

## **Autonomy**

Workers having autonomy over their work practice is central to empowerment. Autonomy is 'the ability to influence one's own behaviour'. It is enabling or authorising an individual to think, behave, take action and control work and decision making in an autonomous way

Central to autonomy is the amount of control or direction a worker is given by his manager. There must be as few restrictions as possible in the ways in which tasks are performed and just enough direction to ensure the task is performed properly while allowing for the employees personal contribution. People need freedom and choices; the scope to take initiative; to take risks; and to make decisions.

While freedom is required for autonomy, setting limits to the level of autonomy an employee has is the prudent way to progress when implementing empowerment. Setting boundaries gives the confidence to employees to take risks and initiative within the scope of the limits set, while the employers can be reassured that the employees will not take risks that will endanger the company.