

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

## Advantages for enterprises



**+** healthier **workers**  
*SUCCESSFUL enterprises*



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Directorate-General of Health

Alameda D. Afonso Henriques, 45, 1049-005 Lisboa, Portugal

Tel: +351 218 430 500

Fax: +351 218 430 530

E-mail: geral@dgs.min-saude.pt

www.dgs.pt

### AUTHORS

Sandra Moreira - Senior Officer of the National Programme of Occupational Health

José Rocha Nogueira - Coordinator of the National Programme of Occupational Health

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF HEALTH

DIRECTORATE OF DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

### THIS DOCUMENT WAS REVISED AND APPROVED BY:

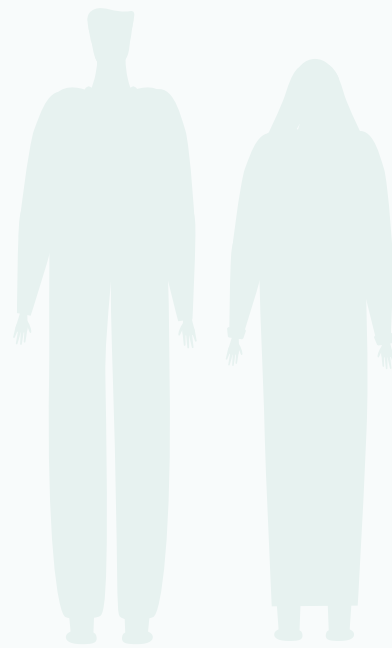
Coordination Team of the National Programme of Occupational Health: *Carolina Nunes; Eva Miriam Rasteiro; Fátima Ramalho.*

Technical Commission for Monitoring the National Programme of Occupational Health: *Alexandra Monteiro; Alice Manuela Pinto; Ana Dias; Carmen Velosa; Cíntia Reis; Elisabete Branco; Inês Castro; João Camacho; João Crisóstomo Borges; Manuel José Galego; Maria João Manzano; Regina Rocha; Susana Alves; Susana Silva; Teresa Galhardo.*

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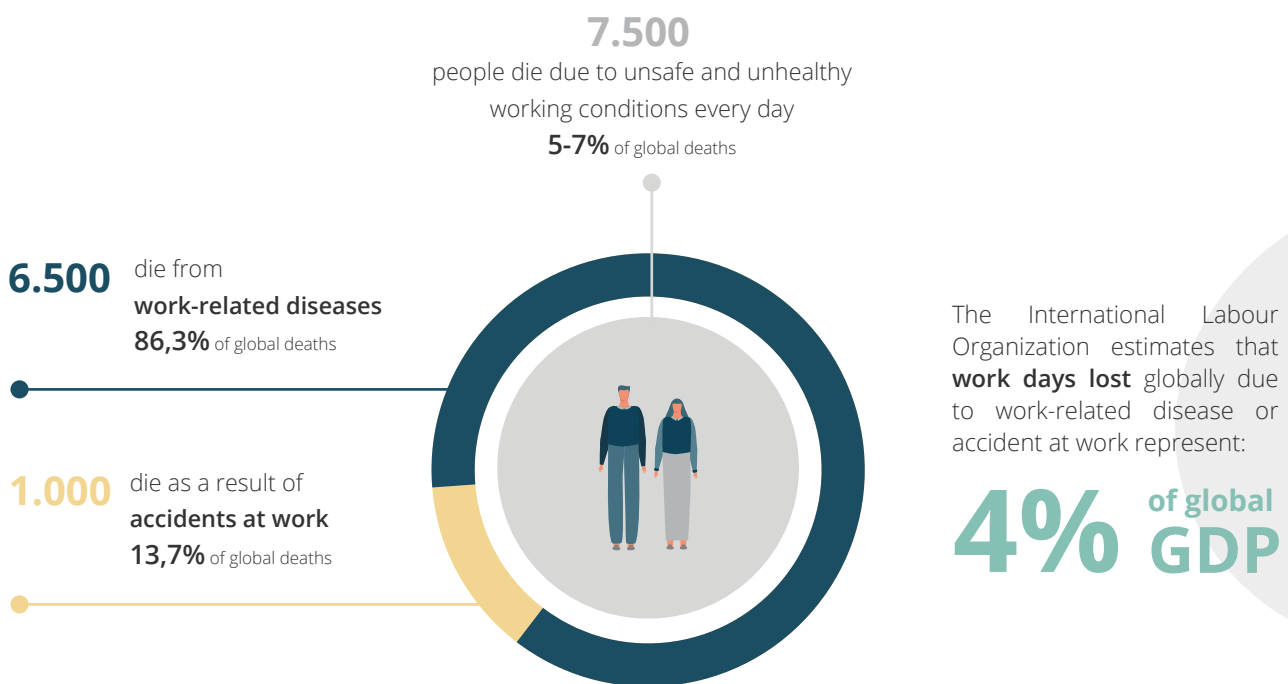
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# Previous Considerations

According to world estimates from the International Labour Organization (ILO), every year **“2,78 million workers<sup>1</sup> die** from work-related diseases<sup>2</sup> and accident at works<sup>3</sup>, and **374 million workers suffer from non-fatal accidents at work”** (1). These data show that 7,500 people die every day from poor

occupational safety and health conditions (**Figure 1**) and from work-related diseases and accidents at work, which together account for between 5% and 7% of all deaths worldwide. Working days lost due to disease or accident at work represent almost 4% of the world’s GDP (1) - **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1.** Global estimates of mortality and estimated impact of work-related diseases and accidents at work on Gross Domestic Product.

Source: Adapted from the International Labour Organization, 2019 (1)

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this document "worker" and "employee" are synonyms, considering that the latter is a "worker on behalf of an employer"

<sup>2</sup> *Work-related disease is any disease acquired by a worker as a result of exposure to one or more risk factors present in the occupational activity, working conditions and/or techniques used at work, and which does not represent normal "wear and tear" of the body". The cause of work-related diseases is often difficult to determine. One of the difficulties is due to the latency period (the fact that it can take years for the disease to have a noticeable or visible effect on the worker). Sometimes, when this disease is identified, it may be too late to achieve worker intervention, but the disease participation (compulsory under Article 1 of Decree-Law n.º 2/82, of January 5th) should trigger preventive measures so that other workers, under the same conditions of occupational exposure, do not manifest the disease.*

<sup>3</sup> *Accident at work is the one which occurs at the place and time of work and which directly or indirectly produces body injuries, functional disorders or an illness resulting in a reduction in the capacity to work or income or death (article 8, of Law n.º 98/2009, of September 4<sup>th</sup>).*

At a national level, in 2015 alone, there were **208,457 accidents at work**, of which 161 were fatal, and between 2010 and 2017, an average of **3,533 work-related diseases were confirmed per year** (2). Considering the ILO's world estimate and national GDP data for the year 2018 (3), in Portugal, working days lost due to work-related disease or accident at work are 8,064.5 million euros per year.

This data shows that **it is essential for enterprises<sup>4</sup> to identify and assess the existing risks in the workplace, aiming to adopt preventive measures** (e.g. change of the workplace, its processes and/or its organization), which ensure that the work is carried out in the most appropriate, safe and acceptable way in the light of current knowledge, and which attest that the measures in place effectively prevent adverse effects on workers' health. The data also suggest that there is a long way to go in order to reverse the overall trend of increasing occupational exposure levels (1).

