

VISION ZERO

Offensive Mittelstand: New concepts
to assist and motivate SME's and
Family-owned Businesses

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PRACTICE



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Background

Siemens, like other companies, needs to check suppliers for the quality of their occupational health and safety (OSH) systems. When working with small or medium-sized suppliers, this assessment is often challenging - usually small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) do not use certified management systems due to high costs and time constraints. For this reason, clients in need of reliable criteria for their assessment, usually oblige their contractors and/or suppliers to submit a bunch of information. This binds a lot of resources for both parties, the supplier/contractor and the client.

Solution

To find a common solution for this challenge with the benefit of a Win-Win, Siemens contacted the OM, a network of partners in Germany aiming to support SMEs (see box). Experts of the OM-foundation "Stiftung Mittelstand - Gesellschaft - Verantwortung", the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS), a founding Member of OM, and Siemens developed an approach to simplify the process of prequalification, combined with fostering OSH activities in SMEs.

The aim is to offer SME's a harmonized low-level and verified self-assessment based on the GDA-ORGcheck (OM-Praxis A-3.1), a reference instrument of the OM that was jointly developed by the German central government, federal state governments, German OSH insurances and social partners within the scope of the Joint German OSH Strategy (GDA). The GDA-ORGcheck is aimed at the self-assessment of occupational safety and health organization. As a complementary element, the OM developed the online-Database "OM-Self-Assessment", where SMEs that successfully complete the GDA-ORGcheck will be listed for two years. They also receive the "OM-Self-Assessment OSH"-logo for their PR.

Offensive Mittelstand

- ▶ The "Offensive Mittelstand - Together for Good Companies" (OM) is an initiative that promotes employee-oriented, productive, and preventive business management. The OM creates modern standards and practical tools developed especially for small and medium-sized companies. Currently the OM comprises about 400 partners, including federal government, federal state governments, business associations, trade associations, guilds, craft chambers, trade unions, professional business organizations, health insurance companies, research institutes and service providers.
- ▶ More information on the OM can be found here: www.om-zeichen.de.
- ▶ More information on the OM-foundation "Stiftung Mittelstand - Gesellschaft - Verantwortung" can be found here: www.stiftung-m-g-v.de.



OM-Self-Assessment OSH

The OM-Self-Assessment-Database is hosted by the OM. The companies that successfully underwent the GDA-ORGcheck (OM-Praxis A-3.1) online are listed here as holders of the "OM-Self-Assessment OSH".

“The Offensive Mittelstand – Together for Good Companies is an initiative that promotes employee-oriented, productive, and preventive business management.”

The “OM-Self-Assessment OSH” is a verified assessment based on the GDA-ORGcheck (OM-Praxis A-3.1) as one of the OM-Checks, which are Practical-Standards. It helps SMEs with the organization and documentation of different requirements regarding OSH and leads to a prequalification certificate.

In order to become listed in the “OM-Self-Assessment-Database” and to receive the “OM-Self-Assessment OSH”, SMEs have to take the following steps:

1. Registration on www.om-zeichen.de incl. payment (280 € + VTA for two years)
2. Completion of the OM-Self-Assessment: GDA-ORGcheck (OM-Praxis A-3.1) fully processed, description of at least ten measures
3. Formal quality check by the OM-foundation “Stiftung Mittelstand – Gesellschaft – Verantwortung” (SMEs with the need of rectification will be contacted)



Advantages

The “OM-Self-Assessment OSH” goes along with multiple advantages.

SME	Contracting company
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-level, affordable, broadly accepted proof of quality in OSH • Can be used for several clients (within the two years) • One-time effort • Image gain among clients, customers, and employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplification and standardization of prequalification processes • Reduced costs • Independent, non-profit, quality-assured self-assessment • Easy acquisition of qualified suppliers / contractors

Outlook

Since OSH is not the only relevant topic for clients, suppliers, and contractors, the “OM-Self-Assessment-Database” is to be expanded. Additional to the “OM-Self-Assessment OSH” the “OM-Self-Assessment Environmental Protection” will be implemented. The underlying check will be the OM-Check “Operational Environmental Protection” (280 € + VAT for two years). Those two modules, OSH and Operational Environmental Protection, can be purchased independently from one another.

Furthermore, the “OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain” (390 € + VAT) will be implemented as a comprehensive option. The “OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain” comprises three checks:

- GDA-ORGcheck (OM-Praxis A-3.1) for OSH
- OM-Check “Operation Environmental Protection” (OM-Praxis A-3.6) for environmental issues
- OM-Check “Supply Chain” (OM-Praxis A-3.7) for supply chains and human rights

The “OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain” is particularly relevant, since on 1 January 2023 the „Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains“ (Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz, short: LkSG) entered into force in Germany. It is the legal foundation for „German companies to respect human rights in global supply chains“ (BMAS 2023a)..

Currently LksG is applying only to enterprises with more than 3,000 employees, from 2024 on it will also include enterprises with more than 1,000 employees (BMAS 2023b).

But since the LkSG covers the complete supply chain including products and services, it also affects small and medium-sized enterprises if they interact as suppliers or contractors for large companies.

Additionally, this topic is not only relevant in Germany. In other European countries as well as in the European Union there are similar Due Diligence Acts planned or already enforced.

The “OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain” is aimed at supporting SMEs to prove their compliance and to lower the bureaucratic effort for them as well as for the contracting companies.

Further information on the “OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain” will soon be available on www.om-zeichen.de. In the future, it will also be available in English, so that SMEs affected by any Due Diligence Act will be able to get listed in the OM-Self-Assessment-Database and thus record their efforts regarding Corporate Social Responsibility and similar responsibilities.

<p>Module 1: „OM-Self-Assessment OSH“</p>	<p>Module 2: „OM-Self-Assessment Environmental Protection“</p>
<p>Self-Assessment via OM-Check A-3.1</p>  <p>280 € (+ VAT)</p>	<p>Self-Assessment via OM-Check A-3.6</p>  <p>280 € (+ VAT)</p>
<p>Module 3: „OM-Self-Assessment Supply Chain“</p> <p>Self-Assessment via OM-Check A-3.1, OM-Check A-3.6 & OM-Check A-3.7</p>  <p>390 € (+ VAT)</p>	

References

[1] BMAS 2023a. *Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains*. Berlin, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

[2] BMAS 2023b. *Supply Chain Act: Act on Corporate Due Diligence Obligations in Supply Chains*. Berlin, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

[3] *GDA-ORGCheck: Systematic occupational safety and health pays off*. Mainz.



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