



WHY

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting your workers and your business, as well as complying with the law. It helps you focus on the risks that really matter in your workplace. A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Workers and others have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures. Risk assessments need to be site specific.

A method statement is simply a written method of communicating how a task is to be carried out, whether describing how to mop a floor or build a bridge. It lets us fulfil our legal obligations in providing adequate information; it too needs to be site specific.

What WE Need to Do

1. Identify the task you want provide a Method Statement for. Broadly identify the method of carrying out this task.
2. Carry out a detailed risk assessment. When the risks are identified and quantified try to eliminate them (by changing methods of work, materials etc), then reduce the risk as far as reasonable. Finally with small risks you cannot eliminate/further reduce, provide appropriate safety equipment and PPE.
3. Produce the Method Statement from the Risk Assessment which will define the activity procedure from the Risk Assessment results. It will identify the control procedures which have been identified within the Risk Assessment.
4. Carry out the activity, monitor the risks and change the Risk Assessment and thus Method Statement if things are different than expected or change.

It's very important to break down the different elements of work into sections, following a logical sequence, to allow you to do accurate Risk Assessments & Method Statements of each. So for example, if I was going to paint a bridge, I would probably break the project down into the following Risk Assessments & Method Statements - Site establishment, access (scaffolding) erection & dismantling, painting, traffic management etc.

Don't ever forget the removal works e.g. if putting a scaffolding up, it also has to be removed and its never simply the reverse of erection, especially as site conditions change.

Remember – Individuals must understand the method in which they are to carry out their work, not just the methodology of the whole job.

