

## Working Smart 1: Too Heavy or Extreme Force

Posted in: Material Handling

- Is your workgroup stuck in the stone ages or has your workgroup made the evolutionary leap to the 'tool age'?
- If there are tasks that you do which belong in a Strongman competition, maybe this year is the year to work smarter.
- Any time you find yourself struggling with something too heavy or too hard, the first thing to do is ask 'why?'. Someone has probably encountered your problem and solved it before (often within your company). In some cases, not handling (and re-handling) the item by hand is the solution. Ask around and see if items can be delivered to the location where they're needed, or if they can be handled using equipment (e.g. forklift, pallet jack etc.).
- If eliminating the heavy work isn't an option, look for a mechanical assist. If you work in one area, installing overhead cranes, jib cranes, or a hoist are easy ways to take heavy loads off of the body.
- When dealing with heavy items or high forces, consider changing how the work is done. Carrying can be changed to pushing/pulling on a cart; pulling in an awkward position can be changed using pulleys or winches.
- Looking for the right tool to reduce stress on the body should be an ongoing process. Advances in battery powered handheld tools (e.g. drills, torque wrenches) now allow us to use much smaller tools and in some cases allow for the use of hand tools in compact spaces where it wasn't possible even a year ago.



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