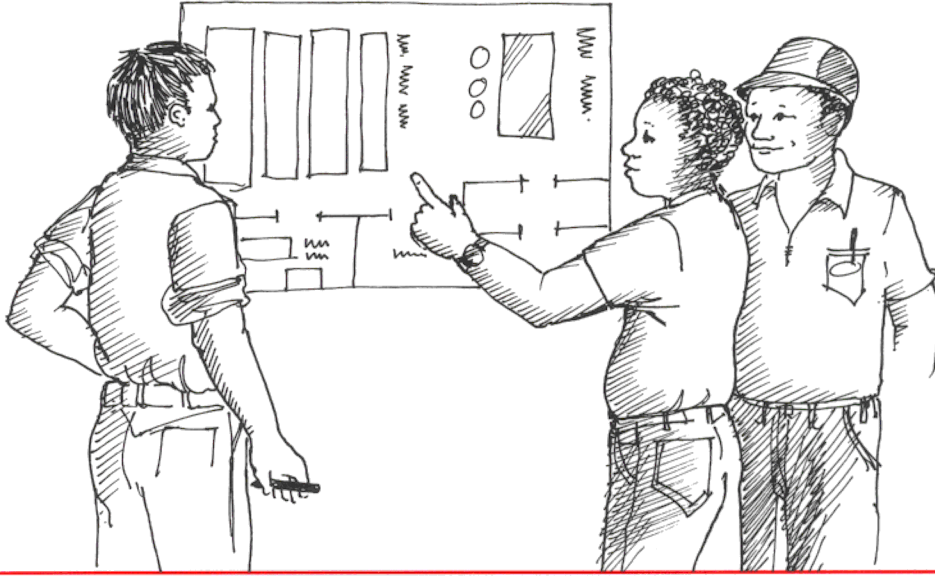


# Risk-Mapping

To see the workplace clearly and to understand its dynamics, you need a "Risk Map."



## What is a risk map?

A risk map is a floor plan of the workplace which pinpoints various hazards that can cause injury, illness or even death. It is similar to a blueprint which gives a visual representation of the location of workplace hazards.

## Why is risk-mapping useful?

Risk-mapping is a useful technique because it allows workers to participate in the analysis and identification of hazards. The risk-mapping findings can be used to identify and prioritize hazards. Risk-mapping provides written records of workplace hazards and gives labor/management representatives a better view of the problems.

## How are risk maps made?

Risk maps are made by utilizing the following seven steps:

1. Form a planning committee to implement the risk-mapping method. This could be done by recruiting a core group.
2. Develop a workplace health and safety questionnaire. This questionnaire should be designed in such a way that it asks questions which disclose the type and location of workplace hazards.

3. Distribute the questionnaires to a group of workers. The group should be selected based on certain similarities such as job title, same work area, or same work process.

4. Prepare the risk map. Having collected all of the distributed questionnaires, a large scale floor plan should be drawn to map out the work area, pinpointing the hazards by types such as chemical, physical, ergonomics, infectious hazards, stressors, etc.

To identify and intensify the degree of hazards, colors and symbols should be used. For example, red diamond (physical hazard), blue circle (chemical hazard), brown square (ergonomics), yellow triangle (infectious hazards) and purple pentagon (stressors). The intensity of the hazard should be reflected in the size of the symbol. For example:

◇ = high      ◇ = medium      ◇ = low

The number of people affected by each hazard should be written in the symbol. If a source is responsible for two or more different hazards, this also should be noted with two or more symbols.

5. Get worker feedback. This is a very important aspect of risk-mapping. Here workers are brought together to review the risk map and to make the necessary changes and additions.

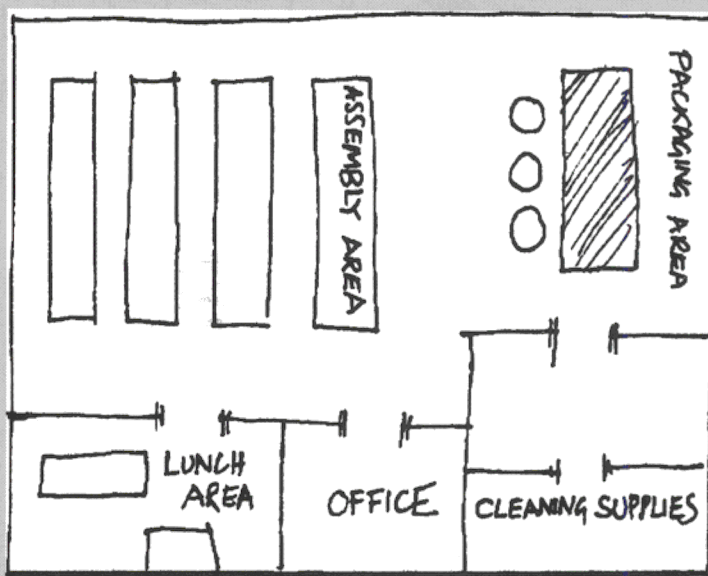
6. Prioritize the map. At this point, workers should determine the more serious hazards, the extent of their seriousness and the strategy that will be needed to fix them. When making their determination, the group should begin with hazards that affect a lot of workers or could be solved easily.
7. Seek Results. Having obtained several decision-making tools, such as the risk map; a list of hazards, and; informed workers, the following actions can be taken:

- Present a proposal to management for changes.
- Share information with other safety and health personnel including the safety and health committees.
- Consult with the safety and health professionals from the District Council 37 Safety and Health Unit or the Citywide Office of Safety and Health (COSH) regarding the hazard(s).
- Request an inspection by a regulatory agency such as PESH, Fire Department, Buildings Department or Department of Environmental Protection.

**What are some of the effective workplace changes which could be made as a result of risk-mapping?**

- ☐ Workers will be trained
- ☐ Work procedures or policies which have impacted an accident or illness will be revised
- ☐ Defective or useless Personal Protective Equipment will be changed.
- ☐ The purchase of new PPE or ergonomic tools will be made.
- ☐ A cleaning schedule to eliminate slips, trips, falls and build-up of allergens will be set up.
- ☐ Engineering or administrative controls could be implemented.

Now that you have become familiar with this tool to identify workplace hazards, it will be necessary to evaluate the effects of the changes over time. This will require you to compare the prior working conditions with the current to measure the extent of illnesses and injuries.



**For more information on any of these issues,  
please contact the DC 37 Safety and Health Unit at 212-815-1685.**

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