

# OSH practitioner self-reflection framework for working with distributed workers



## Instructions sheet

This self-reflection framework sets out abilities that were found during the research to be particularly key for OSH practitioners when working with distributed or remote workers.

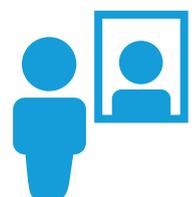
This framework aims to give a sense of the particularly important areas to consider when dealing with distributed workers – getting communication right, knowing your workers, taking a participative approach and cascading occupational safety and health (OSH) via line managers.

### Using the self-reflection framework

We recommend that OSH practitioners use this framework to reflect on the behaviours they use in their role to support OSH for distributed workers, explore any development needs they may have and plan actions to meet these needs.

If you are an OSH practitioner, you might want to use the following steps:

- 1** Identify the behaviours that you feel are definitely part of your approach, those that are sometimes part of your approach, and those that are never part of your approach.
- 2** For those that are sometimes or never part of your approach, consider whether they are important to your work with distributed workers or not. Based on this, identify priority areas in which you want to make changes.
- 3** Develop an action plan for the changes you would like to make, using the form provided.
- 4** Share the action plan with the distributed workers with whom you work to get their input on what changes they would like to see you make.
- 5** If you feel that it will be difficult for you to make these behavioural changes on your own, consider seeking support. For example, informal coaching or support from your manager might be helpful; you might find it helpful to get some formal coaching or mentoring; and/or you might want to attend a training course to develop the relevant skills.
- 6** Finally, you may find the following useful for gaining more information about supporting occupational safety and health for distributed or remote workers in the “Additional materials” section in [www.iosh.co.uk/outofsight](http://www.iosh.co.uk/outofsight)



## Getting the OSH message across to distributed workers

Includes being visible, approachable and available, engaging with workers in the most appropriate ways and being open and flexible about communicating with workers

### Visible, approachable and available

Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Visit workers at each site/location	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conduct training yourself rather than outsourcing or sending training sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Be an ambassador for safety and health and act as a role model	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ensure you are known by name, not just as 'the safety person'	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ensure you are available, or have support in place, if help and support are needed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Provide workers with a variety of contact details for you (email address, phone number)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Open, flexible communication

How often do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Hold regular OSH meetings, reviews and briefs, both face-to-face and using teleconferencing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Arrange informal group chats (using technology such as Skype) to bring different sites together	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Attend operational and distributed worker team meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Hold 'market stall' events connecting service groups (such as HR, OH, Finance) with workers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Arrange informal social events to involve all workers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Provide workers with a variety of contact details for you (email address, phone number)	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## Recognising the differing needs and engaging with all distributed workers

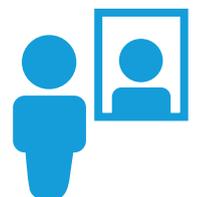
Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Recognise that everyone responds to OSH messaging in different ways and adapt to the situation and worker accordingly (for instance using performance drivers in discussions with managers)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ask if there is anything stopping workers doing their job rather than telling them what not to do	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Explain why you are asking them to do things	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Clarify the benefits of the OSH approach in their role	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Use a whole range of communication tools such as presentations, toolbox talks, email, newsletters, one-to-one chats, Skype	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Listening to and understanding distributed workers and their roles

Includes gaining knowledge and understanding of distributed worker roles and taking a respectful approach to worker input where workers feel safe and confident to report issues

### Gaining knowledge of worker roles

How often do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Gain as much understanding as possible about the difference between distributed and non-distributed worker roles	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Develop an understanding of each distributed worker job by spending time working with them (not just observing)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When developing distributed worker protocols, ask yourself questions from the worker perspective (such as 'how is this going to help me?')	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When on site, ask managers/ reps if you can accompany them on a tour so that you see what they see	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Make multiple visits to ensure you experience the diversity in their role	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## Respectful approach to worker input and trusting workers

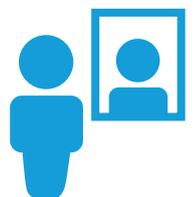
Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Enable people to be able to report anything without it being trivialised	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Take time to listen to worker opinions and suggestions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ensure everything reported is dealt with appropriately and that feedback is given to the worker on action	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Trust workers' input	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Give confidence to workers that if they feel unsafe they can say no and stop	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Make sure workers know you are there to help and make work safer for them	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Always record and investigate accidents and near misses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Remain objective and never take sides	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Empowering and collaborating with distributed workers

Includes empowering workers to take ownership of their work and safety, and establishing and using collaborative working

### Empowering

Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Trust that workers are trying to do it right	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Allow operational staff to take ownership of their procedures and protocols such as providing flexible risk assessment templates	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Develop initiatives to encourage ownership in operational staff (such as a daily star activity system)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Connect groups and sub-groups of workers together to enable them to share learning and develop insights together	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## Collaborative working

Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Involve a number of sites in developing solutions by (for instance) setting up multi-site group chats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Involve all groups of workers (such as shift-workers) in safety initiatives and communicate that all groups are equally important	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Involve workers in the OSH process and gain their buy-in to initiatives and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Establish a network of colleagues whom you, and workers, can talk to and share ideas with	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Cascading to distributed workers via managers

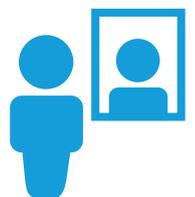
Includes providing knowledge and support to managers, being in frequent communication and enabling opportunities for managers to communicate about OSH

### Providing knowledge and support

How often do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Ensure line managers have sufficient training, knowledge and support	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Make sure managers are kept up to date on all procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Develop the OSH skillset of senior management	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Frequent communication

How often do/are you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Build rapport and relationships with line and senior management	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Be in constant contact with management	<input type="checkbox"/>				



## Enabling

Do you...	very high extent	high extent	medium extent	little extent	very little extent
Enable opportunities for line managers to get together and share OSH issues	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Increase opportunities for management to be face-to-face with their workers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Embed OSH as a line management responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Get leadership to drive OSH messages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Raise the attention of senior managers to any issues and ensure that they are sufficiently concerned to act	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ensure that management lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Action Plan

Goals	Action steps	Resources	Time frame (e.g who and what)	Notes

