

Getting specialist help with health and safety



This is a web-friendly version of pocket card INDG420

Looking for specialist health and safety help for your business? Deciding exactly what help you need is very important. Unless you are clear at this stage, you probably won't get the help you really need.

What should I do first?

Visit HSE's website www.hse.gov.uk/smallbusinesses/must/advice.htm or call Infoline on 0845 345 0055 and find out what help is available for your business. You may also find it helpful to discuss matters with your trade association.

Am I able to deal with it myself? Should I be?

You probably already deal with most issues yourself, with the help of your staff, and develop the necessary expertise in-house. You should try to do the same for health and safety - managing it is good for your business.

If I call on specialist help what, exactly, do I need it to do for me?

Some things you may not be able to do for yourself. A clear understanding and explanation to the specialist help is essential, for it to give you what you really need.

Will the specialist help be good enough to solve my particular problem?

Is there evidence of relevant training/knowledge, such as formal qualifications? Does the specialist help have practical experience of your industry/activities? Can they explain to you why they are competent to advise you on this particular problem? Is the specialist help a member of a professional body? If you are in any doubt, you can check with the professional body what training/knowledge and qualifications are relevant, and on the specialist help's membership.

Have I made it clear to the specialist help exactly what I want from them?

And do you think they understand? Ask them to explain what they understand the work is and what they will do, when and at what cost.

Have I shopped around to find the right help at the right price?

If you were buying new computers you wouldn't just accept the first offer you saw, so why do it with health and safety advice? You also need to check that the help is adequately insured.

Have I received the help I needed?

Do you have a practical, sensible solution to your problem? Or do you think you have you ended up with something completely 'over the top', or a mountain of useless paperwork? Ask the specialist help to explain, and to consider whether there may be a simpler alternative.

Have I received good follow-up support from the specialist help?

Have they made sure you've understood their recommendations and dealt with any questions you had about implementing them?

Further information

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For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Fax: 0845 408 9566 Textphone: 0845 408 9577 e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com or write to HSE Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG.

This pocket card contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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