Definition of workability and difference of workability to fitness for work

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Definitions?!

- Workability / work ability
- Work disability
- Fit for work
- Work capability
Workability

• Workability – WORK ABLE - Capable of being put into effective operation; practicable or feasible: a workable compromise

Disability

- physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on the ability to do normal daily activities
Workability concept

• The concept of "work ability" is central for many sciences, especially for those related to working life and to rehabilitation.

It is one of the important concepts in legislation regulating sickness insurance. How the concept is defined therefore has important normative implications. The concept is, however, often not sufficiently well defined.
• Work ability refers to a worker’s capacity to sustain
• employment in his or her current job,
• given the demands of the job and his or her individual resources

Ilmarinen, Gould, Järvikoski, & Järvisalo, 2008
• Work ability - a worker’s functional ability to do their job / functional capacity to meet the requirements of the job.

• Work ability - workers’ ability to carry out their work, that is, having:
  - the occupational competence,
  - the health required for the job and
  - the occupational virtues that are required for managing the work tasks (Tengland, 2011).
Work ability influence factors

• Human resources motivation
• Biographical and life-style factors (e.g. age, alcohol consumption, physical exercise, BMI)
• Work-related factors (e.g. mental and physical work demands, management)

Van den Berg, Elders, Zwart, & Burdorf, 2009
Two definitions of work ability?

• One for specific jobs that require special training or education, and

• One for jobs that most people can manage given a short period of practice.

Work ability for specific jobs that require special training / education

MEANS HAVING:

• occupational competence,
• health required for the competence, and
• occupational virtues required for
• managing the work tasks,
• assuming that the tasks are reasonable and that the work environment is acceptable.
Work ability for jobs that most people can manage

• health

MEANS HAVING: • basic standard competence and

• relevant occupational virtues required for managing some kind of job,

• assuming that the work tasks are reasonable and that the work environment is acceptable
These definitions give us

• **TOOLS** for understanding and discussing the complex, holistic and dynamic aspects of work ability, and they can lay the foundations for the creation of **instruments** for evaluating work ability, as well as help formulate **strategies for rehabilitation**.
• Work-ability can be broadly described as the match between the physical, mental, social, environmental and organizational demands of a person’s work and his or her capacity to meet these demands.
Factors contributing to work-ability

Physical function

Body functions

Psychological function

Cognitive skills

Activities and participation

Behavioural skills

Social skills

Work Ability

Environmental factors

Outside the workplace

Within the workplace

J. K. Fadyl et al.
Workability is influenced...

- Working Conditions
- Personal Factors
- Environment
- Socio-Cultural Factors
## Personal factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genetic heritage</th>
<th>Health status / Disease</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Exercise</td>
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<td>Sex</td>
<td>Training / Practice</td>
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<td>Fatigue</td>
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<td>Body Mass Index</td>
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</tbody>
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Working conditions

Psycho-social factors, leadership, support, feedback, appreciation, fair play, commitment, trust

Ergonomic factors

Organizing factors: shift activity, duration, automation, mechanization, work regime, rhythm, speed, number of workers, team

Work arrangements

Flexibility

Hygiene

Noxious
Socio-cultural factors

- Country
- Average income per capita
- Salary
- Alimentation
- Home conditions
- Drugs / Alcohol
- Family
- Transport
- Mentality
Environment

- Longitude and Latitude
- Climate
- Season
- Relief
- Food offer
- Ecosystem
Good work
Quality
Productivity
Innovation
Satisfaction

Competence
Expertise

Good health

Positive attitude
Quality of life
Self-esteem

Work ability, premise and consequence
Defining and measuring work-ability

• Is of interest to those in the field of occupational or vocational rehabilitation for two primary reasons:

• **First**, it is important that people are not at work when it is unsafe, or when that person’s capability to perform the job is affected to the extent that there is a significant risk to them or their employer.

• **Second**, it is crucial that people are not excluded from work because of perceived incapacity, when reasonable supports could be put in place that would allow them to perform satisfactorily in their job.

