

Oratation- I

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**ERGONOMICS IS FOR EVERYONE**

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**Abstract**

“Ergonomics is for everyone” is an important challenge for ergonomists. It *should* be the case because ergonomics affects everyone, and is used by everyone, although everyone may not be aware that this is the case. Ergonomics has the potential to improve the lives of working men and women. Thus, the statement is a challenge for ergonomists because to be an ergonomist not only requires technical knowledge and skill, but it also requires the ability to be able to act as a change agent in workplaces. The application of ergonomics in the workplace is about shifting power and influencing others to enable technical and/or social change to happen—it is essentially a political process. Some ergonomists will perceive this as a threat, but others will see important opportunities. An expansion of traditional skills to import methods from other disciplines, particularly the social sciences, can make the discipline more powerful and more influential. With this expanded skills-base ergonomists can be more capable of realising the goal of translating people-centred ideas into reality—of making ergonomics for everyone.

This paper draws on the example of ground-breaking Australian research, *Digging Deeper*, which examined key aspects of occupational health and safety in the mining industry. In addition to its technical findings, the research established The Platinum Rules, a list of ten key action areas that codify the fundamental steps that lead to safe and healthy workplaces.

**Keywords:** Ergonomics practice, ergonomics competencies, organisational politics, occupational health and safety, mining