

FACING UP TO DRUGS AND ALCOHOL ABUSE AT THE WORKPLACE

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Aġenzija għall-Harsien mill-abbuż tad-Droga u l-Alkoħol.
Agency Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse.
Foundation for Social Welfare Services

THE S.A.F.E. PROGRAMME
IN A NUTSHELL

WHY S.A.F.E.?

In an increasingly competitive economy, controlling avoidable costs is paramount. The impact of alcohol and drug misuse among employees would include:

- reduced efficiency;
- absenteeism on and off work;
- accidents;
- deteriorating co-worker relationships;
- impaired performance.

Drug and Alcohol misuse has to be treated as part of an organization's human resources policy. **sedqa** has held training sessions for management, frontline supervisors and employees to help them identify, and deal with substance misuse since 1996.

PROGRAMME HISTORY

The S.A.F.E. Programme was first implemented within Maltese enterprises in 1996. During the same year Dr Mark Gauci and Dr Noel Vella held a study on a sample of 457 managers within Maltese companies regarding their perception of Drugs and Alcohol at the workplace:

- 8.5% claimed that they had taken drugs in the past;
- 1% stated that they were currently using drugs;
- 5% knew workers within their company using drugs;
- 21.4% knew workers who drank alcohol at work;
- 42.7% knew workers drinking alcohol heavily off work.

This study continued to prove **sedqa's** foresight in the importance of addressing substance misuse at the workplace.

Source

VELLA, N. el GAUCI, M., *Drugs and Alcohol at the Workplace: Managerial Attitudes, Malta (1996)*.

IMPLEMENTATION

The S.A.F.E. Programme is always implemented according to the companies needs, yet the general approach is seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1.

Phase 1: A nomadic stand is set up, normally with one preventive message on either Alcohol or Drugs and **sedqa's** 24-hour helpline (151) in a prominent place within the company. Literature displayed is provided by **sedqa**.

Phase 2: Training for Management, Frontline Supervisors, and Foremen. This is a four-session programme:

Session One: Alcohol and its Effects

Session Two: Drugs and their Effects

Session Three: Stress Management

Session Four: Approaching the Problem Employee

Phase 3: Informative sessions for employees.

Session One: Alcohol and its Effects

Session Two: Drugs and Effects

Phase 4: Company Drug and Alcohol Policy Formulation and appointment of Focus Person.