• This is important for employers because of economic demands put on them when workers are on sick leave, but also because for the worker, as being in employment is often associated with better quality of life, health and physical functioning.
Work Capability Assessment

is a functional assessment which looks at a range of different activities relating to physical and/or mental, intellectual and cognitive functions, to determine whether an individual could reasonably be expected to work or undertake work-related activity, or not, taking into account developments in modern healthcare and workplace environments.
Factors related to management, ergonomics, and lifestyle explained both the decline and improvement in work ability during aging.

Young age, higher management position, high job control, supportive organizational climate, and high organizational commitment at baseline were significant predictors for a positive development of work ability.
Feldt et al concluded that
• aging and
• lower-level managers
are at risk of an unfavorable development with respect to their work ability.
More attention should be given to their psychosocial work conditions in organizations in order to prevent poor work ability.
An Ecological Model of Health

Work ability house

Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991
Work engagement, supported by resourceful jobs and positive self-esteem, plays an important role in maintaining and promoting work ability, and consequently, possibly also in decreasing employees’ intentions towards early retirement.

Auli Airilaa*, Jari J. Hakanena, Wilmar B. Schaufelib, Ritva Luukkonenc, Anne Punakalliod and Sirpa Lusad, Are job and personal resources associated with work ability 10 years later? The mediating role of work engagement, Work & Stress, 2014, Vol. 28, No. 1, 87–105,
Fitness for work

The determination of whether the individual is fit to perform own working tasks without risk to self or others.

Cox 2000, Serra 2007
# Fitness for work

## Introduction

Fitness for work

Impact of health on work.  
**Work, Activities, Referral and Prevention**

## Consequences of (chronic) illness

ICF model, adapted for Work and health

## Clinical reasoning

Extending clinical reasoning to **Activities and participation, occupational history taking**

## Assessing fitness for work

Clinical intervention, rehabilitation and return to work, **Referral to an occupational physician**

## Interventions and active support

Pre-employment examination and preventive periodical medical examination

## Prevention

History taking about fitness for work

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http://www.emutom.eu/chapter3.php
Topics – fitness for work

1. Consequences of (chronic) illness for the work of a patient and how to actively support return to work

2. Fitness for the job: pre-employment examination and preventive periodical medical examination

3. What every physician should ask his / her patient about fitness for work
Consequences of illness

• it is possible to assess disability in a more objective way and to plan active interventions

• the International Classification of Functioning, disability and health (ICF model) provides a framework and enables the communication between different medical specialties
ICF model adapted for work and health

ICF model with intervention options
Adapted by PBA Smits and JHAM Verbeek, Coronel Institute of Occupational Health, AMC The Netherlands.
EMUTOM project, August 2011. ICF © World Health Organization 2001
Definitions of the ICF elements

Function: disorder in function and / or anatomical structure
Activity: limitations in functional capabilities
Participation: problems in social participation

Personal factors: e.g. education, experience, coping, motivation
External factors: e.g. workload, working conditions, social support

Clinical interventions: treatment by GP or clinical specialist
Personal interventions: training, strengthen coping
Environmental support interventions: adapt the workplace, strengthen social
Fit and keep fit for the job

• Pre-employment examination
  – Aims at protecting the health and safety of the examined person and of third parties by assessing medical fitness for a specific job.
  – Therefore it is important to know the specific medical requirements for the job. A major question is whether a medical examination can predict health risks and healthy functioning in the future.

• Preventive medical examination
  – health surveillance of workers in jobs with specific exposures such as noise, carcinogens and asbestos to prevent possible health effects.
  – In this chapter the topic is medical fitness for work. In preventive periodical medical examination the aim is to periodically assess medical fitness for the job. It can be compared with a pre-employment examination
What every physician should ask his/her patient about fitness for work

When taking a patient’s history, Ramazzini added the question “what is your occupation?”

- Are you (un)employed, fulltime / part-time?
- Do you fail at the moment due to your complaints, when did you stop working?
How long will be maintained Napo’s work ability?
Conclusion ...

Fit for work

Good health
Work ability

Disability
The More I Think
The More Confused I Get