

Five top tips for getting started on ISO 45001 – in brief



1 Secure 'top management' commitment to ISO 45001 and their involvement in actively leading on it

Carefully read and understand the ISO 45001 requirements. Prepare well so that you can explain the many benefits of an improved occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS) and adopting ISO 45001 principles to senior decision-makers in your organisation.

- Explain how ISO 45001 can help to manage overall corporate risk and boost morale, productivity, reliability and reputation; secure business and talent; and prevent disruption and supply chain problems.
- Outline relevant processes you may have, such as for quality and environment, and the possible efficiencies from integrating them.
- Highlight similar organisations (and competitors or clients) that are seeking certification. Emphasise the vital role of all managers in OHSMS success.
- Ensure they fully understand the OHSMS and can show leadership in integrating it into the organisation's systems and processes.

2 Review your current OSH arrangements against the ISO 45001 requirements to identify any gaps

If your organisation has decided to seek certification, then you'll need to engage a Certification Body, which will review your policy and arrangements and advise you. If already certificated to OHSAS 18001, or other standard, they're probably in touch with you already.

You'll need an initial status review (gap analysis) to assess how well your organisation can satisfy ISO 45001 and what further work it needs to do. The identified 'gaps' will highlight improvement areas. If this work is being carried out using internal resources, a mixed team of managers and workers with collective knowledge of all relevant parts of the business, guided by a competent OSH professional, should be used.

3 Develop an implementation and resources plan to close the identified gaps

Once the areas for improvement are identified, you'll need to develop an action plan, covering the 'who, what, how and when', to address them. This will require input from the mixed team and OSH adviser to help prioritise and determine the most effective course of action for each area of weakness and an appropriate timeframe for delivery.

These risk-based actions need to be proportionate and costed in terms of the controls required and the resources needed for implementation and ongoing operation, including any necessary processes, equipment, training, monitoring and communication mechanisms.

4 Ensure effective mechanisms for change management and worker consultation and participation

You need to consider the scale of transformation that your organisation is undertaking and whether you have sufficient in-house experience for this or require external support.

In developing the change-management arrangements, it's vital you fully engage and adequately consult the workforce on all aspects of the process and ensure the involvement and commitment of relevant parties. Good two-way communication and interpersonal skills are crucial to ensure that you bring everyone with you on this journey and manage any associated risks.

5 Take steps to address any OSH competence and resource needs across the organisation

ISO 45001 has an overarching requirement for everyone in the organisation to have adequate OSH competence in order to carry out their roles safely and healthily. This will require each of your organisation's departments to assess and plan to meet the OSH training and competence needs of their teams and any additional training required to help embed the new OHSMS at all levels in the organisation.

You'll also want to review your procurement, contractor and outsourcing arrangements regarding OSH competence criteria. You'll need to identify costs and source responsibly any other resources needed, such as competent assistance, training, equipment, tools and software.