Although work is undergoing profound changes due to the transformative effect of globalization, new technologies, artificial intelligence, demographic change, 'atypical' forms of employment, climate change and the transition to a green economy (1), these and other changes can't be a justification for the absence of a decrease in work-related morbidity and mortality. On the contrary, these amendments should be seen as an 'engine' and an excellent framework for improving working conditions that guarantee health and safety of workers.

It is recognized that **there are countless "dangers" (also called "occupational hazards")** that can be found in workplaces, some more

obvious and easy to identify, in terms of buildings and equipment (e.g. unprotected machinery; tools in a poor state of conservation), and others that **may not be as evident and perceptible**, and may be of a chemical nature (e.g. paints, disinfecting and cleaning agents, plant protection agents); physical nature, in its various forms of energy (e.g. noise, vibration, radiation and temperature); biological nature (e.g. bacteria, viruses and fungi); psychosocial nature (e.g. associated with nature, content or inadequate workload, lack of social support at work, existence of work-family conflict, among others); and biomechanic nature, associated with the non-application of ergonomic principles (e.g. activities with inadequate manual handling of heavy loads, with incorrect postures and/or with extreme muscle skeletal position, such as working while standing for long hours).

It is considered that the **employer's<sup>5</sup> solution should be, as a matter of priority, to eliminate "hazards" rather than to adapt workers to inappropriate working conditions**. It should be noted that, for instance, accidents at work do not simply stop because workers are aware of the necessary safety issues: the awareness of a safety culture may help, but in itself it does not change inadequate working conditions that lead to injuries, illnesses or even worker's death.

It should be noted that, according to the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, **it is a worker's right to work in conditions of hygiene, safety and health**. These conditions should enable workers to achieve high levels of physical, mental and social comfort and well-being and to provide opportunities for improving individual health and enhancing healthy practices and lifestyles' (4).

<sup>4</sup>For the purposes of this document, "enterprises", "businesses" and "organizations" are synonyms, and integrate all branches of activity in the public, private or cooperative and social sectors.

<sup>5</sup>"Employer" is the natural or legal person with one or more workers at his service and responsible for the enterprise or establishment or, in the case of non-profit organizations, who is competent to hire workers (paragraph c), Article 4, Law n.º 102/2009, of September 10<sup>th</sup>, in its current version). Within the scope of Public Administration, the State or other public legal person that constitutes public employment bonds should be considered as "public employer", under the terms of Law n.º 35/2014, of June 20<sup>th</sup>.

It is therefore extremely important that enterprises seek to ensure **healthy work environments**<sup>6,7</sup> that is, environments in which workers and employers collaborate jointly in the process of continuous improvement in the protection and promotion of workers' health and well-being and ensure their safety, in the interest of work sustainability. For this purpose, it is essential that the enterprise **organizes and ensures the proper functioning of Occupational Health/Occupational Safety and Health (OH/OSH) services for all workers**, in accordance with the provisions of Law n.º 102/2009, of September 10<sup>th</sup>, in its current version.

It should be noted that Occupational Health (OH) is an established right in the Health Basic Law (Law n.º 95/2019, of September 4<sup>th</sup>) to which all workers should benefit during their professional life. Its purpose is the prevention of occupational risks and the protection and promotion of workers' health (5) and involves various areas of specialization (e.g. occupational medicine, occupational nursing, occupational safety, occupational hygiene, occupational psychology, ergonomics, among others). Among the main **objectives of the OH** the following stand out:

**a)** The promotion and maintenance of high levels of physical, mental and social health and well-being of all workers;

**b)** The prevention of adverse effects on workers' health, in particular through continuous health surveillance;

**c)** The protection of workers from occupational exposures liable to endanger their health;

**d)** The integration and retention of workers in a work environment adjusted to their physical and mental needs (adaptation of work to human).

This means that the continuous improvement of OH/ OSH should be recognized as “a crucial pillar for the quality, competitiveness and innovation of any enterprise, for ensuring the sustainability of employment in Portugal, as well as for increasing the quality of life, health and well-being of workers, their families and society in general” (5), which justifies and requires a strong investment from the business world.

This document is framed in the National Programme of Occupational Health (PNSOC): Extension 2018/2020 (5) and aims to identify and systematize the main advantages of OH for enterprises, aiming to highlight the importance of OH among employers, workers and their representatives and its relevance for the management and business strategy (6) of enterprises.

<sup>6</sup> A healthy environment is, by definition, a safe workplace as well.

<sup>7</sup> The concept of a healthy work environment integrates (32): a) Health, well-being and safety issues in general working conditions; b) Health and well-being issues in the psychosocial work environment, including the work organizational culture, management model and employer's values; c) Resources that support and encourage individual health at work; d) The enterprise's involvement in the community aimed at improving workers' health, their families and other community members.

# 1. Introduction

Why should I bet on Occupational Health  
 What are the advantages for enterprises  
 Is it just a cost or there are benefits



These questions are often raised by employers/managers when they are faced with the legal obligation to comply with the "Legal framework for the promotion of occupational safety and health" (Law n.º 102/2009, of September 10<sup>th</sup>, in its current version) and, above all, when they have to organize and maintain the operation of OH services, also known as OSH services.

Although it is difficult to obtain an accurate result of the positive impact of OH/OSH on an enterprise, it is undeniable that business advantages are numerous. It is important to enhance that the cost of accidents at work, work-related diseases and lack of well-being at work, plus the economic impact they have on productivity, competitiveness and quality of work show that OH/OSH is essential to good business management.

But the importance and relevance of OH/OSH in the business environment may be easier to understand (5) when answering some questions:

- *Could the occurrence of a serious accident at work force your enterprise to stop?*
- *Would the loss of one or more of your key workers harm your business?*
- *Would you benefit from cheaper accidents at work insurance and increased productivity?*

- *Do your workers, customers or investors expect a responsible and sustained approach from your enterprise?*

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes", it is likely that OH is a determining factor (7) for the success of your enterprise.

In this context, this document aims to identify and briefly substantiate five main advantages of OH in enterprises (**Figure 2**):

- **Advantage 1.** OH goes beyond the mere legal obligation because it is indispensable to good business management;
- **Advantage 2.** OH is an investment in the present and the future, vital and profitable for any enterprise;
- **Advantage 3.** OH fosters productivity as well as quality and is a competitive advantage;
- **Advantage 4.** OH is an important contribution to social responsibility and to sustainability of your enterprise;
- **Advantage 5.** OH is an excellent business card and values your enterprise's image.

