



Psychosocial Hazard Quick Guide

LOW JOB CONTROL

Low job control can occur when team members **have little to no say** in the decisions or processes that **affect them and their work**. This can include, but is not limited to, what happens in their work environment, how their work is done or the objectives they work towards in their role. Not having input or control over important aspects of one's role can lead to team members feeling stressed and can lead to psychological injury if the experience is **severe, prolonged or frequent**.

A quick guide to managing the risk of low job control is summarised below, to help you understand how to spot and address low job control in your teams.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Look out for these warning signs that low job control may be a risk factor in your workplace:

Excessively **HIGH** requirements to:

- Seek sign off or permission for routine or low-level tasks (e.g. *sending emails*)
- Structure tasks in a rigid way (e.g. *scripted conversations*)
- Prescribe how and when things occur (e.g. *set break times*)
- Work at a set pace or in an inflexible way (e.g. *machine-based work*)

...Which results in excessively **LOW**:

- Opportunity for team members to use their skills or judgement
- Autonomy to influence one's schedule or work environment
- Flexibility to adapt work approach to the needs of the situation
- Perceived opportunities to learn and grow
- Input to decisions about how work is done or how roles are structured



POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF LOW JOB CONTROL

If excessively low job control is experienced severely and/or frequently over time, it can increase the risk of:



Exacerbating or interacting with other psychosocial hazards (e.g. *increasing job demands*)



Greater work delays, paperwork and/or frustration for clients / customers



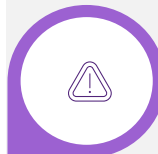
Disengagement or loss of interest in role



Increased turnover or workplace injuries

When considering the level of risk for this hazard in your team or workplace, remember to ask yourself:

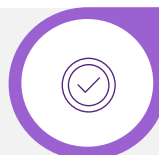
1. How **LONG** have issues been occurring?
2. How **OFTEN** are they occurring?
3. How much do these issues **IMPACT** your team members?



WHAT YOU CAN DO

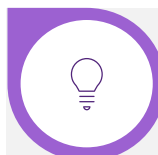
Some actions you could take as a leader to help address the risk of low job control:

- ▶ **Plan work arrangements, requirements or deadlines** in advance to reduce uncertainty
- ▶ Work to balance which **key tasks** require monitoring / sign-off while allowing team members autonomy to progress routine or lower risk tasks efficiently
- ▶ **Consult with team members and take their views into account** when making decisions about the workplace and work itself
- ▶ **Support team members to utilise an appropriate level of autonomy** to define how and when they undertake their work (e.g. *schedule their own breaks*)
- ▶ **Involve team members in conversations about continuous improvement**, and encourage them to explore potential efficiencies in their work
- ▶ Check in with your team members often to make sure they feel they are able to **utilise their knowledge and skills in their work**
- ▶ **Listen to job control concerns** and take these seriously



GOOD PRACTICE

Managing job control is an ongoing process and you should review your knowledge and the effectiveness of your actions regularly.



Keep these tips in mind:



Select for success by assigning tasks and roles that match team member skills and capability levels



Review existing systems and processes for opportunities to create flexibility in the pace of work (e.g. *editable workflows*)



Use regular forums to talk about, raise and/or solve job control concerns, such as regular performance and development conversations



Remain vigilant about job control: Aim to address concerns before risk increases, by prioritising constant and open communication