

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (OSHMS)

THE HIRARC MATRIX AND THE IMPORTANCE
OF IDENTIFYING RISKS AND HAZARDS AT THE
WORKPLACE



At present, companies are required to comply with the implementation and development of an Occupational Safety and Health Management System (OSHMS). As part of this implementation, it is important to consider the identification of hazards and risks to which employees are exposed at the workplace.

One of the main tools that allow the identification of these hazards is the Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control Matrix, known as the "HIRARC Matrix". This Matrix establishes control, management and improvement mechanisms for such risks to avoid accidents and incidents at work, as well as to prevent occupational diseases. Thus, this Matrix is the backbone of the Occupational Safety and Health Management System.

Now, to design a HIRARC Matrix, it is important to identify the differences between hazards and risks:

Hazards	Risks
Condition present in the work environment, act or situation that has the potential to cause an injury or illness to employees during their work activities.	Combination of the probability that the hazard to which employees are exposed will materialize and the severity of the harm of deterioration to employee's health that this materialization may cause.
Example: Wet or slippery floor	Example: Fall on the same level

It is important to be aware of the main hazards to which employees may be exposed in the development of their activities, such as the following:

- ▶ **Physical:** Noises, extreme temperatures, vibrations, and radiation.
- ▶ **Chemical:** Metal dusts, vapors, gases, and fumes.
- ▶ **Biological:** Bacteria, fungi, viruses, and pests
- ▶ **Electrical:** Damaged electrical panels, exposed electrical wires, and overloading of plugs.
- ▶ **Ergonomic:** Inadequate and forced postures, repetitive movements, heavy lifting, and over exertion.
- ▶ **Locative:** Floors in poor condition, wet or slippery floors, stairs in poor condition, and lack of order and cleanliness.
- ▶ **Mechanical:** Exposed machines, defective tools, vehicles in poor condition, and unserviced boilers.
- ▶ **Psychosocial:** Excessive workload, excessive work pace, work content, interaction with the opposite sex, and personal relationships at work.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

At BDO, we have a specialized and multidisciplinary team that can provide the necessary assistance for the identification of the hazards to which employees are exposed through the HIRARC Matrix, the implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Management System, among others.

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DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT TO KNOW MORE? CONTACT US!

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