspect of a business may be to involve the community in hazard resolution. They would have a better understanding of the local laws, the environment (fauna and flora) and the impact when there is a chance of a risk to the community.

Initiatives that business objectives may include is working with the community by:

- **Community capacity building**

  Community capacity building is when the capacity of the people in the community participates in actions relating to the interests of the community. People may act as individuals, groups, organisations or networks. Their activities are referred to as Community Activity and these activities are divided into three types of activities:

  - Building relationships – where people take interest in community initiatives such as volunteers for fire fighting in emergency situation or participants in work health and safety issues that arise from business endeavours.

  - Delivering services – these services may be provided by the community and usually include volunteer groups.

  - All of the community support and participate in decisions that influence the quality of local life. For example, if an organisation changes processes and a leak of noxious gases enters the air, they are required to consult and work with the community in making decisions that will control the risk to the local inhabitants and personnel.

- **Community development**

  Community development is the process where personnel in the local community work together to create more employment positions, income and infrastructure; and work towards ensuring that the community can handle change. By improving networks, income and solving problems, the community improves. Some of the endeavours of the community is to build new skills so as to take advantage of human capital. Other resources need to be developed to improve the communities' environment.

Many communities aim to create wealth, be more involved in change and participate in the functions of the environment and community to improve not only dollar values, but also the value of the people together. When an organisation refers a risk to the community, it can draw on the resources of the community to maintain control of the risk. A failure of the community to act can place the environment at risk and this can have a negative impact on tourism, especially if the area relies on its natural resources to generate income. If you are in a rural area, your land may be poisoned from a risk in a workplace when something occurs that poisons the local environment.

By participating in events in the workplace, personnel can protect their environment and in turn protect their wealth.

Factors that will impact on the business objectives of the organisation may include:

- **Business planning**

Business planning is about obtaining results. Effective business planning has to be a real appraisal of the current position of the organisation. Business plan contain:

Business planning is the creation of the mission and vision statement and the strategies to meet these goals and missions. Every aspect of operations is focused on addressing the business objectives through the allocation of resources. These plans utilise financial, human and physical resources to meet their objectives and legislative requirements.

When resolving problems it is essential that you make sure that your research objectives are consistent with the organisations plan and objectives. For example, part of the organisations mission could be to "continuously improve the operations of the organisation"…..Resolution of legislative requirements includes using human resources as part of the consultative process to improve safety and ensure that operational objectives are met.

All internal operations are geared to the organisations mission and vision statements. For more information on business planning, download a copy of the Business Planning Guide from URL Address: www.business.gov.au/Documents/Businessplanguide.doc Access Date: 21.02.2012

- **Flexibility, responsiveness**

Organisation's that are top heavy and have too many managerial layers are not as responsive as flatter organisations that have fewer layers of management. Too many management layers can slow down the level of responsiveness an organisation due to the bureaucracy and political plays of management. To survive in a globalised dynamic environment, organisations need to obtain fewer layers. This ensures that they have a competitive edge in their industry.

Those who still have not changed their organisational structure may be forced to maintain a flatter structure so that the organisation can be responsive to their legal obligations in relation to the consultation process.

- **Financial performance**

Financial performance is a subjective measure of how well a firm uses its assets from its primary mode of business and generates revenue. Financial performance determines the financial health of the organisation at any given period of time.

- **Marketing and customer service**

Marketing creates value for customers and builds strong customer relationships in order to capture value in return. Customer service is what brings customers back to the organisation. Marketing brings the customer into the organisation and in turn the development of customer service.

- **Service provision**

  A service provision is a service a business offers instead of a physical product. The services offered are similar to a product in that with costs and a variety of services, which vary from business to business. There are three types of business activity – primary – secondary and tertiary. Service provisions fall under tertiary and are aimed at other businesses and the general public who are involved in primary and secondary business activities. Sales provisions cover many industries including hospitality, legal and agriculture.

- **Work procedures and quality assurance manuals**

  Many organisations, especially those who have ISO 9001:2008 accreditations have manuals that are audited to ensure that the organisation conforms to the continuous improvement process. Work procedures are developed from this manual to ensure that personnel know and understand their job responsibilities and roles in ensuring that quality assurance is maintained.

Objectives are set for a reason. When information you need to understand what impact (if any) your research may have on the department or what the impact the objectives of each of these departments may have on the topic researched. For example, the introduction of new equipment and plant may not be considered practicably reasonable if the cost of replacing the equipment or plant exceeds the budget.

