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EDITORIAL

ISHM is undergoing some changes. We have been short-staffed for way too long and overworked for the same amount of time. Admittedly we have been late in answering emails and phone calls. Please rest assured that we are trying and often working overtime to accomplish all that must be done.

We have a new Customer Management Program in full operation. When everyone develops the habit of logging into their account they will be able to update contact information, check invoices and pay dues.

Help for upcoming tradeshows

This year, in order to spread the word about our certifications, ISHM is exhibiting at multiple trade shows. To keep down costs we hope to have folks from the local area help man the booth. This activity earns valuable COC points and at the same time is a great way to meet folks and make new connections.

We will be at:
The ASSE Expo in Orlando June 9-10-11
Tennessee Safety Conference in Nashville July 21 and 22
EHS Audit from your Phone or Tablet - Really?

We recently attended a presentation about safety and technology. The instructor used “iAudtor” as an example of emerging technology.
The product can be found at: http://www.safetyculture.com.au/iAuditor/

We thought that it looked to be an interesting app that may help in audits.

ISHM nor the author makes any claims as to the usefulness or accuracy of this program. We have presented it for informational purposes only.

Traditional or Non-traditional University Degree? What a Question

Earning a degree from an accredited university isn’t as easy as it was for your mom or dad. Today’s college students are more experienced and older than the last generation of environmental, safety and health professionals. Today’s students must navigate school, work, family, and outside activities. The ever increasing cost of higher education has left many of our experienced safety and environmental technicians and coordinators stranded in their current roles and wondering “How can I advance?”.

Students now have choices as to attend classes full-time, part-time, nights, or online.
These are not always easy trade-offs. Do you take time out to go to university full-time?
Do you give up 3-5 nights a week for part-time classes? Do you have the structure and self-discipline to complete the degree requirements on-line? Everyone must answer those questions honestly to be successful in their higher education goals.

The US Department of Education (DOE) has funded studies of on-line education since 2005. The full reports are posted on the DOE website. We will note the primary findings below.
The study data indicated that “Students taking most of their classes online report more deep approaches to learning in their classes, relative to classroom based learners” (NSSE 2008 – The National Survey of Student Engagement). Additionally, “When courses provided extensive, intellectually challenging writing activities, students engaged in more deep learning activities such as analysis synthesis, and integration of ideas from various sources, and they grappled more with course ideas both in and out of the classroom” (NSSE 2008). McCormick states that “Critics of distance education assume that face to face classes have inherent advantages as learning environments. But these results indicate that those who teach classes online may be making special efforts to engage their students. It may also be the case that online classes appeal to students who are more academically motivated and self-directed.” (NSSE 2008).

I believe the NSSE 2008 study correctly determines that online educators and online students are inherently more attuned as to what they want out of the class material. The educators are engaging one on one with the students. The students are engaging both directly with the educator and secondarily with fellow students. Additionally, the students want to learn. They are self-motivated.
The NSSE 2009 report states “Course management technology was most strongly related to student-faculty interaction...” Therefore, when choosing a university, technology must be considered. Can the student
interact directly with the faculty via Skype, email, text, etc.? Are classes PowerPoint and fill in the blank simplistic or are the classes more demanding discussion content with interaction with fellow students? Finally, The Sloan Consortium’s Annual Online Education in the United States (2010) demonstrates:

1. Online enrollments at US colleges and universities grew by nearly one million from 2009-2010
2. Nearly 30% of all college students in the US are taking at least one online class
3. More than 75% of leaders of public universities believe that online learning is as good as or better than face to face

Based upon the metadata, utilizing 51 discreet evaluation points, as presented by the DOE through independent contract resources, we can say undeniably that non-traditional (online) earned degrees provide at least as good, if not better, educated graduates if:

1. The university provides a meaningful interaction between faculty and student
2. There is some form of student interaction with the course material
3. There is group interaction through text, email, blackboard, etc.

We in the safety industry are now seeing the fruits of the educational labor. Non-traditional graduates are earning positions at the highest levels of state and federal government agencies and as senior management within Fortune 100 companies. Hiring managers are taking advantage of a new sources of highly trained and experienced safety professionals.