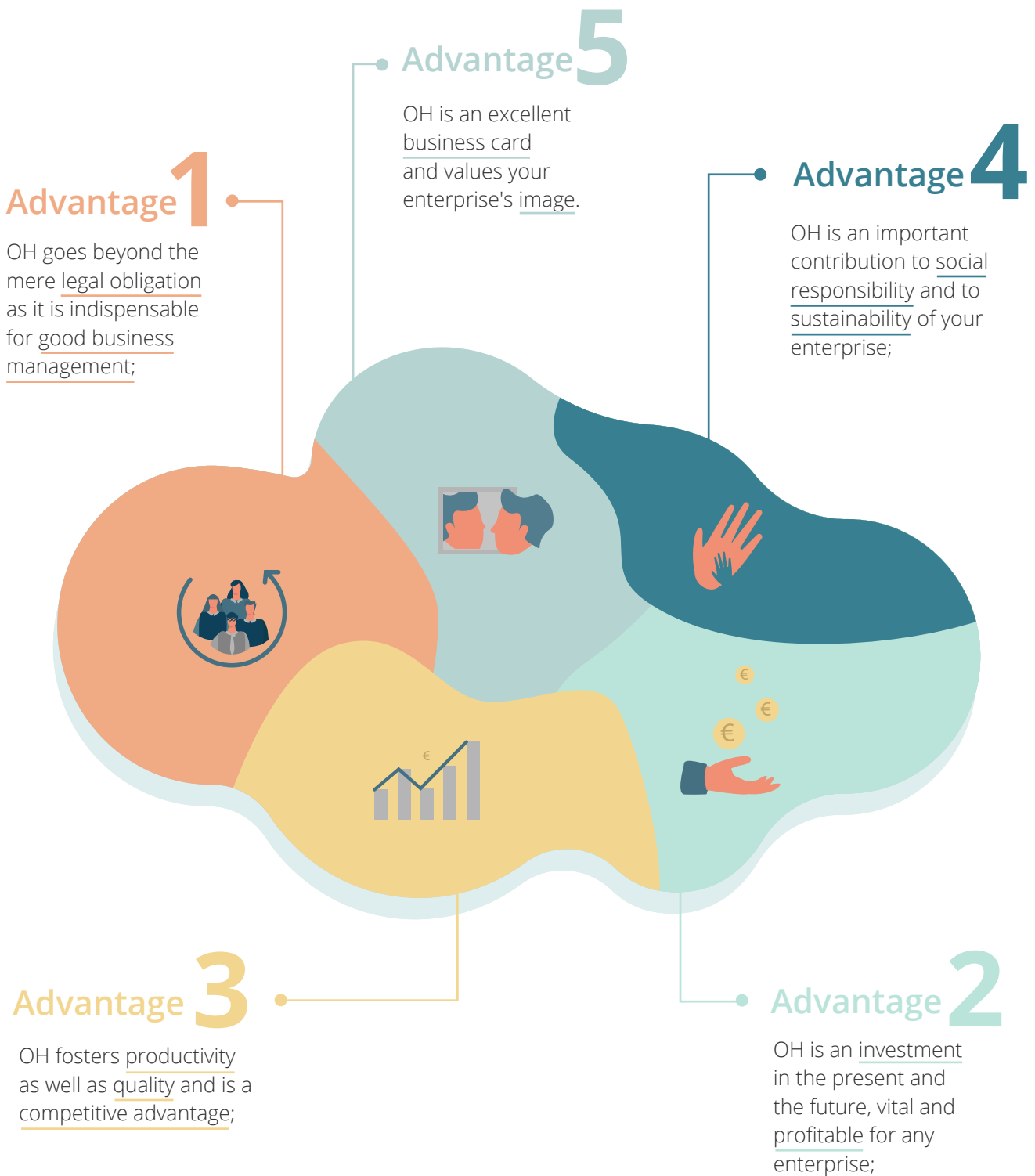


Figure 2. Main advantages of Occupational Health (OH) for enterprises.

## 2. Advantages of Occupational Health

### 2.1. OH goes beyond the mere **legal obligation** as it is indispensable for **good business management**.



**Every employer has the legal and moral responsibility to protect their workers against the occupational risks to which they are exposed. But protecting workers also means protecting the enterprise, since its success depends to a large extent on people and their health and well-being. Intelligent business management therefore ensures adequate OH/ OSH services for all workers.**

Law n.º 102/2009, of September 10<sup>th</sup>, regulates the "Legal framework for the promotion and prevention of Occupational Safety and Health", in accordance with Article 284 of the Labour Code, regarding prevention. This framework establishes, among other aspects, the general principles of prevention of occupational risks, the general obligations of employers and workers, the requirements for organization and operation of OSH services, as well as the requirements for consultation, information and training of workers in this field.

But compliance with OH/OSH requirements goes well beyond the limits of a legal and "administrative obligation" (8): these requirements are essential to a good corporate governance and to a business strategy of growth (6). This is because the success of any enterprise results from the success of its workers, that is, their skills, talent, dedication and personal commitment to work, which is only fully achieved if workers feel good and safe at work and enjoy high levels of health.

A team unhappy with their work or living in a bad work environment is probably an unhappy, unproductive, "sick" and with "lack of self-esteem".

Without a good worker's performance there is no potential for success of the enterprise. For this reason, enterprise leaders can't afford not to create appropriate working environments for their teams to be productive, innovative and creative: it is essential that work is safe and positive for health, because only with healthy working environments it is possible for workers to be "ambassadors" of the business and feel part of the enterprise.

With this in mind, the increase of legal provisions of OH/OSH should be regarded as essential to a good business management (**Figure 3**), given that they promote healthy work environments which:

- Affects workers' health and well-being and value human capital, "key factor" of enterprise and its development and progress in a positive way;
- Contribute to absenteeism reduction (absences from work due to disease or accident at work) and presentism (being at work but not producing) and to the increase of job satisfaction, with a beneficial impact on productivity and quality of work;
- Create an adjuvant context to attract, recruit, motivate and ensure (retain) the continuity of the best professionals in the enterprise, especially when associated with fair salaries, adequate training and good prospects for career progression;
- Provide a great opportunity for middle managers and team leaders to lead by example and reinforce correct behavior and good practices, by personal and close contact with workers and by involvement in their daily work (e.g. management's decision to wear protective equipment will certainly have

a strong influence on the attitudes of workers; praising good examples in OH/OSH and using less positive practices to improve will certainly create better working environments).

However, it should be noted that the success of corporate OH/OSH management depends substantially on the involvement and level of commitment of the employer, management and workers. For this reason, it is essential that the enterprise's intermediate managers and team leaders are aware and informed about OH/OSH, given that planning, leading, coordinating and controlling the organization of work and work activities of various workers have a major impact on the overall work load and social control and support, and can strongly influence their health

(9) and well-being. Equally important is the participation of workers and their representatives (6) in the resolution of OH/OSH issues.

It should also be noted that the enterprise's management process in OH/OSH should not be limited to reacting to incidents that occur, nor be neglected when there is no accident at work (6). It is essential to have a culture of prevention, based on an adequate assessment of occupational risks (carried out by OH/OSH services), which underpins the necessary prevention and protection measures, embodies and improves health surveillance of workers and which triggers, among other things, actions to promote health in the workplace.

**In short:** OH/OSH requirements, in addition to ensuring that "enterprise is in compliance with the law", should be recognized as being of primary importance for its full operation and integrated into normal management operations, as they contribute to ensure health and well-being of key elements of the enterprise - the workers - which is indispensable to good functioning and progress of any enterprise.

**I. Remember that you work with people**

- Don't get them exhausted
- People are not machines
- Treat them with dignity and respect
- Affect adequate resources in terms of time and remuneration

**II. Listen to your workers and establish a dialogue with them**

- Be inclusive
- Do it often
- Recognize and value the work and commitment of workers
- Develop human skills of managers and supervisors

**III. Assess and control occupational risks to which workers are exposed to**

- Don't just react to incidents: prevent them
- Organize appropriate OH/OSH services
- Control occupational risks at its origin
- Assess if the adopted preventive measures are

**IV. Quickly solve the issues in your workplace**

- Ensure good working conditions
- Don't let identified problems drag on
- Encourage the active participation of workers in problem solving

**V. Improve OSH skills**

- From managers to senior positions
- From the workers' representatives
- Of workers in general

**Figure 3.** Golden rules for better business management. (Adapted from the European Commission, 2016 (7))

## 2.2. OH is an **investment** in the present and to a vital and **profitable** future, to any enterprise.



**Although employers and managers invoke most of the time the high costs of occupational safety and health when discussing their enterprises' budgets, since they consider their return to be long-term and hypothetical, the economic advantages of the proper organization and operation of OH/OSH services have never been more evident.**

For every accident at work that does not occur in an enterprise there is a considerable amount that is saved. But then, it is also important to be aware that, for every accident at work that doesn't occur, there is someone who is not injured or incapacitated or, even, someone who survives.

