

Improve safety culture and drive operational efficiency with Digital Safe Systems of Work

We live in an era where many of our day-to-day activities are carried out digitally – and many aspects of our daily work routine are performed digitally. Is it, therefore, a reasonable assumption that the same can be true for safe systems of work?

Like many questions in life, the answer is a bit yes and some no. Few individuals would fully entrust their own well-being or the safety of personnel they supervise to an algorithm. Not many companies would stake their reputation as responsible employers entirely in the hands of a software program. On the other hand, there is plenty we can do digitally to help ensure personnel safety.



Could we digitally assess risk?

Currently, risk assessments rely on several sources for information. Experience leads the way, with years of work in particular work environments informing many decisions. Standards, legislation, best practices, and common sense also play a part, but staff possess different experience levels and common sense. These types of variations often result in unacceptable levels of consistency or accuracy.

It is difficult to imagine a completely digital solution where a risk assessment software program trawls safety and other information and spits out a comprehensive solution. The risk assessment software would undoubtedly find instances of things going wrong, and it could possibly identify some learnings from these incidents. However, what most people consider experience is also made up of things that don't go wrong, as when long periods with no incidents are used as evidence of safe work practices.

When things don't go wrong, they will not make it into any recordkeeping system, which would not be found by any digital system. So, are digital solutions therefore of no use for risk assessment? Fortunately, it is possible to address these issues by combining digital systems with human experience to produce better risk assessments.



Risk management software solves the problem

Risk assessment software helps deliver consistency. Manual use of standard risk assessment techniques typically produces very different results among different people. People's skills and attributes differ, including risk perception, so two people assessing the same job often come up with different findings.

Risk assessment software can address this by prescribing a risk level to each element contained within a task, thus guiding users to help them reach a consistent and accurate conclusion. The risk levels of these elements can be adjusted at any point to reflect continuous learning from actual workplace experience.

Risk assessment software can incorporate learnings from accidents and incidents into their knowledge base for future use by users. Defining company standards and best practices for health and safety, along with a safety knowledge base, helps organisations gain an early warning of sub-standard practices and improve the safety culture within their business.

The knowledge base of the software can be translated into different languages. This means that every worker can follow the same standards and consistency wherever they may be located worldwide. It also means best practices identified at one site in one language can be quickly assimilated at other sites, so a plant need not experience an incident to capture learnings from others.

In the foreseeable future, it is difficult to envisage a stage where risk assessment will be completely carried out using only digital methods. Still, one can undoubtedly anticipate how risk assessment software can augment the experience, incorporate learnings, and provide consistency and accuracy when assessing risk. Yokogawa RAP digital safe systems of work help organisations globally ensure the safety of their workforce daily. The knowledge bases contained within these types of software applications will naturally grow and improve through use, eventually transforming to add wisdom by representing the desired safety culture of the organisation.

*To find out more, please contact
uk.marketing@uk.yokogawa.com*