Conversely what impact does a purchase of equipment have on the organisation? Will it increase productivity or will the level of risk rise due to the risks it introduces to the workplace. Objectives must be clear and researchers must stay focused on the details.

To reinforce their findings, researchers are required by law to consult with workers and any party impacted or influenced by the hazards that were raised due to a worker raise an accident/incident report or a planned change is being implemented.

In a time of scarce resources, organisations are moving to developing employee skills. The consultation process implemented with WHS Act and Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice. Employees are encouraged to participate in and contribute to the safety process.

- **People management**

  Personnel are in a position to identify where improvement to working conditions can be made. Empowering your staff using positive reinforcement and training them builds their confidence so they will be proactive in providing ongoing feedback about not only their legal obligation to report a risk, but to identify where there is a problem in efficiency and providing feedback to personnel. It is important to use your interpersonal communication skills to lead personnel into using their own initiative.

- **Interpersonal communication**

  To build an environment of trust and respect with your workgroup and other stakeholders, it is necessary for you to demonstrate that you support them. Empowerment is the process of building worker confidence to a level in which they can work semi-autonomously or autonomously in the workplace.

  The techniques that you use to build confidence are interpersonal skills. These interpersonal skills include:

  - Demonstrating empathy by being able to place yourself in their shoes and consider situations from their perspective
  - Being respectful and honest – do not promise something that you are unable to do.
  - Be consistent and follow through – If you are unable to keep a promise, communicate the problem with the team
  - Highlight strengths to build confidence and demonstrate your support to them
  - Be flexible – everyone has different needs so you may not find that you can build confidence with people in the say ways.
  - Give worker a sense of control. Consider the consultation process and acknowledge all feedback and thank people for their efforts in a way in which to build confidence.
  - Share information that will impact on their decisions. The worker needs to be able to feel confident that you provide them with the correct information. When a worker makes a suggestion based on this information, thank them for their feedback and ideas and always provide them with feedback on the final decision.

- Acknowledge feelings and encourage workers to voice their opinions.

No matter how strong a relationship is in the workplace, you will invariably be faced with conflict. Take the time to listen to each party views. Acknowledge their problems and feelings and then use appropriate techniques to resolve the issue.

- **Organisational values and behaviours**

An organisations culture aims to influence the way personnel operate in the workplace. For an organisation to be effective, the culture must be managed so that all workers act together as a team.

Culture is based on the way a person behaves and their beliefs that influence the world around them. When a worker enters a workplace, they should be treated with respect and honour. With the need to feel accepted, they will work with their workgroup and form behaviours, values and beliefs that they will associate with the culture of the organisation. For example, if management regularly congratulates a worker for a job that has been done well, then it will become a ritual that is accepted and appreciated by the workgroup so that they will act in the way the organisation requires to meet their legal obligations.

Culture gives workgroups the sense of belonging through a collective identity, thus ensuring the individuals do not feel isolated from their workgroup members.

The values and beliefs of your organisation and the development of your work health and safety skills need to be anchored in ritual throughout the whole organisation from recruitment until they leave the organisation.

3. Present information

3.1 - Present recommendations and issues in an appropriate format, style and structure using suitable business technology

3.2 - Structure and format reports in a clear manner that conforms to organisational requirements

The International Standards Organisation (ISO9000) objective is to ensure that organisations maintain the same standard in all of their paperwork. The standards set are a reflection of the image and style that the organisation wants to portray. These standards will be found in the organisations procedures. Image is an important aspect of an organisation's operations. The image that an organisation portrays reflects the type of customer that the organisation is trying to attract.

Consistency of structure will be reflected in the:

- **Company logo**

  Logos are a statement of the organisations image. When a customer receives mail from an organisation, they will set it aside as it will distinguish itself from other mail.

- **Company colour scheme**

  - Bright primary colours grab a child's eye. These dominant colours in a reception area are not conducive to increased productivity.
  - Pastels and light colours are conducive to increased productivity and the organisation must reflect this consistency by using more sedate colours on the logo.

- **Document production**

  Formatting includes the font, page setting and style of text document to the used. This also includes paper size and the type of paper used. For example, no communication will occur without the use of a logo, colour scheme and formatting.

- **Content restrictions**

  The restriction of content has been incorporated into many organisation's policies and procedures. This will usually include not using organisational documents such as emails and letters for personal reasons and for sending specific emails. If you are not sure about content, ask for assistance.

- **Templates**

  Templates can be found in software. Organisational personnel can develop their own templates to suit their needs and ensure that consistency will automatically run across all of their products. These templates and other "house style templates" (which are required in certain circumstances such as to complete forms) can be found in computers and associated software programs.

