

Challenges and opportunities of digitalization for health and well-being at work

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Background:

Developments in the working world (e.g. digitalization) are imposing new demands on employees. However, it remains unclear how digitalization affects health and well-being at work and how companies can respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. In order to stimulate the discussion of these issues, the Austrian Health Promotion Fund supported 20 projects focusing on 'Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) in the Working world 4.0'. The central research questions were: What challenges and opportunities regarding "Work 4.0" were identified and what measures have the companies developed?

Methods:

We used a combination of different qualitative and quantitative research methods and instruments. As a first step in this multi-stage process, we conducted workshops with the WHP project managers of each company. Subsequently, we carried out a document analysis of the developed catalogues of measures to identify the underlying opportunities and challenges. To quantify and validate these results, we invited the project leaders and team members to participate in an online survey.

Results:

As the WHP projects in the companies progressed, the focus shifted from the challenges to the opportunities offered by digitalization. On average, opportunities were rated more important than challenges in the online survey. The most important challenges were sensitization of managers, permanent accessibility as a health risk and mental stress and strain. The most important opportunities were the optimization of knowledge transfer, communication and documentation. The measures implemented ranged from the use of innovative tools, to knowledge transfer on methods and health-related content, to changes in materials and organization.

Conclusions:

The examination of digitalization in the context of health and well-being at work has highlighted the positive aspects of digitalization. The health promotion measures implemented can serve as examples of good practice for other companies.

Key messages:

- As companies began to consciously examine digitalization in the context of health and well-being at work, the focus shifted from the challenges of digitalization to the opportunities it offers.
- To meet the challenges of digitalization and to act on emerging opportunities, companies have implemented

numerous different measures that can serve as examples of good practice for other companies.