EXERCISE #1

**Target Audience:** All office employees  
**Exercise Objective:** To review facts about MSDs and office work  
**Instructions:** Have trainees complete the worksheet below. Then discuss the results as a group and answer any questions.

1. Briefly define ergonomics and explain its goal.
   
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2. Identify two common ergonomic risk factors for office workers.
   
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3. Identify two MSD symptoms that commonly affect office workers.
   
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4. Describe what you should do if you experience job-related MSD symptoms.
   
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Office Ergonomics | *Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) and You*

1. Ergonomics is the science of fitting jobs to the workers who perform those jobs. The goal of ergonomics is to reduce exposure to MSD risk factors.

2. Common ergonomic risk factors for office workers include:
   - Repetition
   - Awkward posture
   - Contact stress
   Sometimes force is also an issue. For example, if an office worker needs to lift heavy objects such as boxes of supplies or frequently pushes and pulls heavy file drawers, the risk of injury, especially to the back, increases. The fifth ergonomic risk factor, vibration, usually only affects production workers who use vibrating tools. However, an office worker who spends a lot of time in the home workshop using such tools could potentially develop a non-work-related MSD over time.

3. MSD symptoms commonly affecting office workers include pain or swelling in:
   - Hands
   - Wrists
   - Fingers
   - Forearms
   - Elbows
   These symptoms are generally linked to spending hours every day working on a computer.

4. Employees who experience symptoms of a job-related MSD should follow your organization’s procedures for reporting MSD symptoms. Explain your reporting procedures, identifying the appropriate person in the organization (supervisor, safety director, HR personnel, or other) to whom to report symptoms. Also explain what happens after an employee reports symptoms—for example, referral to a specialist for medical evaluation and treatment.