A enterprise's investment in the prevention of occupational risks reduces the possibility of a more qualified worker being seriously injured in an accident at work, of the more creative worker in the enterprise being absent from work due to exhaustion or intoxication in the workplace (resulting, for example, in eye irritation, neurological, respiratory or digestive disorders), or of the more experienced worker in the enterprise making more production errors due to constant pain associated with musculoskeletal disorders (8), putting at risk enterprise's product quality.

The above examples aim to highlight that accidents at work and work-related diseases which can have a high impact on the functioning of enterprises, leading to high costs (10), which are not always easy to ascertain and which are usually poorly understood (11) by the employer and society in general.

However, the truth is that any enterprise can obtain considerable benefits from investing in OH/OSH (7). Studies show that every euro an employer invests in OSH equals to a profit of more

than the double (8) (12), assuming that OH/OSH measures, when well planned, appropriate and systematically reviewed, can provide an economic return that is 3 to 10 times (13) higher than the monetary investment, with in some situations a return of 12:1 (12 euro benefit for every euro invested in OSH) (7).

Therefore, the 'expenditure' on OH/OSH is actually a worthwhile investment (12). When the employer invests in the prevention of occupational risks (including in good working conditions) and organizes quality OH/OSH services and appropriate to the working population, and a full compliance with legal OSH requirements is ensured (6), the possibility of injuries and diseases occurring or worsening (12), or even workers death decreases and this investment contributes to reduce absenteeism and health costs, improve worker morale, ensure the reduction of insurance charges and promote the performance and productivity of the enterprise (11).

In this context, it should be noted that an accident at work, a very serious one or even fatal, can have critical financial consequences in a large enterprise, but in a small enterprise, the occurrence of this situation can be a financial disaster (7) (8), taking into account the greater difficulty in replacing "key" workers (many of whom have different activities and responsibilities across several areas of the enterprise) and in bearing the associated costs. In certain situations, an accident at work can lead to the closure of the enterprise: around 60% of the enterprises which stop working for more than 9 days end up closing (7).

It should also be pointed out that there are direct and visible (or insured) costs and indirect, invisible or hidden costs. It is recognized that microeconomic effects related to OH/OSH can

only be measured indirectly (12), with indirect costs estimated to be four to ten times higher (10) than direct costs. In this estimate of OSH costs, studies indicate that the most important component is the "quality of life" (14): to account for the cost relative to the impact that work-related health losses have on worker's life (14) and the value of lost quality of life or the loss of life itself.

In general terms, the most common costs (13) (14) for the enterprise are considered to be related with absenteeism from work (e.g. working days lost due to injury, disease or death), health care (as overall health and rehabilitation costs), insurance and disability, and costs related to interruptions in production processes, including the temporary replacement of workers, recruitment, outsourcing and/or overtime pay (Figure 4).

As far as workers are concerned, the direct costs caused by an occupational disease or accident at work are mainly related to loss of income, possible job loss and health care costs. The indirect, intangible (1) and often difficult to quantify costs are associated with immeasurable human, personal and family suffering (1), the possible reduction in worker's capacity to work after injury or disease, as well as the repercussions on quality of life and physical and emotional well-being (1) of the worker and their consequences at family and social level.

This tragic and regrettable reality of occupational disease and accident at work is, to a large extent, preventable (1) by developing effective prevention strategies in enterprises that not only ensure the 'human value' of working population, but also reduce the social burden associated with work-related health damage.

Thus, it is understood that the lack of OH/OSH generates costs for enterprises (13), given that it devalues the enterprise's human capital and affects productivity, competitiveness and reputation in supply chains (1) (6). For this reason, regardless of enterprise size and financial market conditions (which exert strong pressure on enterprises to achieve short-term financial goals and shareholder profit expectations), the employer must ensure the organization, operation and quality of OH/OSH services and its access for all workers, as well as to ensure the necessary investment in the primary prevention of work-related diseases and injuries, as it is cost-effective and an economy factor (15), which prevents deaths, injuries, disability and human suffering.

**In short:** Investment in OH/OSH services should be seen as a 'good business' which in itself brings important economic benefits to the enterprise, as a result of the effects of the prevention measures in place (16) and health promotion measures which, when increased, enable the development of workers' health potential (17). This investment by the enterprise also translates into an economic and social benefit for the community. When investment is focused on tangible and effective OH/OSH improvements (7) and supported by proper risk assessment, there are certainly greater benefits.

# DIRECT COSTS

- Remuneration for no executed work.
- Medical expenses (including medical and surgical assistance as well as medical and functional rehabilitation for working life).
- Compensations.
- Increase in accidents at work insurance charges and/or loss of associated fares.

# INDIRECT COSTS

- Loss of worker's quality of life, especially in the event of accidents at work leading to disability and irreversible health consequences.
- Professional and social reintegration, including job adaptation.
- Repair or replacement of damaged machinery or equipment.
- Reduction or temporary shutdown of production (e.g. interruptions due to accident at work).
- Training:
  - of the "replacement worker(s)";
  - in situations of occupational rehabilitation of the injured worker.
- The addition of:
  - administrative and legal procedures (including reports and communications);
  - supplementary risk assessments.
- Reduced productivity and/or quality of work:
  - especially if the absenteeism is from a "keyworker";
  - until the "replacement worker" has the same level of income and technique;
  - due to the negative influence on well-being and work relations among colleagues of the injured worker (e.g. feelings of concern, insecurity, anger and demotivation).
- Deterioration/breach of relationships and trust with investors, suppliers, customers and public entities.
- Loss of important contracts.
- Devaluation of the enterprise's brand.

**Figure 4.** Examples of direct and indirect costs related to accidents at work.

## 2.3. OH fosters productivity, quality and is a competitive advantage



**Having workers with high morale, committed to their work and unfrequently ill makes all the difference to get new business, to retain customers and/or to expand the enterprise. An adequate OH/OSH service can promote positive results in workers' health and well-being, consequently, in their motivation and in the productivity of the enterprise.**

Work is a determining health factor (1) which plays a key role in human beings' life, especially if we take into account that most people spend about 8 hours a day in the work place, whether at an office, a factory, a plantation, a construction site, or another. It is work that ensures subsistence of human being and satisfaction of material and social needs and that provides a network of social relations and interactions (1), making it possible to prosper and develop human capital. It also allows us to broaden the opportunities for choice and well-being, in addition to giving a sense of identity, belonging and purpose (1) (18) to human life.

A healthy work environment is therefore considered a source of personal growth, strengthens individual skills and abilities and contributes to the development of workers' health and well-being potential and their protective factors (17).

However, when workplaces are unhealthy and unsafe, workers carry out activities in adverse health conditions, organizational climate of work is unsuitable, unstable or of little "human value", or when there is low social support (from colleagues and supervisors) and/or there is a mismatch between skills required and professional category of the worker. These and other conditions lead to reduced levels of health (17), well-being, motivation and workers' satisfaction and, consequently, negatively affect the enterprise at various levels, as for example the one presented in **Figure 5**.

