

Stairway to Heaven

It turns out that a shortage of meeting rooms in a workplace can be a good thing for employee health and well-being. Often, staff have little choice but to take many of their meetings offsite. Walking to the Treasury Gardens and cafes are popular options, as is a stroll around the city blocks.

“We didn’t really need to promote walking meetings because people were already doing it”. The benefits? “It’s nice to get outside. It’s a bit of exercise, you get to see what’s going on and get a bit of fresh air.”



Given its popularity, Leon conducted a risk assessment of walking meetings. He got a map, marked out a few common routes and went for a wander. “It’s quite easy to do. You’re basically identifying risks and judging the likelihood of accidents occurring”. Risks include trip hazards, traffic conditions, weather etc. “The important thing is to not be bogged down by every risk imaginable, but simply identifying what they are and reporting them to management”.

Typically, the risks are no more than what is usually expected in a normal journey in an urban environment. “Of course if there is something unusually serious or dangerous, then you’d have to do something about that, like letting managers and staff know, or contacting the relevant authority (eg. Melbourne City Council, VicRoads etc).”



Malcolm often walks between floors instead of using the lift. Interestingly, there are 2 stairwells in the building. Malcolm investigated both. One leads to a dark labyrinth of concrete corridors to an exit in an unexpected location. The other is more centrally located but cannot be opened from the ground floor. This means staff can walk down to exit there, but cannot enter the stairwell from the ground floor to walk up. “Even so, we can put up a

few posters and arrows to highlight the stair option to encourage other staff to walk down instead of taking the lift.”

Leon and Malcolm will keep ‘talking the walk’ in their workplace. They’ve formed a Walking Action Group and will continue to find ways to inspire others to ‘keep moving’ at work.