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, or who may be attending, 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
- Tennessee Safety Conference in Nashville July 21 and 22
- NSC Congress in San Diego September 15-16-17
Please let us know if you would be willing to spend at least one half day in the booth promoting ISHM

Can the safety and health profession survive the contraction of the middle class?

By Dave Johnson, ISHN Editor

I’m looking at a photo of the Caterpillar Work Tools Waco TX safety team. Nine workers stand in a row – one woman and eight guys it appears to me. All are wearing jeans. All are smiling. You can tell they’re good guys (and women). They’re workers, man, plain and simple. Eight of ‘em wear ball caps.

They wear hoodies, pull-overs, light jackets.

These are the folks safety and health managers typically watch out for.

My question is, where will these folks be five, ten years from now? All appear to be in their 30s or 40s. Will they still have jobs? Will they have jobs that require the oversight and management of safety and health professionals?

You can read the news all over the Internet:

“…the middle class, so long a powerhouse of U.S. prosperity, is being crushed as never before…”

“the single biggest issue facing the country is the destruction of the American middle class.”

Leftist fear-mongering to get Hillary elected in 2016?

The Wall Street Journal, no leftist rag, recently reported that Procter & Gamble is cutting back on marketing to the fading middle classes, instead selling more to either high-income or low-income customers and abandoning the middle.

According to The Journal, Citibank has coined this, “the Consumer Hourglass Theory” – because it depicts a society that bulges at the top and bottom and is squeezed in the middle.

According to research by Pew Charitable Trusts, “The Great Recession” officially ended years ago, but most middle-class Americans are still feeling woozy from the punch. About six-in-ten (62%) say they had to reduce household spending in the past year because money was tight, compared with 53% who said so in 2008.

About four-in-ten (42%) middle-class adults say their household’s financial situation is worse now than it was before the recession, while 32% say they are in better shape; an additional 23% volunteered that their finances are unchanged, according to Pew. Of those who say they’re in worse shape, about half (51%) say it will take at least five years to recover, including 8% who predict they will never recover.

About that Caterpillar safety team, I glad these folks are still smiling...

Safety and health pros are upper middle class
Pew says the U.S. middle class is those earning roughly between $33,000 and $64,000 a year. A qualifier: Americans love to identify themselves as middle class, even if their incomes are much higher or lower than the national average. It's more a mindset about picket fences, backyard barbecues and Hallmark Card iconography.

U.K. newspaper The Guardian columnist Gary Younge asks: With many who would traditionally describe themselves as "middle class" caught in poverty and economic instability, who truly fits into this category?

Not your average safety and health professional. According to the Board of Certified Safety Professionals, a survey of 2,236 BCSP members in 2012 revealed the average salary (no-certification) to be $85,566.23

That’s not bad coin. Especially when you add a second income as in most married families today.

But the shriveling of the once-vaunted U.S. middle class, with many blue-collar jobs long gone overseas, could kill off interest in becoming a safety and health pro in future decades, if not even that far off. Creative destruction has done a number on the U.S. economy. Six million manufacturing jobs were eliminated between 2000 and 2008, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In the 1960s, 25 percent of American workers toiled in manufacturing jobs. Today, less than one in ten work in manufacturing, according to the Federal Reserve Bank.

Who’s left to manage?
Exactly who will future pros manage? I see construction workers, oil and gas industry workers, miners, and then… retail, retail, retail and health care, health care, health care. Service industry, service industry, service industry. Not a lot of big-time hazards in all those drugstore jobs where you stand behind a counter all day. Other than tired legs… Good for the anti-fatigue matting companies…

I see future safety and health professionals staffing multinational EHS departments; specializing in the entertainment business; food and beverage processing and national restaurant chains; the hospitality industry; transportation services (freight trucking, rail lines, airlines, shipping, metro transit systems); forestry; big box retailers; EHS staff positions in colleges and universities (education); warehousing; express delivery services; and the remnants of U.S smokestack industries – automakers, steelmakers, metal fab shops, rubber and plastics processing, valves and fitting, concrete, cement and brick companies. Toss in pharmaceuticals and nanotechnology manufacturing.

It’s not a bad mix. But it’s not the booming U.S. economy of the post-war years and of seemingly unending promise.

You might recall that in October 2011 NIOSH announced that America’s colleges and universities are expected to graduate 13,000 EHS professionals in the next five years, compared with employers’ projections of 25,000 hires over the same period. (I submit that demand figure is way too optimistic.) There just doesn’t appear to be the interest in safety and health jobs. Safety is not based in Brooklyn, Seattle, San Fran, NYC and LA, where many young ’uns want to work. Safety isn’t sexy, isn’t techie, isn’t talked about much, gets very little press, publicity and promotion.

Plus, those all-too-hyped Millennials coming on to replace retiring Baby Boomers might not have the right stuff for safety and health work. Prizing their freedom, mobility, and independence, Millennials might not be keen on being safety disciplinarians and spending their days in rules-heavy command and control structures.