When you refer to a style, you are referring to the presentation of the document that you are developing. The style includes:

- The headings that you must use in the document
- The font, type size of text
- Whether text and/or information should be bold, italics or underlined
- Colour of text, bullets and structure of the paragraphs.

Organisational policies and procedures

Paper	**White**
	9 inches by 11 inches
	One side only
Title	**Centre near the top**
	ALL CAPS
	Your name centred underneath the title
	Name of team, supervisor and date
Text	**11 point standard font**

	1.5 space text body
	Single space block quotes
	One space following a period at the end of a sentence
Margins	1 inch at top, bottom, and sides
Paging	Page numbers in bottom middle
Indentation	Omit page number on title page and first page
	Indent 5 spaces for each new paragraph
Quotations	Use quotation marks when quoting directly

Standards may include:

Email (Appendix Number Two)

To open electronic mail, you must go to

Start- All Program-Microsoft Office-Microsoft-Office Outlook

Most organisations use Microsoft Office now, however, it is important to read your organisations policies and procedures to make sure that you are using the correct program.

Every email that you send has a several sections. If you are not already familiar with these sections, then you should ask for assistance.

Forms (Appendix Number Three)

Forms can be created in Microsoft Word, Excel and Access. If there is no form to suit your needs already developed, you can start by either obtaining a template from your program or downloading a template from the Microsoft template

Letters (Appendix Number Three)

A normal part of your day will include being exposed to different types of letters. While the style and format of the letters will vary, the same general rules shall apply.

When you write a letter, it is important to keep your style formal than the way you normally speak. The layout should be clear and have all of the information set out as shown below.

Read the sample of the letter provided above. Notice that it is more formal than the way you would normally speak.

Memos (Appendix Number Three)

Memorandums are documents that are internal to an organisation. Memorandums are usually sent to individuals within an organisation. Notice the cc in the first section of the memorandum. It is usually standard practice for individuals listed in this section to initial the memorandum to show that they have read it.

This is an example of a memorandum found in the templates discussed on page 20. When you open the task pane, you should go to memos. Left click once. Move the cursor to elegant memo and this interoffice memorandum will appear. You should follow the same process for each template you use, unless the organisation has a template

Minutes of meetings (Appendix Number Three)

Minutes of meetings are an official record of an organisation. It is essential that they are accurate since they may be needed as a record to protect the organisation in the case of legal proceedings and actions against the organisation. For example, in the Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice the COP states that there is no legal obligation to maintain records of consolidation meetings. However, it strongly recommends that the organisation workers maintain and document records of meetings that so that the organisation will have proof that it is complying with its legislative requirements.

Decision making

It goes without saying that personnel require more information to making a decision. The level of information that is provided to personnel will vary according to their level of authority and the relevance of the information provided.

When you analyse information in a report, provide facts that support your recommendations. Provide facts on both the advantages and disadvantages of each recommendation. Ensure that the personnel that are quoted are reliable sources from professional sources. Avoid references from Wikipedia unless you are able to find another reference that will support your recommendation.

Make sure that you make appropriate use of technology. There are many software programs that will assist you with the presentation of the information. Use the appropriate presentation material to meet your needs.

Technology that you may be required to use is:

- A computer to design the presentation.
- A printer to print it
- An overhead projector if you are using power points to present the information
- An email to send the information to the correct party.

Consultation process

The level of information provided during the consultation is usually not as vast as the information provided during the decision making process. By the time workers and other personnel impacted or influenced by the hazard are provided with information, management or the decision maker has narrowed down the options available according to the allocated budget and other factors such as the control measures meeting specification requirements.

3.3 - Report and distribute research findings in accordance with organisational requirements

Before you send a document, it is essential that you double check the documents address to make sure that the document is addressed to the correct party. Many organisations, for example will write "if you are not the intended recipient please do not access this email." This is to protect the data sent.

Confidential and sensitive information is sent to organisations' on a daily basis. When information is sent to the wrong party, especially when they are in competition with the intended recipient, your organization can be left open to litigation. This means that your organization and you as a representative of the organization can be sued, especially if the organization lost business or suffered a loss due to the negligence of the sender.

Imagine the impact this would have on your employer's reputation. Your credibility would also be affected. Care should be taken to ensure that you follow organizational procedure when sending a document. It is essential that the document reaches

its intended audience. This means that the document must reach its intended recipient.