Although making a profit is a priority for the enterprise, it is essential that work is not seen as a "commodity". Healthy, humane working environments that ensure dignified working conditions are indispensable to the enterprise's business (6), and there must be a continuous concern to reduce (when it is not possible to eliminate) occupational exposures which are harmful to workers (e.g. dust and gases, noise, vibrations, extreme temperatures, workload, among others).

It is recognized that workers' general well-being is crucial to the success of the enterprise (1) and is closely linked to all aspects of working life, from quality of working conditions that the employer provides for its workers, to the climate and organization of their work, as well as to workers' perception of working environment. It's undeniable that a healthy working environment contributes significantly to workers' motivation and commitment (8), productivity (14) and quality of work (17), which favors the competitiveness of the enterprise and its economic growth (6) (14) (19).

The productivity of the enterprise depends on the performance of resources and production processes, e.g. the relationship between the goods/services produced/available and the means used. The increase in productivity may translate into "more production" and "more sales" and/or a reduction in the cost of resources (including human and material resources) used in the business. The implementation of more efficient equipment and methods and the development of technological innovations (for example, which minimize losses, reduce operating time or reduce resource or operating costs) may enhance enterprise's productivity. However, the implementation of these conditions depends to a large extent on the human factor: the motivation,

engagement, positive commitment and/or innovative and creative spirit of workers to design, develop or implement equipment, methods and procedures to increase the quantity of products and services.



- **Reduction of productivity**, with direct impact on the financial performance of the enterprise;
- **Reducing the potential for innovation**, which does not ensure the future of the enterprise and may jeopardize its survival and competitiveness;
- **Negative impact on family life:** workers accumulate stress throughout the working day and end up "freeing" it at home over family members (e.g. spouse, children, parents, grandparents).

- **Increased turnover rates**, e.g. workers do not stay very long in the enterprise, and the time they stay is insufficient to give some enterprise value;
- **Increased absenteeism**, due to disease or accident at work, in addition to other situations of dissatisfaction and discouragement that lead to work absenteeism;
- **Increased customer dissatisfaction**, because dissatisfied workers are unable to attract customers and ensure the maintenance of the "customer portfolio".



**Figure 5.** Examples of negative impacts on enterprise due to reduced levels of workers' health, well-being, motivation and satisfaction.

Therefore, full compliance of OH/OSH requirements and adequate management in this matter can contribute, in several ways, for the enterprise to achieve higher productivity, such as, for instance:

- a) When working methods are safer, there is more productivity because they usually allow work to be carried out more quickly and, in certain situations, with less labour resources;
- b) There is more productivity when there is less work absence due to disease or injury, which ensures more staff to carry out and distribute work tasks;
- c) When workers are motivated and committed, and have the necessary qualifications for the assigned work, there is more productivity, because professional performance is faster and more effective.

All enterprises need to improve their productivity, quality and competitiveness, which requires a good organization and communication, but also good working conditions and an organizational culture which increase workers' values (and recognizes the value of their work) in order to motivate them and ensure their cooperation and engagement to the enterprise, aiming a better professional performance. To this end, however, it is crucial that the enterprise's strategies are synchronized,

in other words, that, at the same time as the enterprise ensures its customers and investors' full satisfaction, equal importance is attached to worker satisfaction, the retention of qualified staff, responsible hiring, decent work practices, fair remuneration and high levels of worker health and well-being.

Simple and appropriate OH/OSH improvements can increase not only productivity but also quality and competitiveness (7) of the enterprise. OH/OSH is in itself a quality requirement, as it influences the result produced by the enterprise (e.g. goods and/or services free from defects, fast deliveries, no production losses) when placed on the market. It is also considered to be a competitive advantage, given that a poor performance of an enterprise in OH/OSH can be a serious competitive disadvantage for competitors and investors; on the contrary, compliance with OH/OSH requirements can be used to gain prominence and evidence in the face of competition, whether in a wider market or in a market segment.

Thus, compliance with OH/OSH requirements should be viewed by enterprise managers as part of the organizational culture and a reason for commitment and pride.

**In short:** OH/OSH should be considered a primordial, differentiating and extremely important element in business world, given that it influences quality, productivity and competitiveness of the enterprise, as well as success of the business. Ensuring workers' health, well-being and satisfaction is the key factor in achieving customer and investor satisfaction.



## 2.4. OH is an important contribution to **social responsibility** and **sustainability**.

**An employer is truly sustainable (6) and responsible only if it ensures safety, health and well-being of his workers. By targeting on a business strategy that continuously promotes workers' health and safety, added value is granted to workers, to enterprise and to society, with an alignment of the sustainable development<sup>8</sup> goals and with the social responsibility principles<sup>9</sup>.**

The social and public growing pressure associated with the higher expectations and demands of consumers and customers require enterprises to go beyond compliance with legal obligations and act responsibly (20) and sustainably. Nevertheless, concerns about social responsibility and sustainability<sup>10</sup> are (or should be) increasingly a reality and a commitment of enterprises. It is well known that society is more aware and tends to value enterprises with these concerns. In addition, it is clear that the new generations begin to take these matters into account when choosing where to work.

It is recognized that enterprises have a considerable social impact (21) given their contribution to the life of local communities, in terms of employment, wages, benefits and taxes (19). On the other hand, enterprises depend on the health, stability and prosperity of the communities in which they operate (19), which

reveals the interrelationship between the parties. According to Decree-Law n.º 89/2017, of July 28<sup>th</sup>, which transposes Directive 2014/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, of October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014, "corporate social responsibility, demonstrated through the disclosure of non-financial information relating to the social, environmental and corporate governance areas, contributes decisively to the analysis of the performance of enterprises and their impact on society, with a view to identifying sustainability risks and increasing investor and consumer trust".

The above-mentioned Decree-Law also establishes that large enterprises<sup>11</sup> and big companies must submit an annual non-financial statement, either through the management report or in a separate report (the Non-Financial Information Report), "prepared by their management bodies, containing sufficient non-financial information for an understanding of the evolution, performance, position and impact of their activities, concerning at least environmental, social and worker-related issues, equality between women and men, non-discrimination, respect for human rights, combating corruption and attempts at bribery". It should be noted that, even if indirectly, this legislation also applies to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as partners or suppliers of large enterprises, by imposing them the presentation of non-financial information on their activities (21).

<sup>8</sup> *Sustainable development* has as its main objective "to satisfy the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (35).

<sup>9</sup> *Corporate social responsibility* is 'a concept whereby enterprises integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis enterprises (18). This concept is "mainly driven by large enterprises, even though socially responsible practices exist in all types of enterprises, public and private, including SMEs and co-operatives" (19).

<sup>10</sup> *Sustainability* is achieved when the three main pillars ("social", "environmental" and "economic") coexist and interact with each other in a harmonious and balanced way.

<sup>11</sup> *Large enterprises* are those that exceed at least two of the three limits defined in number 3, Article 9, determined in accordance with Article 9-A, both of Decree-Law n.º 158/2009, of July 13<sup>rd</sup>, as amended by Decree-Law n.º 98/2015, of June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Consequently, OH/OSH issues must be included in the non-financial statement, as an important aspect of the social performance of enterprises, as revealed by the methodology of the Global Reporting Initiative - GRI (21), a tool used by enterprises to report the positive and negative contributions of the enterprise to sustainability and to present the main social, environmental and economic indicators.

