The Importance of Ergonomics

IS YOUR WORKSPACE BECOMING A PAIN IN THE NECK?

Prolonged sedentary behaviour and poor ergonomic set-ups in the workspace can cause chronic injuries, affecting productivity and staff turnover.

The truth is, humans are not designed to sit in front of screens for prolonged periods. We're still hard wired for the action-packed existence we led for hundreds of thousands of years, but in this modern age of cutting edge technology we are becoming ever more sedentary. The question is, how do we resolve such contradictory poles. That's where ergonomics comes in.

Ergonomics is a science all about the optimisation of designed products, processes and systems by applying physiological and psychological principles. Applied to the workplace, the goal of ergonomics is to reduce discomfort and minimise the risk of injury to allow employees to work more safely and productively.

Why is ergonomics important?

It will probably come as no surprise to learn that recent research published in the British Medical Journal[1] found that office-based workers spend 66% of their waking day sitting down, which equates to 73% of their working day. And most of that time, is spent sitting down in front of a screen according to data from DataReportal, with UK workers averaging 3 and half hours a day in front of desktop screens.

That may seem harmless enough, but there are serious health and wellbeing implications when poor office ergonomics leads to bad posture, causing strain on the body's musculoskeletal system – there is a significant risk of developing a chronic injury such as neck or back pain and repetitive strain injuries such as carpal tunnel and tendonitis.
And when people are uncomfortable or in pain, it isn't just bad for their wellbeing, it affects their productivity too. Poor office ergonomics is likely to lead to an increased time off work and higher staff turnover - unhappy employees who can't work to their full potential are prone to find somewhere more comfortable to work.

A problem hiding in plain sight

Of course, office technology is constantly evolving and, therefore, so is the way we interact with our workspace. As a result, office ergonomics must keep up and adapt to these new

challenges. One area that is developing quickly is computer screens – they're getting bigger and wider.
Today, screens come in an ever-increasing range of shapes and sizes, from curved, square and flat screens to wide and ultra-wide screens. We have portrait and landscape screens, dual and triple monitor set-ups and large screens. Why is there such a choice? Because people simply work better with the right size, format and number of screens.

That's all well and good, but the sheer variety throws up a huge, ergonomic challenge – how do we ensure that they can all be positioned and adjusted to the perfect ergonomic position? Failure to do that means we end up adjusting ourselves into poor postures that can lead to all sorts of muscular strains and musculoskeletal disorders.

Taking screen support to new ergonomic heights

The answer is Flo X, our newest dynamic monitor arm capable of holding larger, wider and heavier screens up to 43", as well as dual and triple monitors, setting a new benchmark in design.

In practical terms, Flo X's dynamic adjustment allows you to move even the heaviest of screens to the optimal ergonomic position with ease. That ensures your head is in a neutral, balanced position, reducing musculoskeletal stress and decreasing the likelihood of injury and headaches. Correct posture also improves breathing and oxygen uptake, reducing fatigue rates and boosting concentration levels.

Using the next generation of our D-ring tilt mechanism allows Flo X to accommodate bigger screens and even curved screens, while still retaining fingertip adjustability and easy-to-balance tilt. Tilting your screen allows you to eliminate glare and reflections to minimise visual fatigue and digital eye strain. You can also flip your screen from landscape to portrait and back effortlessly, which helps you avoid the stresses and strains of awkward postures caused by poor positioning and repetitive scrolling.

The ability to accommodate curved screens also brings ergonomic benefits to your workspace, by matching the curvature of the screen as closely as possible to the natural curvature of our field of vision. This means, less eye strain and fatigue as well as necessitating less repetitive neck movement to take in the peripheries of your screen.

So you see, ergonomic design is not just important, it is quite simply the key to a happy, productive workplace – wherever that happens to be these days.

1. Effectiveness of an intervention for reducing sitting time and improving health in office workers: three arm cluster randomised controlled trial.

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