Intended recipient may include:

Audience for document

Attention must be paid to making sure that you have the correct recipient/s. If the document needs to go to more than one party, then you must confirm the parties that should receive the information.

Always proofread the names on the envelope or in the email. When a document is processed with CC (carbon copy) and BCC (Blind carbon copy) make sure that you have the correct parties. In many organisations, when a report or other style of document is sent to workgroups and clients on a regular basis, lists of the intended audience are made up.

These lists can then be CCd or BCCd onto the email. This saves time and effort only if the lists are kept up to date. If the lists are not maintained, there is the chance that new personnel or recipients will be missed and that other personnel may be sent the information even when they no longer require it. This can occur when personnel change positions in the organisation or leave it.

Signatory of the document

Check to make sure that the person or person/s required who are authorised to sign the document are authorised to do so. There will be times when the required signatory is not available. In these instances, another member or staff will usually be authorised to sign off on the document.

The signatory will usually proofread the document before signing off on the document.

If you are still new to writing documents, let them know so they will look more closely at the document before signing it.

Supervisor /or other staff member who may add to or forward document to another recipient

You will not always be required to send the document to the intended recipient. There will be occasions when your supervisor is unable to check the document. In these instances, they will usually advise you that they are going to keep the document before sending it to the recipients on the document.

Other staff may be authorised to add to or forward the document to another recipient. This may be a normal part of business operations or it may be at the request of the recipient.

Management	Work group members

Power-point presentation Reports As an attachment on an email	Meetings – Group Informal meetings Signs around work area Update in procedures Training

3.4 - Obtain feedback and comments on suitability and sufficiency of findings in accordance with organisational requirements

As quality assurance is an ongoing process, even when a new procedure is introduced to the workplace, information must be reviewed. There is a need to establish whether the change implemented into the environment is meeting its objectives. When the level of productivity is set, the promise that the organisation makes to its clients is maintained. For example: If the lead time is six days, then the organisation must deliver in those days.

Before change is implemented, you should make sure that you have a point of reference upon which to measure any variations to processes and performance.

When you are trying to obtain feedback, it is important to identify what you are trying to measure. It is only when you know what you are going to measure, that you will be able to determine the appropriate method/s of feedback. At times, you will find that you may need to obtain different feedback in different methods to ensure that not only business and research objectives have been attained, but to ensure that the processes put in place are appropriate.

It is also important to keep your options open in regards to the manner in which you are obtaining feedback. At times, there may be a reaction to a change that was not foreseen. It is only through changing your feedback process or adding to the process that you will be able to determine that the deficiencies. There may even be times when you may need to revisit your research to determine whether you have missed information that would have impacted on the final decision.

Feedback may include:

Audit documentation and reports

Are operations being maintained? If not, where are the problems? If yes, have there been any changes? When change is implemented, it may weaken one area and strengthen another area in the work process. Audit documentation and reports can give you statistical information that you can check before and after changes to identify the impact that the change implemented has had on the productivity and level of performance of staff.

In audit information and reports, watch for:

- Variations over time
- Changing trends - identify whether you can trace it back to the problem you researched.
- Sharp changes in attitude toward the product
- Sales variations taking into consideration changes in market trend or cyclical trends.

Comments from community, board members, clients and colleagues

Informal meetings and formal meetings are an excellent environment in which to obtain feedback from personnel at all levels to ensure that the change implemented is suitable and meets the businesses objectives and organisational requirements. Discussion is a good environment in which to stimulate ideas and use them to determine whether information is sufficient and suitable

Give personnel at all levels an opportunity to provide feedback to ensure that you have sufficient knowledge to determine whether or not your research is sufficient. Feedback from all levels not only confirms that the information is sufficient and/or suitable; it can also assist you in refining your processes.

Comments can be invaluable. If you obtain specific feedback, research it. However, make sure that you are given a specific amount of the same feedback. If you research every comment, you will find that you are researching your research all of the time. People have their own wants, needs and preferences. Their feedback may just be their personal view.

