



## Working together for OSH - successful organisational and individual interventions

*Prof. Rüdiger Trimpop, University of Jena*

Countries that emphasise worker participation in health and safety also show excellent accident records and are strong in Health-Promotion and WLB. Yet the degree of participation in health, safety and human-centred design of work has fallen due to reducing work-complexity to hire cheaper labour and standardising procedures.

Simultaneously the amount of lost-time due to psychological stress, has risen to about 40% in Germany. Less influence, participation, time for finding problems and designing human-centred solutions and an increase of time pressure, travel necessities and constant electronic and mobile presence can be observed. Safety and health circles are often transformed into meetings with the supervisor, thus reducing the true behavioural basis for prevention.

Risk analyses are often performed by safety technicians alone and some with leaders, but most without involving the workers themselves. In traditional work-safety, technical and organisational measures override personal ones and thus the person is believed to be not essential and too expensive in working hours invested.

In the areas of most importance due to the death- and loss-time statistics, this approach is inadequate. Most deadly accidents happen in traffic, while commuting from and to work or to conferences and customers or with the road as the working place, for example truck-taxi-bus drivers. Occupational traffic accidents account for more than 50% of the deadly accidents. Since no supervisor knows how employees come to work or drive while outside the company, and nobody knows exactly what stresses other people, except for the common ergonomic problems, such as noise, the argument is: In those areas, the workers have to be involved personally to come to a prevention of health and safety issues in addition to work-design approaches.

Our data show, that supervisors and safety technicians report themselves to be far below effectiveness in these areas. Furthermore, a risk analyses for stress performed through supervisors in a large German company came to significantly different results in 18 of 19 categories, than an analysis performed with involvement of the same workers. A longitudinal study (8years) with 2000 safety technicians show the most promising areas for cooperation

A number of successful interventions with worker participation will be presented, as well as the conditions under which they are successful and when they are not. Only by involving everyone, we can “produce” a healthy person in a healthy organisation.