

Example risk assessment for a motor vehicle showroom

Setting the scene

The owner carried out the risk assessment at this company, which sells motor vehicles from a small showroom and forecourt on a high street. Opening hours are 10.00 am to 6.00 pm, 7 days a week.

Ten staff work at the company, five full-time and five part-time. Apart from the showroom and forecourt, there are two offices (one for closing sales and completing documentation, one for the manager and the company secretary), a designated car wash/valet

Important reminder

This example risk assessment shows the kind of approach a small business might take. Use it as a guide to think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks. Please note that it is not a generic risk assessment that you can just put your company name on and adopt wholesale without any thought. This would not satisfy the law – and would not be effective in protecting people.

Every business is different – you need to think through the hazards and controls required in your business for yourself.

area behind the showroom, a small kitchen and toilet and washing facilities. Vehicle servicing and repair is done off-site, by a different company.

The premises are cleaned every day, between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm, by staff from a contract cleaning company. The same company also cleans the showroom and office windows, and supplies staff for car valeting and washing.

The premises were built in 2003 and do not contain any asbestos.

How was the risk assessment done?

The manager followed the guidance in *Five steps to risk assessment* (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf).

- 1 To identify the hazards, the manager:
 - looked at HSE's web pages for small businesses (www.hse.gov.uk/smallbusinesses/index.htm), to learn where hazards can occur;
 - walked around the premises, inside and out, noting things that might pose a risk, and taking into consideration what was learnt from HSE's guidance;
 - talked to staff to learn from their knowledge and experience of areas and activities, and to get their concerns and opinions about health and safety issues in the workplace;
- 2 The manager then wrote down who could be harmed by the hazards and how.
- 3 For each hazard, the manager wrote down what controls, if any, were in place to manage these hazards. They then compared these controls to the good practice guidance on the HSE website. Where existing controls were not considered good enough, the manager wrote down what else needed to be done.
- 4 Putting the risk assessment into practice, the manager decided and wrote down who was responsible for implementing the actions identified and when they should be done. When each action was completed, it was ticked off and the date recorded. He discussed the findings of the risk assessment with staff, put a copy up in the staff kitchen for all staff to see and made it part of the induction process for new staff.
- 5 The manager decided to review and update the risk assessment every year, or straightaway if any major changes in the workplace happened.

Company name: Smith's Motor Sales

Date of risk assessment: 28/09/07

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Slips and trips	Staff and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff 'see it and sort it', eg all spillages trailed in water, dried up immediately with a dry mop. ■ Premises cleaned every evening. ■ Showroom floor machine cleaned and polished only after the showroom is closed. ■ All areas well lit. ■ Floor surfaces, inside and out, in good condition. ■ No trailing leads or cables. ■ Door mats put at showroom entrance in wet/icy weather, and replaced when they get very wet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loose carpet tile in manager's office to be repaired/replaced. 	Company secretary to arrange	30/10/07	21/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to put warning cones around spillages during cleaning and drying. 	Manager	01/10/07	01/10/07
Movement of vehicles	Staff and others risk potentially serious injury if struck by a moving vehicle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff cars are parked at the back, away from customer area. ■ Vehicles are moved very slowly. ■ All staff that are expected to move vehicles hold a full driving licence. ■ Staff ensure that cars being manually pushed always have a person seated at the wheel, to keep the vehicle under control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Only authorised staff allowed to handle high performance vehicles. 	Manager	04/10/07	01/01/07
Contact with cleaning chemicals	Valeting staff risk skin problems such as dermatitis, and eye damage, from direct contact with cleaning chemicals. Vapour from cleaning products may cause breathing problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All cleaning products stored in a secure, cool and dry area. ■ Staff are trained in safe storage, handling and use of products, eg only use small quantities at a time, keep lid on containers, keep doors/sun roof open when working inside vehicles, spills procedure, etc. ■ Staff wear the right personal protective equipment, as recommended by supplier. ■ Staff instructed to dry their hands thoroughly after washing cars, and to use skin cream provided as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investigate replacing 'irritant' cleaning products with milder alternatives. 	Company secretary	30/10/07	30/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to read the safety information on the product before use, and to follow the instructions. 	Manager	04/10/07	04/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to report any health problems they think may come from cleaning, and to regularly check for dry, red and itchy skin on their hands. 	Manager	04/10/07	04/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to appoint someone to regularly check skin on hands of valeting staff. 	Manager	04/10/07	04/10/07

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Manual handling Moving cars, handling office equipment etc.	Staff risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy/bulky objects, such as moving cars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff trained in how to safely push cars, eg ensure sufficient people available to do so etc. ■ Trolley used to transport boxes of paper and other heavy items when collecting deliveries etc. ■ High shelves for storing light items only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff not to try to lift objects that appear too heavy to handle. 	Manager	30/10/07	04/10/07
Display screen equipment	Staff risk posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries, eg to hands/arms, from overuse, improper use or from poorly designed workstations or work environments. Headaches or sore eyes can also occur, eg if the lighting is poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff do not use computers for long and continuous periods. ■ DSE training and assessments of workstation from CD ROM carried out by all new starters early on in induction. Any actions to be carried out ASAP. ■ Reassessment to be carried out at any change to work feature, eg equipment, furniture or the work environment such as lighting. ■ Workstation and equipment set to ensure good posture and to avoid glare and reflections on the screen. ■ Shared workstations are assessed for all users. ■ Lighting and temperature suitably controlled. ■ Venetian blinds at office windows to control natural light on screen. ■ Noise levels controlled. ■ Eye tests provided for those who need them, dutyholder to pay for basic spectacles specific for VDU use (or portion of cost in other cases). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manager to ensure that any actions arising from the self-assessments are followed up ASAP. 	Manager	30/10/07	04/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind staff to tell the company secretary if they have any pain that may be linked to computer use. 	Manager	30/10/07	04/10/07
Electrical	Staff could get electrical shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment, such as pressure washers, or a faulty installation. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Residual Current Device (RCD) built into main switchboard. ■ RCD tested by valeting staff before using the pressure washer. ■ Staff trained in safe use of pressure washer. ■ Staff trained to spot and report to office administrator any defective plugs, discoloured sockets or damaged cable/equipment. ■ Defective equipment taken out of use safely and replaced promptly. ■ All appliances brought onto site (toasters, fans etc) must first be tested for electrical safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask landlord when the next safety check of the electrical installation will be done. 	Company secretary	30/10/07	20/10/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confirm with landlord the system for making safe any damage to building installation electrics, eg broken light switches or sockets. 	Company secretary	30/10/07	20/10/07

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Work at height Changing light bulbs, putting up decorations etc.	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong stepladder, in good condition, provided. ■ Only trained, authorised staff allowed to work at height. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Print and pin up in kitchen HSE leaflet on safe use of stepladders (www.hse.gov.uk/falls/stepladders.htm). ■ 	Company secretary	4/10/07	4/10/07
Plate glass	Staff/customers risk injury from walking into plate glass windows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Safety glass used. ■ Promotional displays and other markings on showroom windows to show it is glass. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action at this stage. ■ 			
Fire	If trapped staff could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation/burns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working with landlord, fire risk assessment done, see www.communities.gov.uk/fire and necessary action taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure the actions identified as necessary by the fire risk assessment are done. 	Manager	From now on	

Assessment review date: 28/9/08