Customer satisfaction questionnaires

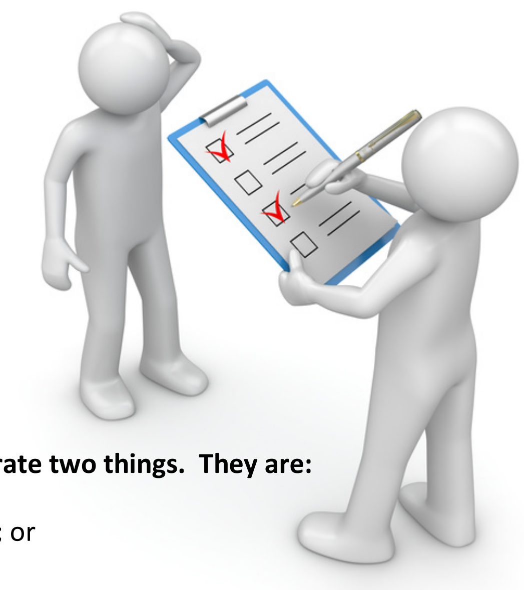
When you consult with personnel, make sure that you do not miss the end users. They are the personnel who use the product and can identify if the quality of the product is maintained, whether the changes impact on the way in which the end product operates. The quality of the product may be affected by the change. The change may not be sufficient for the customer to return the product. However, if there is a down turn in sales, then you may need to review established customers to find out why they are no longer using the product.

Quality assurance data

How will you measure quality? There are many ways in which to measure quality? It all depends on the information that you are researching. For example, you are measuring the quality of the air in mine shafts to ensure that workers are not put at risk. Measuring productivity to identify whether performance has improved or quality to ensure that your product is within safe design parameters.

Quality measurement techniques may include:

- Repetitive measurements
- Internal test samples
- Control charts
- Independent measurements
- Audits



Returned goods

The amount of returned goods to a supplier can demonstrate two things. They are:

- Customer dissatisfaction with the product; or
- Problems with the products performance.

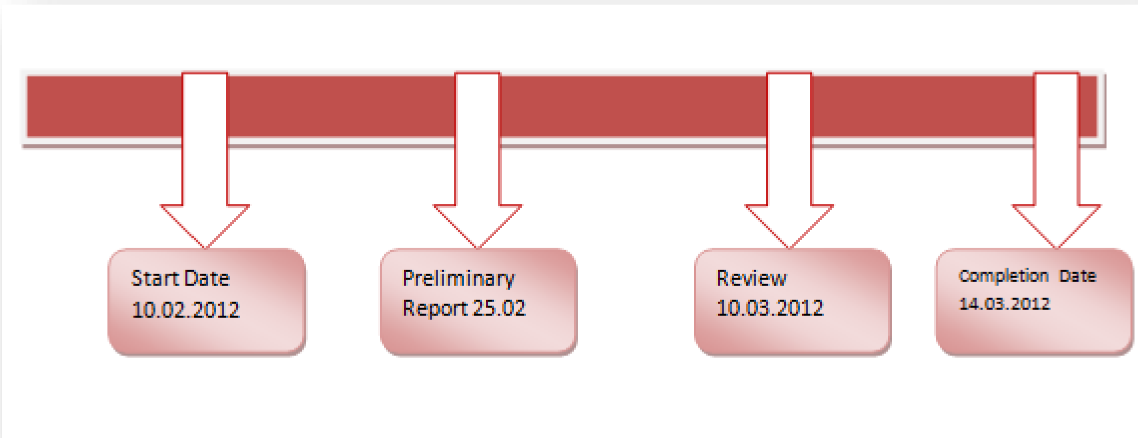
When the goods returned to the organisation increase, it signals an alert to the organisation that something is wrong with the product. An organisation will usually take an acceptable level of returns without concerns, but when a change in returns increases, action should be taken to ensure that the cause of the return is identified and appropriate action is taken to minimise or eliminate the amount of returns.

Make sure that you are consistent in the timing of your feedback. If you are not consistent, you have the risk of putting the consistency of your results at risk. Organisational policy and procedures will provide you with timelines in which to complete tasks in the workplace. It is important to make sure that you plan your tasks in a sequential order so you do not lose track of your goals and tasks. Time management skills will give you the time to do what you need to do. Organisational skills require that you follow procedures.

Maintaining lists and records of the tasks you perform and then filing the final information away can assist personnel when they are faced with a similar task again. Check your organisations records to determine whether you are just repeating a task or whether information is available which you can improve upon.

Each time you perform organisational and time management skills, you should aim to continuously improve the way in which a task is performed. This can then become best practice.

A time line can be used to set up the tasks that you are required to perform.



To assist you in developing your time line, you can create lists. These are the basic rules that should be followed:

- Create a list of what tasks you need to perform
- Write down and follow-up items
- Carry forward any task that is not completed
- Keep track of any due dates
- Create a list of priorities
- Keep track of all of the tasks that are on-going
- Make sure that your work area is clean so you do not lose vital information
- Make sure that all of the current work is kept in the same location

File information that is no longer required into a folder to be stored. Delete any information that is not required.