

Increased internal locus of control:

Health-related factor for workers with a *Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)*

Interpretation:

An increased internal locus of control has a positive impact on return to work and can reduce the duration of absence of workers with a MSD.

Proposed measurement tool (★★★):

"Internality" subscale (6 items) of the Multidimensional Health Locus of Control questionnaire – Form A (Wallston et al., 1978).

Caution:

This factor can only be evaluated by accredited professionals. Venturing into the evaluation of this factor is therefore prohibited. If you suspect that this factor may be involved, you must rely on the professionals in question. Self-administration or the administration of a questionnaire by an unqualified person may lead to undesirable consequences such as the calculation of erroneous scores and the misinterpretation of results that may result.

However, the elements (items or portion of interview) constituting this tool can provide additional information to other return to work actors or stakeholders, such as the actors from the organization (employer, human resources, supervisor, union representative, etc.). This allows for a better understanding of what the factor implies, which in turn can help to target some more specific elements or needs that would require (1) a possible intervention (using an accredited professional) or (2) adjustments of the organization, especially in terms of prevention.

“Internality” subscale of the Multidimensional Health Locus of Control questionnaire – Form A

Instructions: Each item below is a belief statement about your medical condition with which you may agree or disagree. Beside each statement is a scale which ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). For each item we would like you to circle the number that represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. Please make sure that you answer EVERY ITEM and that you circle ONLY ONE number per item. This is a measure of your personal beliefs; obviously, there are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
1. If I get sick, it is my own behavior which determines how soon I get well again.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am in control of my health.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. When I get sick, I am to blame.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. The main thing which affects my health is what I myself do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. If I take care of myself, I can avoid illness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. If I take the right actions, I can stay healthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6

→ Final score (sum of 6 items): / 36 (possible range: 6 – 36)

Scoring instructions

Sum the scores to the statements. The final score can then vary between 6 and 36.

Interpretation of scores

A high score on this scale means that the worker believes he or she has the power to influence his or her health, which has a positive impact on the return to work.