

THE NEW PARADIGM WORKSTATION SYSTEM FROM UCI IS ALL ABOUT YOU

Paradigm: a generally accepted model of how ideas relate to one another, forming a conceptual framework.

The advantage of Paradigm begins by giving users control of how they work, organise, interact and maintain comfort, with its unique sit-to-stand capability.

An increasing number of studies worldwide continue to prove the benefits of sit-to-stand workstations within the office environment.

One such study – ‘Stand Up Australia, August 2009’ – covers research into office-based, call centre and retail employee behaviors. It revealed that:

- ▶ 77 per cent of the working day is spent sitting
- ▶ Individuals who spend high amounts of time sitting at work also tend to spend high amounts of time sitting on non-work days
- ▶ Participants in the study perceived much higher levels of their own physical activity than they did when measured objectively
- ▶ Prolonged sitting time in the workplace is an adverse health risk.

The Stand Up Australia study provides further evidence that organisations need to be prompted to consider sedentary work spent sitting in the workplace as an emerging health issue. Future research should be directed towards expanding the knowledge base with respect to whether there are direct links between sedentary time at work and adverse health outcomes, and consequently the influence of sedentary time on productivity and absenteeism.

Fast facts about sit-to-stand deskings:

- ▶ Alternating between sitting and standing results in decreased discomfort and increases productivity;
- ▶ Standing burns up to 30 per cent more kilojoules than a static seated position;
- ▶ Variation in movement is the key to maintaining a healthy body;
- ▶ Postural variation is the most effective way of reducing musculoskeletal discomfort through weight redistribution and repositioning;
- ▶ One Paradigm desk is suitable for all people of different shapes and sizes. This caters for a mobile workforce, either sharing desks in ‘hot-desk’ situations, or in call centres with a constant cycle of staff. The flexibility of electric sit-to-stand deskings also accommodates people with disabilities and existing back problems;
- ▶ The pressure on the lower back, buttocks and legs is considerably reduced in a standing position, as different sets of muscles are activated;
- ▶ When we move from a sitting to standing position, our body’s natural inclination is to stretch and move. The immediate effect is a reduction of the pressure on the spine and improved blood circulation. Paradigm allows the user to maintain this variable position for as long as they desire, whilst still continuing to work as usual;
- ▶ Technology has taken us to a stage where we are most productive in front of our PC, and although we are advised to take regular breaks and move around the office, this does not always happen. Sit-to-stand technology allows the user to achieve many of the benefits that they would from leaving their desk, while continuing to work;

- ▶ Only an electric sit-to-stand desk provides true height adjustability as the height can be altered by the individual at the touch of a button throughout the working day as required;
- ▶ Sit-to-stand deskings reduces problems caused by static and sedentary postures that can lead to musculoskeletal injuries and work-related stress issues;
- ▶ Incremental changes allow the user to easily change heights between tasks such as typing and writing, and assist with comfortable collaboration with colleagues.

Stand Up Australia specific recommendations for employers:

- ▶ Prolonged sitting should be considered within occupational health and safety policies and practices, just like other elements of posture;
- ▶ Employers need to be aware of the levels of prolonged sitting among their employees during work hours – for example, by auditing levels of sitting in the workplace;
- ▶ Employers should explore opportunities to reduce sitting in the workplace – for example, through simple interventions (such as promoting and supporting standing meetings), possibly in combination with environmental interventions (such as height adjustable desks) that can promote postural transitions. It could be as simple as extra-long telephone cords in the call centre, which allow employees to stand during and between calls;
- ▶ Employers should engage in research to explore links between prolonged sitting and indicators of workforce engagement – absenteeism, presenteeism, or productivity;
- ▶ It will always be difficult to engage employees in moderate-to-vigorous activity during the workday but research has shown that light-intensity activity is also beneficial and should be given increased recognition amongst employers. Getting employees moving is the most important thing – even light-intensity activity is good for health and wellbeing.

Why Paradigm?

Paradigm is designed to support organisations and individuals to implement simple strategies for substituting sedentary time for light-intensity physical activity during the work.

Ultimately, Paradigm sit-to-stand deskings provides the facility manager with a true ‘one desk fits all’ solution in the workplace, removing the requirement to reconfigure and readjust workstations with staff movements. Couple this with the long-term health benefits and you are sure to see improvements in productivity within your office.

Please contact UCI for more information about the Paradigm workstation system.