IDEAS Step 1: Detailed Instructions for Facilitators
Identify Health & Safety Problem/Issue and Contributing Factors

The process for Worksheet Step 1 will require 1 - 2 meetings. Duration will vary depending on the complexity of the health & safety problem/issue, the size of the group, length and frequency of the meetings, and so forth. Either the design team (DT) or the steering committee (SC) could initiate the process.

Worksheet 1 Goal:

A design team, preferably involving line-level employees, identifies the root causes of a health & safety problem/issue by coming up with a list of things that contribute to it or are the source of it.

Important Terms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health &amp; safety Problem/Issue</th>
<th>Anything that places employees’ physical and/or mental wellbeing at risk.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-issue</td>
<td>A smaller part or aspect of the main health &amp; safety problem/issue that helps to make brainstorming easier to think about.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributing Factors</td>
<td>Anything inside or outside the workplace that can impact the sub-problem/issue in either a positive or negative way; for example employee behaviors, workplace policies, job design, equipment, work space, etc., etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Root Cause Analysis</td>
<td>Going through a process like this to create a fairly complete list of all of the underlying causes or sources of a health &amp; safety problem/issue.</td>
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Group Process:

1. Select a health & safety problem/issue –

All possibilities can be considered initially. The site facilitator needs to help the team focus on a single health & safety problem/issue, or a related group of concerns. The worksheet for Step 1, flip charts, and dry-erase or chalkboards are all useful tools to facilitate this process. Use of large flip charts and boards will allow group members to work together when considering which health & safety problem/issue to focus on as a priority.

Flip chart sheets can be used in a similar manner, placing several side-by-side on a wall. Flip charts have the advantage of keeping issues and discussion points in front of the group during the entire training, instead of erasing them to start a new discussion.
It's important for the facilitator to encourage employees to consider health & safety issues beyond traditional accident prevention programs. The facilitator should guide employees in considering all problems/issues that impact employee physical and/or mental wellbeing, and help employees settle on a general problem/issue that is salient to the group.

- Identifying a health & safety problem/issue that is worth focusing on is the first challenge in planning any workplace intervention. All members of the Design Team should agree that this is important, and that something should be done about it.
- Health and safety are related and it’s important to consider all the ways health is impacted in the workplace. Consider problems/issues that go beyond safety and prevention to consider overall physical and/or mental wellbeing.
- Consider health & safety problems/issues identified in the All-Employee Survey, focus group summaries, or Design Team exercises or discussions.

- Be sure the group has useful information available that will help prioritize health & safety problems/issues, including results from the All-employee Survey, any focus group summaries, and any previous lists generated by the DT. The SC may have a set of problems/issues in mind that motivated the creation of the program, such as the need to reduce workers compensation costs. These can be shared with the DT to help promote some collaboration between the DT and SC. Be sure there is enough time for the DT to bring up any other issues they think are important.
- A simple voting procedure can be used to help narrow the number of possible problems/issues to work on. Lists of the problems/issues under consideration can be printed in large font and posted around the meeting room. Provide each member of the Design team with 3-5 “votes,” which can be small sticky notes or some other form of adhesive-backed paper, such as colored dots, that can be attached next to problems/issues. Members can move around the room and engage in a voting process all at once. Several ballots can help narrow the choices and help the Design team decide on a final choice.

- All members of the DT should agree on which problem/issue to address, and that something should be done about it.
  - If DT members can’t reach a consensus as to which problem/issue to work on, an anonymous vote may be helpful. Remind DT members that some of the problems/issues can be evaluated later. Also, some problems/issues may be sub-issues of a larger problem and become apparent later in the IDEAS planning process.

2. Identify sub-problems/issues
Make the point that, when building a participatory program, it is important for the program to have some early “wins” ---- successful interventions that will demonstrate the program's viability and also help clarify the different roles of the DT and the SC. Choosing problems/issues that may be easier to work on or receive support for initially, and which would not require a long time period to show results, should receive higher priority for early interventions.

- In most cases, the problem/issue (e.g., too much job stress) can be broken down into aspects that are easier to think about and work with (e.g., stress from deadlines as one sub-issue; stress caused by rotating shifts as another sub-problem/issue).

- Refer to targeted IDEAS tools (for participatory weight loss; stress reduction) for other specific examples in Section 7.

- Sub-issues should be distinct from each other.

3. List anything that might contribute to each of the sub-issues
   - Consider both ergonomics (e.g., poor job design, workstations that do not fit the workers) and employee behaviors (e.g., lack of training) as possible contributing factors in order to achieve a more balanced approach.
   - These don’t need to be in any order

- The flowchart framework of the worksheet may appear to require that contributing factors must be closely related to each other. However, this is not necessary at first so encourage DT members to list all contributing factors, even if they don’t relate to each other. A brain storming session should generate as many ideas as possible. Group members may be willing to take worksheets home to continue adding to them.

- There may be some similarities among these contributing factors.

- If similar contributing factors relate to a single sub-issue, then list these below the appropriate sub-issue. As the group considers contributing factors, new sub-issues may become apparent. The facilitator may need to repeatedly revise the worksheets as sub-issues evolve.

- DT members should be encouraged to go back and review their previous work, especially if this step in the design process occurs across multiple meetings.
previous flip charts, notes and worksheets should be accessible to group members during each meeting to help keep track of what has already been discussed.

Important:
All potential contributing factors should be listed. It is important to encourage brainstorming as a group so that the list of contributing factors is as complete as possible. As needed, sub-problems/issues can be broken down further by using additional worksheets, with a sub-issue listed at the very top of the worksheet.

Important for the Site Facilitator:
It is usually better to have the DT and SC meet separately during the early steps of the IDEAS process for a number of reasons. One reason is that it can be difficult for line-level employees to openly discuss certain health & safety problems/issues, or their contributing factors, when their supervisor or another member of management is present. Personal topics may be avoided not only to avoid embarrassment, but also because any reporting of personal failures might negatively impact one's potential for promotion or standing. Having a supervisor or another member of management present may also limit the scope of problems/issues or contributing factors being considered when line-level employees defer to management’s known positions on these matters. Supervisors and managers may also inadvertently or unintentionally discourage discussion of some problems/issues because these topics are considered controversial or too expensive to address, thereby eliminating the possibility that new and creative means of addressing these problems/issues can be found. Lastly, if DT members can meet more often than members of the SC, requiring combined meetings would considerably slow down the IDEAS planning process.

Nonetheless, it may still be useful for the DT and SC to meet together on some occasions during this initial step of the IDEAS process (e.g., to generally discuss the scope of a problem/issue).

Some groups may be resistant to using paper worksheets. For these groups and others, use of flip charts, dry-erase or chalkboards can help promote an active group process. In this case, assigning a secretary in the group may be helpful to track group discussion and provide group members with hard copy summaries that can be referred to in future meetings.

The Design Process Wheel can be annotated with intervention names to show where any intervention planning efforts are located within the planning cycle. For example, one intervention may be in the process of being implemented (Step 6) while another intervention planning effort may be in the early planning stages (Step 2). This can quickly orient the DT or SC as to where intervention planning efforts stand, and what needs to be worked on next.