



## CASE STUDY

# Cority Enviance Helps Aerospace Company Reduce Ergonomic-Related Injuries

In 2002, a leading global developer of aerospace and defense technology, began looking for a modern way to improve its work-related injury prevention processes. By creating a new ergonomics program supported by Cority Enviance Office Ergonomics Solution (OES), the company reduced its computer-related injuries by 75 percent.

## Aerospace Company Employees Suffer Ergonomic-Related Injuries

The company has around 6,000 employees spread over 40 buildings in its U.S.-based campus. Naturally, its highly technical projects mean engineers and support staff spend many hours sitting at their workstations.

In 2002, the company realized it needed to pay more attention to its ergonomic processes. The organization faced high numbers of work-related injuries, and further investigation revealed a high number of employees were at risk. While the company remedied injuries, it didn't focus on prevention.

"Our injury rates were a lot higher across the board in those days," said the company's safety and health manager. "But our computer-related injuries were especially concerning as they probably accounted for at least 50 percent of all our injuries. We needed to provide a safer work environment for our employees while also reducing workers' compensation claims, lost

workdays, and other soft costs that hurt the company's bottom line."

## Setting Sights on Proactive Risk Management

To address the problem quickly, the company launched an organizational effort to identify employees who were at high risk of injury and move them to a lower risk level through training and equipment. However, when the project started, the task was too big for the health and safety team.

"We can only see so many people," said the company's safety and health manager. "And when you have 6,000 people in 40 different buildings, providing in-person training quickly is impossible. We didn't have enough safety personnel to provide classroom training to hundreds of employees every month."

The safety and health manager and her colleagues began looking for an innovative software solution. The company was already undergoing a digital transformation and had started computer-based training programs in other areas. Using a software-based

### INDUSTRY

Aerospace

### REGION

North America

### ORGANIZATION SIZE

5,000 +

### SOLUTIONS

Office Ergonomics Solution

### CHALLENGES

- Many hours spent sitting at workstations
- High number of work-related injuries
- Many employees at risk

### RESULTS

- Tracked behavior-based habits of individual employees
- Case management and support
- Workplace ergonomics training

### IMPACT

Reduced health costs and ergonomic-related injuries by 75%. Helps prevent future injuries from occurring.



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Safety & Health Manager

ergonomics tool that focused on prevention seemed like a natural step forward.

## Find A New Way to Manage Risk

While researching office ergonomics software, the company discovered OES. Designed to improve office well-being, OES helps companies track and improve behavior-based habits of individual employees. OES identifies which employees are most at risk, so health and safety staff can offer customized ergonomic solutions before injuries develop.

In the case of the aerospace company, OES provided employees with self-assessments of their ergonomic behavior, guided them through the process, and recorded results digitally. OES then automatically analyzed

the data and classified each individual into a different risk category, which gave the company clear insight into which employees needed further care.

“With its sophisticated algorithm, OES could identify high-, medium-, and low-risk employees, allowing our team to better allocate our resources,” the safety and health manager said. “Plus, the visual content helped our employees learn how to proactively set up an ergonomically safe workstation on their own, so we could focus on those high-risk cases instead.”

## Incorporating OES into the Business

When the aerospace company first deployed OES, it focused on the departments with the greatest number of injuries. The health



Computer-related injuries account for half the injuries



Real-time visibility over ergonomic situation



90% of employees approve of the OES program

and safety team created criteria to identify individuals who were most at risk, looking closely at those who often worked with a keyboard or mouse. The company first asked the high-risk employees who spent most of the day at computers to complete the OES self-assessments.

During the self-assessments, employees shared their ergonomic habits by interacting with visual representations of office workers. For example, an employee might have seen three pictures of a person with computer screens placed at different angles. The employee selected which picture best resembled the way their own screen was angled.

OES then recorded the answer and used it to build a risk profile for each employee. By

leveraging the employee data from these self-assessments, the company had the information it needed to identify common risks for injury.

“We often found issues with a mismatch of keyboard and mouse,” the safety and health manager said. “We frequently identified awkward posture and contact stress, whether from a chair issue or positioning of the keyboard and mouse.”

## Setting New Equipment Standards

With the ability to identify risk factors, the company then took appropriate remedial measures. An industrial hygienist at the company recalled that the organization

learned it needed to address some equipment issues.

“Some of the results made us rethink our equipment standards because we found out more people needed keyboard trays or an ergonomic chair,” the company’s industrial hygienist said. “We began working with the facilities team to provide some of the necessities we previously considered optional, like keyboard trays or regular ergonomic chairs, and made them standard equipment.”

## Dramatically Reducing Workplace Injuries

Soon after implementing a proactive approach to reducing injuries, the company noticed some impressive results. Along with a high reduction in lost workday rates, the company saw its overall computer-related injury rate drop by around 75 percent while yielding significant decreases in workers’ compensation costs.

“With the lower lost workday rate, the injuries were less severe because we caught them earlier,” the safety and health manager said. “Instead of paying \$10,000 for a carpal tunnel case, we ended up paying \$1,500 or \$2,000 for physical therapy.”

Not only did the team have hard numbers on reduced health costs but OES also tracked the change in risk behavior to show a direct correlation between the two.

## Improving Training Methods

In addition to identifying high-risk employees, OES helped the company train employees in proper workplace ergonomics. The OES self-assessments included visualizations of people sitting at workstations, which showed employees the correct way to sit.

“OES included realistic visuals that showed different sitting positions,” the safety and health manager said. “Employees could see themselves sitting in different positions and try to identify which ones they most resemble, be it right or wrong.”

Along with the visual content, OES gave

actionable, real-time feedback to employees about how they work. Employees then adjusted their behavior to practice healthier ergonomic habits.

## Providing Better Case Management and Support

Managers also benefitted from the OES Manager’s Tab feature. Using this feature, employees logged any discomfort they felt, which fed into risk management data and alerted managers when appropriate. Following this request, the health and safety team scheduled in-person assessments, recorded the outcome, and continued to monitor the employee.

The Manager’s Tab feature also gave managers real-time visibility over their team members’ ergonomic situation.

“Previously, we had to run Excel lists off the data in OES,” the safety and health manager said. “But now with OES Case Manager, managers can access employee profiles, so they know their employee’s status right away. Managers are taking the initiative to ask how their team members feel and show how much they care about them.”

## Improving Ergonomic Awareness

Not surprisingly, employees responded positively to the way the company deployed OES. Some indications even showed employees better understood ergonomics issues through their self-assessments and OES training.

“The awareness levels have gone up,” the industrial hygienist said. “The word of mouth on campus is healthy, and you hear more people chiming in about ergonomics. It’s not just safety staff pushing ergonomics to other people.”

In fact, according to an internal survey, 90 percent of employees said they approve of the office ergonomics program.

## Managing Future Risk

As the office ergonomics program continues

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to evolve, the company is taking advantage of new OES capabilities. In particular, the company plans to further integrate OES Case Manager with its internal systems to better manage, track, and evaluate employee cases.

"Our internal IT system no longer supports our home-grown ergonomic evaluation reporting system, so Case Manager is the perfect solution for us," the safety and health manager said. "Our managers simply push a button and their employee receives the support they need."

Since the initial deployment, OES has become a staple of life at the company. By leveraging OES, the company can train employees in safe behavior, evaluate risk data through self-assessments, track open cases, and efficiently access program analytics. The company now has the resources it needs to protect the health of its employees and prevent injuries from happening in the first place.



## Let's start the conversation.

*Contact us today for more information.*

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