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Board of Director Thoughts, This Month Linda Coates-Ryan, CSHM

Building a Safety Culture

We often hear that a company has a “Safety Culture” and that a safety theme exists throughout their operations. So how does one go about creating that culture? During my career, I have been involved with many acquisitions, transformations, re-aligning of management, etc. Throughout these myriad of changes, one constant remains: Safety means freedom from risk, and by eliminating risks in our environment, we can then have a “culture of safety”

Sounds simple, doesn’t it. However when you determine that you will eliminate risks, you must first identify what causes the risk. Conducting risk assessments, or hazard identification is an effective solution. Using well thought-out plans, matrixes and other schemes to determine what risks abound at your workplace is an essential task in creating a safety culture. Here’s the rub, once you have identified those risks and hazards, eliminating or mitigating them becomes the big challenge. How do you do that, where do you start? One important fact to remember, the risk assessment output will never exceed the quality of the collection of data used in the process, in technical terms: garbage in – garbage out.

So where to start… The best place is at the beginning. From the first process used in your organization, to the absolute end all outcome; every step has risks
involved. So why not ask the experts, those individuals performing the duties and tasks that contain risk. When I asked a group of drivers to conduct risk assessments of their routes, they were confused as to what I wanted. Then when I asked them to simply identify areas where accidents or injuries could occur on their daily routes, I was amazed at the quality of “risk identification” I received.

Going to the source; whether it be a machine operator, a data entry clerk, a salesperson, a division manager, a CEO; all are able to discuss risks that exist in their workplace, but even more impressive, is that they have ideas on how to eliminate or mitigate those risks. Using the basic ideas of those who perform the duties allows one the opportunity to apply real-life experience in risk elimination and mitigation. Ideas and solutions that will actually work to make the task safer and eliminate the chance for injury or property damage while completing the task can often be implemented with minimum disruption and cost.

While there are fantastic articles and professional opinions about eliminating risk, sometimes going to the source is the best solution. Folks who do the job every day know what it takes to be safe. They also know the short cuts and time saving options that aren’t safe. When given a choice between short cuts that can cause possible injury damage, and doing the job the right and safe way, most workers will chose the safest path. Once we explain the “what’s in it for me” option, most workers at the end of the day just want go home to their loved ones unhurt; and that’s building a Safety Culture.

Linda Coates-Ryan, CSHM

Ask the Lawyer

Question: I’ve heard so much about I2P2. Can you explain what it is and when it may go into effect?

Response: I2P2 is the acronym for Injury and Illness Prevention Program. You have heard so much about it because I2P2 has been on OSHA’s radar for over 20 years. OSHA may finally issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) this year.

I2P2 is essentially a proactive process by which management and employees come together to identify and address hazards and risks in the workplace. OSHA identifies six major elements of an effective I2P2 program:

1. Management Leadership
2. Worker Participation
3. Hazard Identification and Assessment
4. Hazard Prevention and Control
5. Education and Training
6. Program Evaluation and Improvement

OSHA drafted a proposed rule on I2P2 in the 1990s, but held off on issuing a formal rulemaking. In 2012, OSHA issued a White Paper supporting an I2P2 rule. In 2014, OSHA stated that I2P2 is its highest rulemaking priority. In support of I2P2, OSHA cites, among other things, that 34 states have adopted some form of I2P2. Cal-OSHA, for example, has had a comprehensive I2P2 program since the 1970s, and many other states have a variation of I2P2 as part of their state’s workers’ compensation scheme.
In 2013, OSHA released an I2P2 Fact Sheet. OSHA emphasized that compliance with the Fact Sheet was voluntary, but encouraged employers to get started. The I2P2 Fact Sheet is likely a preview of what the I2P2 NPRM will look like. A copy of the Fact Sheet can be found at https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3665.pdf.

OSHA stated that it will likely issue a NPRM in September, 2014. Once OSHA issues the NPRM, we will hear a lot more about I2P2.

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