Within this framework, it is important for the employer to recognize that compliance with all OH/OSH requirements (6), in addition to enabling compliance with applicable legislation and consistency with international conduct, provides a comprehensive framework of action that allows for addressing (22) concerns of social responsibility and sustainable development, in addition to "decent work"<sup>12</sup>. These requirements also contribute to strengthen the ethical and transparent behavior of the enterprise and to ensure sustained growth and stability (7).

Thus, the implementation of an effective OH/OSH program in an enterprise, which fosters the prevention of occupational risks and promotes workers' health and safety, should be considered an excellent opportunity (22) to demonstrate the enterprise's capacity to respond to commitments related to social responsibility and sustainable development, given that, for example:

**a) The elimination or reduction of occupational risks** can contribute to saving workers' lives by preventing accidents at work and diseases that would lead to death or life-long disability. Reducing accidents at work and occupational diseases or work-related health problems, as well as improving the performance of workers and enterprise, reduces the pressure on public and private social protection, insurance and pension systems (14).

**b) Occupational health surveillance activities**

carried out by the OH services enable preventive measures to be identified and recommended (e.g. the inclusion of work breaks for the worker's nutrition and diabetes control), which may prevent or control outbreak or aggravation of various non-communicable diseases - such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal disorders and others.

**c) Workplace health promotion activities**

can enhance workers' health by raising awareness, and strengthening literacy of various health issues, especially related to healthy lifestyles (e.g. healthy eating, physical activity, smoking cessation) and healthy work practices (e.g. adequate manual handling of loads; good practices to ensure natural ventilation conditions in work rooms).

**d) The activities of OH/OSH services** may also contribute to:

- **Extending active working life and (18) and healthy active ageing**, as these services can recommend and promote the adaptation of working conditions to the skills of older workers and enhance the strategies acquired over many years of experience by older workers in order to minimize the natural decline in some work-related skills (1).

- **A better analysis of the constraints to reconciling work, family and social life, as well as personal and professional workers' development and their work ability (1) (18)**, which may support enterprise's greater or lesser investment in these matters (e.g. working hours' flexibility, skills updating and specific training) and support workers in the changes which occur throughout their lives (e.g. pregnancy period, paternity, early retirement, among others).

<sup>12</sup> *Decent work* is "productive work developed under conditions of freedom equity, security and dignity, in which rights are protected and adequate remuneration and social coverage are provided" (33). It is characterized by four main components: a) productive work; b) protection of rights; c) adequate pay and d) social coverage (33). According to ILO (36), work can only be dignified if it is safe and healthy. WHO (34) recognizes that OSH is among the fundamental pillars of decent work.

By affirming and making commitments that go beyond the requirements of legislation, enterprises seek to raise the level of demand for respect for fundamental rights (19), in a global approach to quality, sustainability and accountability. It should be noted that the implementation of all OH/OSH requirements enterprise fosters appropriate values, policies and strategies recommended at:

- **National level** (e.g. National Programme of Occupational Health (5), National Health Plan: Review and Extension to 2020 (23), National Strategy of Occupational Safety and Health 2015-2020 published by the Council of Ministers Resolution n.º. 77/2015, of September 18<sup>th</sup>).
- **International level** (e.g. Declaration on Occupational Health for All (24); Global Strategy for Occupational Health for All - The way to health at work (25); Occupational Safety and Health

Convention – n.º. 155/1981; Occupational Health Services Convention – n.º 161/1985, Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention – n.º. 187/2006; Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work (26); Istanbul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work (27); Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (28)).

At a time where "organizational happiness", attracting and retaining talent, multi-generationality and robotization, among other issues, are in the order of the day, more than ever before enterprises must be aware of the importance of adopting measures to keep their workers happy, motivated and committed, which necessarily implies that there is a feeling of workplace safety and well-being. Success on this matter is an essential asset for the sustainability of enterprises.

**In short:** It is considered that an enterprise, by guaranteeing of all OH/OSH requirements, promotes decent and sustainable work and social justice and cohesion by ensuring safe and healthy workers now and in the future, with a clear impact on the health and well-being of people (workers) but also on society as a whole (1). A sustainable enterprise strives to establish a triad of balance between "people, planet and profit" ("triple bottom line") to achieve success and ensure long-term business viability (6) (**Figure 6**). This means that enterprises are not sustainable if they do not ensure the safety, health and well-being of their vital resources: workers (6).



**Figure 6.** Importance of Occupational Health as an important driver and support for sustainable development goals and the "triple bottom line".

### 2.4.1. Social Responsibility

An enterprise does not produce with a low internal social performance (29): it is essential to ensure that the working population is healthy, motivated and involved, so that it can compete for the best levels of quality, productivity and profitability of the enterprise and to enhance the power of creativity and innovation.

This explains why economically sustainable enterprises are based on strong social values, such as "decent work" (which necessarily means ensuring health, safety and well-being for all workers) and investment in human capital.

A brief reflection reveals that an accident at work resulting in a workers' death, an occupational disease causing serious health problems such as cancer, and/or any situation that has repercussions on the worker's ability and quality of life, is an enormous social burden. For this reason, the prevention of occupational risks developed by OH/OSH services should be considered a socially responsible business action, which not only guarantees the future of the enterprise but also of society.

The growing number of enterprises promoting social responsibility strategies is notorious, given the greater awareness that, on one hand, this responsibility may have direct economic value and, on the other, that making a profit does not mean that, at the same time, social and environmental goals are met by integrating social responsibility as a strategic investment in management instruments and their operations.

Moreover, the recognition of an enterprise as socially responsible could, for example, strengthen its stock exchange listing, leading to concrete financial advantages (19). Furthermore, an enterprise with good social and environmental results is a good indicator that its activities can result in performance, growth and the ability to 'generate superior profit', in addition to being indicative of 'quality management' and 'sound management' (19).

In that way, it is considered that the activities of the OH/OSH service can contribute to socially responsible practices of enterprises in two dimensions: internal and external (19).

The "**internal dimension**" include practices which are focus on workers and in the enterprise's investment in human capital, including those related to improving working conditions and implementing measures to prevent occupational risks and to promote workers' health. Training and information processes on OH/OSH throughout working life, including those that address health issues and healthy lifestyles, should also be considered in this dimension as they increase the training and accountability of workers. It should be noted that, for instance, that monitoring working conditions of workers in the most vulnerable situations also contributes to social inclusion, which is part of the commitment to social responsibility. Finally, it should be noted that social responsibility has a strong human rights dimension, with the enterprise facing the challenge of ensuring coherence and balance between these rights and development and expansion policies and trade policy.

The "**external dimension**" integrates practices that go beyond the enterprise's own sphere and extend to the local community, involving in addition to workers and their families a broad spectrum of other stakeholders (19): suppliers and business partners, customers, public authorities, NGOs and others who operate in the community. The establishment of positive relations with the local community and the consequent accumulation of social capital is of particular importance, since several actions not only foster the well-being, health and safety of the community but also, directly or indirectly, of workers. Usually includes actions in which the enterprise:

**a)** It is a local agent: i) by supporting local causes (e.g. weekly sale of horticultural products in the enterprise from local farmers to workers; improvement of public lighting near the enterprise

and between the enterprise and the main access to workers' homes); ii) by providing additional offers that promote a balance between work and family life (e.g. enterprise bus for commuting; provision of childcare facilities for workers' children); iii) by promoting healthy lifestyles in the community (e.g. sponsorship of cultural or sporting events involving enterprise workers), among others.

