President's Message

Taking Safety Where It's Never Been

Over 100 years ago safety management emerged as a viable profession. Many noteworthy individuals worked hard to validate and bring credibility to the profession. Now, we must build on that momentum at take our profession to places it's never been.

Progression , advancement and evolution of our profession are only natural. One of the things I noticed several years back is that many of those deciding how our profession would evolve were not safety professionals. It didn't make sense to me that those who were not qualified in the field of safety, nor ever practice safety should be the ones telling the world how safety should be implemented.

I strongly believe that in order to get it right, the field of safety management must be shaped and guided by qualified, experienced safety professionals . I'd never tell our HR Director how to develop and implement an HR program. I'm not qualified to do so.

As our profession moves into the future, it's vital that safety professionals take an active role in it's evolution. Join us. We need your experience, your ideas, suggestions, and your voice.

Together we will shape the future. It's our profession, let's own it!

D Smith
President, ISSP

Production vs.Production Capacity
D Smith, President, ISSP

Let's talk a little about P vs. PC. That is Production (P) verses Production Capacity (PC). Ask any senior leader and they'll tell you production accomplishment is the key to profitability or mission success; and of course it is. But without production capacity, production cannot exist. In other words, in order to sustain production the organization must sustain production capacity. Production capacity consists of many things: effective policies, processes and procedures, resourcing, employee training and motivation, developing a positive organizational culture, and hiring people with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) for the job.

Safety Professional qualifications and KSA's play a vital role in your organizations production capacity. The safety professional is expected to produce a safer work environment vital to sustaining production. Like every other employee, manager, and senior leader, safety professionals must possess the right KSA's for their position.

Not only must they have basic qualifications and KSA's for their position, they must also receive recurrent professional development and currency training.

Why is that important? Well, because Safety Management is a Science.

Webster says any skill that reflects precise application of facts or principles is a science. Safety Management is indeed a science. Science evolves, and science grows. Every discipline of science, including safety management, knows more today than it did fifteen years ago. Imagine going to a medical doctor who received their license to practice fifteen years ago with no recurrent or update training. I don't want that doctor "practicing" on me! Do you? Of course not, and that's not likely to happen because organizations that oversee and guide the medical profession, like the American Medical Association (AMA), recommend and support a plan for currency and update training. The field of medical science evolves continuously. In order to be effective and provide the best possible service, doctors must train and receive continuous updates.

The field of safety management is absolutely no different. New best practices, processes, procedures, and methodologies are continuously emerging. In order for safety professionals to provide the very best service, they must be both qualified and current in their field of science.

Production vs. Protection Capacity (continued from pg. 2)

The success model for every field of science is similar, safety management is no different. So, when safety programs are deficient or provide less than adequate service to the organizations they serve, the answer may be just as simple as focusing on the production capacity of the safety professional. Bottom line - to sustain safety production you must focus on the production capacity of your safety professionals.

One critical issue faced by modern safety professionals is that unlike the medical profession, with the AMA, we do not have an organization or association to oversee or guide the science of safety management.

The ISSP was developed to play that role and fill the void. The leadership of the ISSP believes that you, the safety professional, can best provide the insight needed to guide your profession. Join us today and be heard around the world. We are the global voice of the safety professional. Together we will shape the future of our profession.

Your Company's Pledge to Safety
Nathan Predoehl, Executive Partner
Mentair Group

Please allow me to welcome you to our corner of Safety Management Systems. We are the "Mentair Group" and we have been invited to participate in the International Society of Safety Professionals (ISSP) The Safety Beacon Journal. We will use our corner of SMS to better explain the individual processes that make up a good "Safety Assurance" (SA) component for a well-functioning SMS. We also want to invite you to send us your questions about safety assurance so we can share them and our answers back to you with all of our readers.

Did you know that the third component of your "Safety Management System" (SMS), "Safety Assurance", is your organization's process for fulfilling its pledge to conduct business safely? Your organization proclaims its commitment to safety through their safety policy and safety objectives, it defines how they will manage risk in their "Safety Risk Management" (SRM) component, but the real work for a safety management system happens in "Safety Assurance".

Your Company's Pledge to Safety (continued from pg. 3)

A well laid out safety assurance component of a properly functioning SMS will give your organization's leadership confidence that the SMS they helped design is functioning properly. There are several processes that help provide leadership with good information such as; safety reporting systems, safety studies, safety reviews, safety audits, safety surveys, and internal safety investigations. System monitoring and data acquisition are also very important and are accomplished by the continuous monitoring of all operational processes and the organization's operational environment. There are several methods that organizations can use to monitor what is actually happening during their day to day activities including; confidential employee reporting, auditing of operational processes, and accident/incident investigations. The data gleaned from these monitoring processes is evaluated and the results are checked against the organization's safety objectives to see if they are delivering the desired outcome. If there are shortcomings in the system, they are mitigated to better achieve the desired results.

One of the most important methods of monitoring your organization's operations is employee reporting.

Most organizations implementing a SMS worry too much about how many different kinds of reporting forms they will need, what each form will be named, and how many predetermined boxes can be included on each form.

My recommendation to organizations of all sizes is to keep these forms simple, few in number (many if not all departments can use the same form to report hazards, or continuous improvement opportunities). If you want to ensure that your organization has a successful reporting program, follow these guidelines carefully:

1) Be sure that all managers and executives lead by example and utilize the organization's reporting forms openly. If a worker approaches a manager with a verbal report, have the manager take a few moments to assist them in filling out the reporting form. This will be time well spent for developing a healthy reporting culture;

2) It is very important that all reports are acknowledged quickly. Note, I said acknowledged, not answer with a solution. Let them know that you value their input, but don't rush to provide a quick solution for problems that will require more evaluation to provide a good, solid mitigation.

Your Company's Pledge to Safety
(continued from pg. 4)

If it is an emergency, take care to accomplish the necessary action(s) to assure that everyone is safe. The paperwork can be done later; and
3) I am listing this one last, but it is the most important. Do everything practical to provide your personnel the opportunity to report anonymously and set up guidelines for them to self-disclose without repercussions. It can take months, even years, to develop a good reporting culture, but only minutes to destroy one by carelessly reacting to a submitted report.

Safety Program Strategy Leadership (Part 1)
Kevin Zemetis, President, Strategic Results Center and ISSP Board Member

"People and their managers are working so hard to be sure things are done right, that they hardly have time to decide if they are doing the right things." — Stephen R. *Covey*

When I examine many safety programs, I see a lot of focus on the accomplishment of safety effort and compliance; that is, a focus on the execution of specific programs, procedures and protocols… and let's not forget the Paperwork!

I also often hear that programs are underfunded, and not fully supported by the entire senior leadership team.

What I seldom see is a comprehensive, balanced, and measureable safety strategy to accomplish positive change. When Safety professionals focus solely on compliance, they will not get optimal results from their efforts.

Leading change in your organization is the key to being an effective safety professional.   To lead change you need an envisioned end state--and a game plan to get there. The game plan is your strategy. Without it, you can generate a lot of effort, but can you be sure you are getting closer to a stronger safety culture and mitigating high levels of risk in your enterprise?

We know that the purpose of a SMS is to produce predictive information for better risk decision-making. We also know that predictive information is derived from our safety processes and results. So how are these tied together? How do we produce predictive information that can be applied in business decision-making?