

Core Elements of Safety Management



The Health & Safety Executive identifies that successful delivery can rarely be achieved by one-off interventions. A sustained and systematic approach is necessary. This may not require a formal health and safety management system but, whatever approach is used, it probably contains the steps Plan, Do, Check, Act. However, the success of whatever process or system is in place hinges on the attitudes and behaviours of colleagues in the organisation.

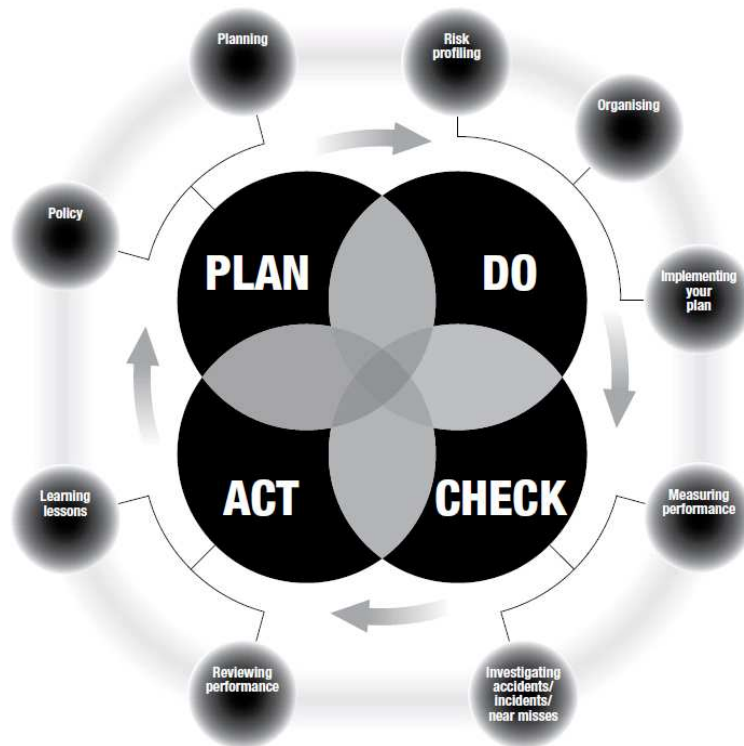
Health and Safety Management Systems

A formal management system or framework can help you manage health and safety; it's your decision whether to use one or not. Examples include:

- national and international standards such as:
 - BS OHSAS 18001 *Occupational health and safety management systems*;
 - BS EN ISO 9001 *Quality management system*;
- in-house standards, procedures or codes;
- sector-specific frameworks such as:
 - the Energy Institute's *High-level framework for process safety management*;
 - the Chemical Industries Association *Responsible Care* framework.

Although the language and methodology vary, the key actions can usually be traced back to Plan, Do, Check, Act.

The Plan, Do, Check, Act Cycle



The Plan, Do, Check, Act Approach

The HSE has moved away from using the POPMAR (Policy, Organising, Planning, Measuring performance, Auditing and Review) model of managing health and safety to a 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' approach.

The move towards Plan, Do, Check, Act achieves a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than as a stand-alone system.

The high-level descriptions may vary, depending on the industry or sector you are working in, but a summary of the actions involved in delivering effective arrangements and how they are frequently described is given in the table below under the headings of Plan, Do, Check, Act.

Plan, Do, Check, Act	Conventional health and safety management	Process safety
Plan	Determine your policy/Plan for implementation	Define and communicate acceptable performance and resources needed
Do	Profile risks/Organise for health and safety/Implement your plan	Identify and assess risks/Identify controls/Record and maintain process safety knowledge
		Implement and manage control measures
Check	Measure performance (monitor before events, investigate after events)	Measure and review performance/Learn from measurements and findings of investigations
Act	Review performance/Act on lessons learned	

Plan

Think about where you are now and where you need to be.

Say what you want to achieve, who will be responsible for what, how you will achieve your aims, and how you will measure your success. You may need to write down this policy and your plan to deliver it.

Decide how you will measure performance. Think about ways to do this that go beyond looking at accident figures; look for leading indicators as well as lagging indicators. These are also called active and reactive indicators.

Consider fire and other emergencies. Co-operate with anyone who shares your workplace and co-ordinate plans with them.

Remember to plan for changes and identify any specific legal requirements that apply to you.

Do

Identify your risk profile

- Assess the risks, identify what could cause harm in the workplace, who it could harm and how, and what you will do to manage the risk.
- Decide what the priorities are and identify the biggest risks.

Organise your activities to deliver your plan

In particular, aim to:

- Involve workers and communicate, so that everyone is clear on what is needed and can discuss issues – develop positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Provide adequate resources, including competent advice where needed.

Implement your plan

- Decide on the preventive and protective measures needed and put them in place.
- Provide the right tools and equipment to do the job and keep them maintained.
- Train and instruct, to ensure everyone is competent to carry out their work.
- Supervise to make sure that arrangements are followed.

Check

Measure your performance

- Make sure that your plan has been implemented – ‘paperwork’ on its own is not a good performance measure.
- Assess how well the risks are being controlled and if you are achieving your aims. In some circumstances formal audits may be useful.

Investigate the causes of accidents, incidents or near misses

Act

Review your performance

- Learn from accidents and incidents, ill-health data, errors and relevant experience, including from other organisations.
- Revisit plans, policy documents and risk assessments to see if they need updating.

Take action on lessons learned, including from audit and inspection reports