**b)** It puts pressure on its suppliers and subcontractors (7) on OH/OSH criteria, including through codes of conduct (6) (19). This requirement in OH/OSH will generate a quality and sustained supply and value chain, in which, at the same time as the organizational climate is favorable to the business, there is a commitment to ensure

adequate OH/OSH services for subcontracted workers, suppliers (7) and other situations of outsourcing (19), motivating all enterprises, along the production chain (6) (19) to guarantee the well-being of their workers and the quality of OH/OSH services, in a dynamic flow of responsibility.

## 2.4.2. Sustainable Development

Integrating OH/OSH into sustainability offers a unique opportunity to protect and promote workers health and, above all, to boost the social dimension (that have been paid less attention comparing to environmental or economic dimensions) (6) in order to reach truly sustainable enterprises (6): a building can be highly energy efficient and provide the greatest comfort to its inhabitants, but it cannot be considered sustainable if a worker has died in its construction; the furniture can be manufactured with wood extracted from reforested areas but it cannot be considered of sustainable production if the joiner who designed them was amputated from a limb in its execution or had pulmonary fibrosis as a result of inhaling wood dust; the practice of organic farming can only be sustainable when the techniques used do not cause serious disabling workers health problems. Thus, although it is recognized that OH/OSH is sometimes underestimated or ignored by enterprises (6), the synergy with sustainability can be an important impetus for the implementation and reinforcement of OH/OSH requirements.

OH/OSH can play a key role in sustainable development (1) and investment in this area can contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (1), in particular the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) numbers 3, 8 and 11 (see **Figure 7**).

Beyond the SDGs indicated, the broad importance of OH/OSH in the three dimensions of Sustainable Development (or pillars) should be highlighted:

### **i. Social Dimension:**

A worker's state of health and well-being is decisive for his/ her active participation in the enterprise and in society, but also for extending the working life:

- By ensuring the surveillance and promotion of workers' health through appropriate OH/OSH services, the employer is also promoting social well-being, as, among other things: a) an individual, when healthy, has the capacity to work and thus enjoy remuneration that enables him to support,

feed, educate and care (children, parents or other family members); b) the remuneration of their work enables consumption, which contributes to the economy in general; c) only with individuals' full work (workers) can the enterprise be fully operational, ensuring that it performs and provides the goods and services essential to society.

- On the contrary, when in adequate working conditions exist in an enterprise, they can have, in the short or long term, consequences which are detrimental to the health and safety of the worker, of greater or lesser severity. Symptoms of discomfort, injury or illness not only affect the worker, but they can also affect other workers and the enterprise in general, due to poor performance, poor employment relations that workers can create, or simply his absence from work.

These consequences could also have repercussions for the worker's family, for example: lack of pay (salary), due to absence from work, accident at work or disease, may prevent the worker's essential subsistence conditions and lead to poverty and possible constraints (for himself and his family) in terms of food, education, basic services (water, energy, sanitation) and access to health care; debilitated and disabling workers' health condition, often combined with pain, suffering and distress, may make it impossible or difficult to provide family care (for children, parents, grandparents and other relatives) and domestic activities, as well as hinder social relationships, which may lead to states of depression, isolation and social exclusion.

Given the above, it should be considered that access to adequate OH/OSH services not only increases the opportunities (18) to improve the individual worker's health and well-being, but also has positive effects on the health and well-being of the family and also contributes to a healthy, satisfied and productive work force (17) in the community.

## ii. Economic Dimension:

Workers' good health is a prerequisite for the

economic, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of an enterprise, and of society as a whole.

Although enterprises are created to produce wealth, in today's business environment where the assessment of performance levels by regulators and consumers is less and less focused on the financial perspective, the OH/OSH criteria are relevant, particularly in certification contexts (6).

It is considered that the well-being and economic sustainability of an enterprise depends on a healthy, motivated and well qualified workforce (17), a force which is also fundamental to ensure the good economic and social future (17) of the communities in which these workers live. For this reason, the World Health Organization highlights that the health and safety of workers is fundamental to the sustainability of enterprises and communities, as well as to national and regional economies (30).

It is recognized that enterprises contribute to community life in terms of employment, wages, benefits and taxes (19), favoring the development of the local economy. However, it is undeniable that keeping workers healthy and active for longer has a positive impact on the productivity and competitiveness of the enterprise (17).

In that way, it is considered that only in healthy work environments (including those with adequate working conditions) is it possible to foster greater business performance that allows good levels of production quality, the maintenance of a strong competitive position, a high level of operational efficiency and savings in production costs (17), aspects that will ensure higher levels of profitability of the enterprise.

## iii. Environmental Dimension:

The working environment is not a system isolated from the natural environment (1): air pollutants emitted by an enterprise or inadequate waste disposal can affect workers' health and sometimes the health of the entire community. There is thus an elementary and bilateral relationship between the working environment and the natural environment

that makes it clear that the "objective of protecting the environment is pursued alongside the objective of protecting workers" (1) and that the coordination between environmental protection (outside) and the working environment (inside) has benefits at various levels. In consequence of this, investments of this nature are known as "win-win" opportunities: both advantageous for the enterprise and advantageous for the environment.

Scientific evidence also shows that climate change and environmental degradation will transform (1) OH/OSH (e.g. due to increased thermal stress at work, namely in agriculture and construction) and dictate the need to implement complementary actions to protect workers, which reinforces the strategic link between environmental issues and OH/OSH.

It should also be noted that healthy workers, by being motivated, committed and keen to business goals, are usually more willing to:

**a)** Encourage 'green' practices (e.g. separating waste, consuming less electricity, saving more water, printing only what is needed) that contribute to reducing an enterprise's carbon footprint and promoting sustainable business practices;

**b)** Improve and innovate in the development and enhancement of clean (18) or green (19) technologies, which improve environmental performance and lead to overall public health benefits, in addition to being associated with more rewarding and cutting-edge jobs (19) for workers.

As a general rule, a reduction in the exploitation of resources, pollutant emissions or the generation of waste helps to reduce the environmental impact, which can be beneficial for enterprises as it reduces costs (19), in particular energy and waste disposal costs.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) IN THE CONTEXT OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (5)

Considering the 'targets' projected by the United Nations (31) to achieve the sustainable development goals, the following items outlines how Occupational Health could contribute to three of the stated goals:

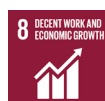


### SDG 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

#### Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Occupational Health may contribute to:

- Achieve "universal health coverage" and "access to quality essential health services", as well as access to "core vaccines", through the organization and proper functioning of Occupational Health Services in enterprises, which should be made available to all workers for the prevention of occupational risks and the promotion of healthy and safe working environments that enhance health, well-being and quality of life, as well as workers' personal and professional satisfaction.
- "Substantial reduction in the number of deaths and illnesses due to hazardous chemicals" through the implementation of the process of identification, assessment and management of occupational risks of a chemical nature by the OH/OSH Services of enterprises.
- Strengthening the country's capacity for "early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks", particularly through the prevention of occupational risks increased by OH/OSH Services in close coordination with employers, workers and their representatives.



### SDG 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:

#### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Occupational Health may contribute to:

- Achieve "higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological modernization and innovation", considering that healthier workers with adequate professional skills are determining factors in the competitiveness and capacity for innovation of enterprises and, thus, in economic growth.
- Promote the development and strengthening of the national policy on Occupational Safety and Health in order to: (a) protect "the rights of labour" and, consequently, of workers; (b) promote "safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers" and "people in precarious jobs"; (c) support "productive activities, generation of decent employment, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation", the "prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour", as well as "productive employment" and "decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities".



