

## To be fit or not so fit...

To be fit or not so fit - is that the question?

Having just watched the 2008 Wimbledon final, we may well ask, - "fitness" is on a continuum - most of us near one end, and the few dedicated souls at the other looking amazonian or like something out of a greek mythology.

Fitness for work is one big hot potato, but it can be made easily manageable by asking what do we really mean by being fit.

My PE teacher drilled it into us -

FIT for WHAT?

This is the question we need to ask when looking at fitness for work.

FIT for WHAT?

There is no point in asking whether someone is fit without qualifying the question. Fit for what purpose - for work, for sport, for sitting on the sofa?

The first part of the answer for us is probably that broad activity we call "work". But this still doesn't really help much. Depending on a person's job, the question still has way too many possible answers.

So, to find out if someone is fit for work we need to consider what that work involves. It could involve many or all of the following plus others.

- physical tasks
- mental tasks
- skilled tasks
- concentration
- emotional control

If you look at a person's role profile for their job you may well find a list of activities they do each day, or qualifications they may have, but as you know this may have little bearing on what actually happens.

It is better to look at a task / job analysis type system where the activities are broken down into the actual skills needed to do the job.

For instance, an office worker may need to be able to sit at a desk, use a keyboard (type) and a mouse, view a screen, read, hold and use a phone, concentrate for long periods etc.

A home carer needs to be able to walk, carry, push, pull, handle another person safely, drive to the house.

A welder may need to be able to walk, climb, crawl, kneel, squat, use hand tools, concentrate etc.

In terms of physical fitness for a task, all the positions needed and physical attributes required must be identified, and then sorted through and tested to see where the difficulties may arise when trying to perform work duties.

Then, and only then, can we start to problem solve the issues and identify if a person is fit to do their job.

For more help on Task Analysis please get in touch.