

# Ergonomics

## Definitions

### Functional Job Analysis -

The Workwell functional job analysis (FJA) is a comprehensive evaluation, which accurately identifies the essential functions and physical aspects of a job. This evaluation becomes a critical tool for developing an effective work injury program. The FJA evaluates the work, the worker, and the job site. It objectively measures, quantifies, and categorizes the active components of the job, including the required movement, functions, forces, actions, and postures. It will identify risk factors associated with cumulative trauma, and will make recommendations for ergonomic modifications and educational programs that will reduce or eliminate such injuries. Once complete, the FJA can provide the following:

Foundation for designing a Post-Offer Screen, A Functional Job Description, Development of job rotation, Enhance and validate a company's current working FJA, Provide ergonomic recommendations

Work related injuries are expensive. Each year, there are over 4.2 million work related injuries reported, with more than \$64 billion in lost time, medical care, retraining, and worker's compensation claims, and over 75 million lost days a year. By implementing our programs, most companies have cut their number of work related injuries in half, with substantial savings for the company

\*This evaluation tool is compliant with the ADA and other international anti-discrimination laws.

### Functional Capacity Evaluations -

The Workwell Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) is an evidence based physical test designed to measure an injured worker's abilities. During this test, the worker performs various work-related activities that can then be matched to the specific tasks of the job. The test combines the highest level of safety with the objective findings of a certified and licensed Physical or Occupational Therapist, and becomes a vital aid in an effective return-to-work program for an injured worker. The Workwell FCE allows the worker to test for his/her maximum objective strength without fear of injury. The therapist, not the worker, determines the injured worker's objective physical and functional abilities during the test. Once complete, this test will provide solutions regarding when and how a worker can safely return to work. The Workwell FCE has outcome data, cost saving statistics and medical-legal courtroom credibility.

- Significant savings in medical costs
- High return to work rate, even in chronic cases. Studies indicate up to 60% return-to-work following an FCE, without further intervention
- Studies indicate up to 50% of open workman's compensation cases can be closed, simply by performing the FCE.

### Post-Offer Screens -

The Workwell post-offer screen (POS) is a functional test that can determine an individual's ability to safely perform the physical requirements of a job, based on validated functional job descriptions. This test allows us to match the worker to the work, and allows the worker and the employer to avoid unsafe situations by identifying mismatches between the physical requirements of the job and physical capabilities of the prospective worker. Since this test matches the worker to the work, this is an important tool for employers

to utilize in preventing injuries. The POS can be used in the following instances:

- Screen for new hires;
- Transferring employees from one job to another;
- Determining an injured employee's ability to return to work following an injury

This screen evaluates individuals in a non-discriminatory way, and adheres to the ADA guidelines. This allows the employer to make hiring decisions in a legal and fair manner.

Implementing this test will ensure standardized, accurate, and cost effective measures for screening employees or potential employees for specific job positions. Consider the results of one study of a major tire manufacturer: This company was concerned that new hires were getting injured because they were not physically matched with specific jobs. After consulting with Workwell to address the ongoing challenges with work injuries, this company implemented the Workwell POS and has enjoyed extremely positive results:

- \$5 million reduction in workers' compensation costs
- Significant reduction in the turnover rate for new hires at a single plant location
  - ◆ (decreased from 33% to 3%)
- 12% decrease in lost time days