### SDG 12 - RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

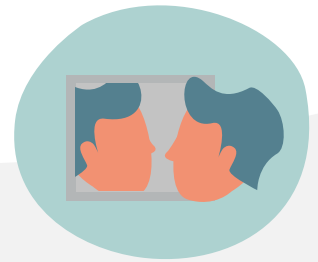
#### Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Occupational Health may contribute to:

- "Encouraging enterprises, especially large and transnational enterprises, to adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into their activity reports", in particular by recognizing workers' health and safety as an important pillar of the sustainability of any enterprise or establishment.
- "Ensure that people everywhere have relevant information and awareness of sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature", considering that the workers' health is "a prerequisite for the productivity and economic development of the country" and that through OH/OSH Services it is possible to foster a culture of prevention and healthy practices and lifestyles, namely in the context of surveillance and health promotion activities carried out by these Services.
- "Strengthening the scientific and technological capacities" of enterprises to "shift towards more sustainable patterns of production and consumption", taking into account that in order to achieve these capacities it is essential that workers feel safe, healthy and satisfied, in order to stimulate scientific and technological knowledge, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship and thus generate sustainable changes.

Figure 7. Contribution of Occupational Health to three Sustainable Development Goals.

## 2.5. OH is an excellent **business card** and values your **enterprise's image**.



**Having the best product or providing the best service is not always enough to succeed in the market. Associating the framework of OH/OSH and its relations with sustainability, social responsibility and the protection and promotion of workers' health with the enterprise's image and brand, favors the good reputation of the enterprise and enables its differentiation in the market, in addition to helping to attract and retain talent, demonstrate compliance and ensure the confidence of customers and investors.**

The customer buys a product or service not only for what it is, but also for what it represents, for what it transmits. With increasingly demanding customers, what the enterprise offers is not enough: the "lifestyle" of workers and what the enterprise represents in society are equally important aspects.

Packaging, quality and reliability are some items that customers look for and value when buying the product or service of the enterprise. However, recent surveys show that consumers also demand to know whether they are manufactured in a socially responsible manner (19) (which, especially in its internal dimension, is very much related to the health, safety and well-being of workers), and this is a factor that weighs on the purchase of a product or service.

It is therefore desirable that purchasers, consumers and users of services value, or move to value, the OH/OSH criterion(s) as the preferred criterion in their 'commercial options'. It is intended that the OH/OSH criterion be increasingly seen as a differentiating factor of quality in relation to other competing enterprises, and that it be associated with a business image of credibility, responsibility and sustainability, in addition to the indication of special concern with

the health, safety and well-being of its workers.

The need for an enterprise to focus on OH/OSH is evident if we consider that the public disclosure of a fatal or serious accident at work, as well as the dissemination of news about a considerable number of work-related diseases in an enterprise, degrade the image and discredit the brand (19). A negative situation at this level can destroy years of marketing work of the enterprise, in addition to leading to erroneous perceptions by customers, situations usually difficult to overcome.

Thus, although the OH/OSH criterion is a demanding challenge which involves a continuous improvement action in the enterprise (e.g. change in the way workers work, adaptation to new equipment or procedures, reconfiguration of workspaces), it is necessary to recognize that OH/OSH presents potential advantages for the enterprise, by:

- Attracting (workers, customers and investors);
- Differentiate (in the market or in market segments);
- Value (the image and brand of the enterprise).

It should be noted that an enterprise that does not invest in OH/OSH runs the risk of becoming an obsolete and unreliable brand vis-a-vis its customers/consumers. A strong brand follows a philosophy and is supported by values. The underlying values of OH/OSH are important to the enterprise's identity, to ensure greater positive worker engagement with the enterprise and to make the consumer feel attracted to and confident with the brand, which will certainly lead to a significant increase in sales.

The concepts of "healthy enterprise" and "safe

and healthy workers" are important allies for the brand to become strong and competitive and to strengthen the reputation of the brand in an increasingly competitive market, which changes at every moment. An enterprise's reputation in its implementation zone and its image as a local agent are factors which influence competitiveness (19).

However, it is also necessary to look inside the enterprise, since dissatisfied, uninformed workers with a feeling of insecurity are propagandists of a negative image of the enterprise. In this context, it is essential that executive directors and members of the boards of directors display visibility to their commitment and strategic vision in the context of OH/OSH through the OH/OSH policy (**Figure 8**), which highlights the high priority provided by the enterprise and the responsibility in this matter.

This commitment at the highest level in the enterprise, associated with good results in terms of OH/OSH, are aspects that not only give well-being and security to workers but which can also help the employer to attract new talent, to ensure the confidence of customers and investors, as well as acting as a good marketing tool that helps to improve and strengthen the image, increase the value of the enterprise's brand (7) and improve its reputation. It may also, even in directly, contribute to a greater intention to purchase or use the enterprise's products and/or services, and encourage contacts with local authorities and people with influence on public opinion.

**In short:** Organizing appropriate OH/OSH services for all workers and including OH/OSH principles in the enterprise's brand will contribute to the best business references, to evidence strong results of the enterprise's sustainable growth and to mirror the ethical, social and human values that the enterprise defends.

# Occupational Health Policy



The Administration/ Top Management /CEO of each enterprise is responsible for defining and establishing an **Occupational Health Policy** (also known as Occupational Health and Safety Policy).

The Occupational Health Policy is a set of intentions, formally expressed by the Administration/Top Management /CEO in a **written document, dated and signed**, which highlights the recognition and importance provided by the enterprise to occupational safety and health, in addition to providing a framework to support the organization and performance of the Occupational Safety and Health Service and the establishment of objectives (institutional and workers) in this matter.

Therefore, the Occupational Health Policy shall be disclosed to workers, and other stakeholders, and updated whenever necessary. In the process of defining/elaborating this Policy, preference should be given to the participation of workers.

Among other aspects, the Occupational Health Policy should ensure the **enterprise's commitment** to:

- a) The guarantee of a safe and healthy working environment for all workers, namely by complying with the legal framework in this area.
- b) The implementation of the necessary prevention and protection measures to prevent/minimize damage to workers' health, based on the assessment and management of occupational risks.
- c) An adequate organization of the Occupational Safety and Health Service, namely by assigning specific duties and competences in matters of workers' health and safety, and by making available the resources essential to the functioning of the service, including specialized professionals, facilities, equipment and working utensils and health assessment and own budget.
- d) The development of a Workplace Health Promotion Program, within the activities of the Occupational Safety and Health Service and based on workers needs and expectations.
- e) Provide all workers with the information and necessary training to increase the culture of safety at work and to promote workers' health.
- f) Recognition and appreciation of Occupational Health/Occupational Safety and Health criteria in enterprises' selection of suppliers, goods and services.
- g) The continuous improvement of the enterprise's occupational health and safety management.

**Figure 8.** General principles of Occupational Health Policy in an enterprise.

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Alameda D. Afonso Henriques, 45  
1049-005 Lisboa – Portugal  
Tel.: +351 218 430 500  
Fax: +351 218 430 530  
E-mail: [geral@dgs.min-saude.pt](mailto:geral@dgs.min-saude.pt)  
[www.dgs.pt](http://www.dgs.pt)