Stay ahead of Creative Destruction
The profession must align itself with the forces of Creative Destruction, and I think to a degree it is. Look at the number of chapters being set up in foreign countries by the American Society of Safety Engineers and the American Industrial Hygiene Association. The number of foreign alliances keeps growing. There is less talk of “safety” and more of “risk.” It’s a good thing, because execs “get” risk. We now have the Center for Safety and
Health Sustainability. Both ASSE and AIHA keep their talent pools of future leaders percolating, and grooming new blood is an obvious priority with both groups.

But I believe the current view of the future of the safety and health profession is too U.S.-centric, too OSHA-centric. Safety and health laws and regs will continue to be harmonized. Best practices such as control banding and the U.K.’s safety case regime will be borrowed country from country. Many, many consultants are, and have for some years, been traveling to the dusty, oil rich Middle East, to South American rain forests, to vast African mines, to steamy Vietnam, yes, to Bangladesh, to smoggy China, to India, to rusting Russia, and to eastern European countries whose names I have trouble with: Azerbaijan, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Kazakhstan. I don’t know who would venture to the Ukraine these days, but if there’s money to be made…

It could be the two major U.S. professional societies will spend less time debating antiquated parts of their names, such as “Engineers” and “Industrial Hygienists” and focus on the question: Is “American” antiquated in the global economy?

The future rests with who organizes, administers, certifies, educates, ensures the quality control of professionals worldwide, and ensures consistently reliable skill sets and knowledge of professionals around the globe. Who makes sure that the most modern PPE, monitoring equipment, eLearning systems and EHS management systems are deployed worldwide? Can we depend on the free enterprise system to do it? How does a global safety and health profession enforce standards? Is it a patchwork quilt of some strong country regulatory schemes and some lousy and/or corrupt ones? Is that the best we can hope for long-term? Or will harmonization of regs eventually unify standards for working conditions everywhere?

I’m just asking… Am I being too United Nations idealistic? Chime in with your opinion. Talk to me at johnsond@bnmedia.com

Board of Director Thoughts, This Month Tom Slavin

**What causes accidents safety?**

Safety and health professionals invest a lot of time and energy investigating and preventing injuries and incidents. We measure our performance using injury rates. And for years we have argued about whether injuries are caused by unsafe acts or unsafe conditions.

Did you ever think we are missing the point? That we are asking the wrong question? Instead of asking what causes injuries we should instead ask what causes safety. It took a long time for the quality profession to get away from inspecting for defects to focus on quality systems. Deming’s focus was not on causes of defects, but on controlling processes and management systems.

Safety is too often defined as the absence of injuries and illnesses. Safety needs to be redefined in terms of ensuring operational success in spite of varying conditions. Our efforts would be better spent on identifying and managing the elements that cause safety rather than merely reducing those that cause injuries and illnesses.
That focus would push us to identify and track leading indicators of performance rather than trailing indicators like injury rates.

So what does cause safety? I think part of the answer is in management systems that can engage the organization in safety improvement. Elements of an effective management system include policy and leadership; resources, responsibility and accountability; employee participation; goals and objectives; risk assessment and control; education, training and communication; monitoring, measurement and assessment; incident investigation; corrective action; and management review. Most of these elements are described in the ANSI Z10 Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems standard.

Leading indicators can include measurements of safety activity, such as training; audit scores; measurements of hazard control, such as risk assessment scores or numbers of people requiring hearing protection; and measures of systems effectiveness, such as quality or timeliness of root cause investigations. The important aspect of leading indicators is the ability to make improvements to improve performance and influence the metric. Trailing indicators are after the fact measures of failure that cannot be directly impacted.

Focusing on injuries can make us falsely assume there are no problems if there are no injuries. Focusing on what causes safety leads us to opportunities for real safety improvement.

Tom Slavin

So many issues, so little time

It is amazing how many challenges the EHS professional deals with on a daily basis.

I recently attended a board meeting of Crane Institute Certification (CIC) and learned that there are a lot of fake lifting industry credentials being sold and used. Crane operator, rigger, and signal person certificates are being forged and folks are buying and using them. Most of us verify the credentials of employees by looking at their certification card. That might not be good enough. We recommend that you call or email the issuing authority to be sure that you have certified professionals with legitimate credentials.

We have been struggling to meet the demands of global harmonization and hopefully that will soon settle down.

OSHA is now proposing that many companies make public their injury statistics. Will that impact our employers? If so how? We probably need to gather those answers.

Next in line is I2P2. What will be needed to get in compliance should it become reality. The majority thought is that it will indeed be enacted.

The Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) is updating and modifying the EM 385 -1-1. There appear to be some significant changes in requirements for certain activities as well as the SSHO requirements. Yep, more things to deal with.

Cell phone use, to include texting, while driving is drawing more and more attention (and lost dollars). Does your company have a solid mobile phone policy that is enforceable? If not, should it? Would it make sense to help the workforce establish a policy for their families?
Workplace violence continues to be on the national news at a frequent interval. So what workplace policy will help with that? Some companies have undergone training to help identify potential troublemakers. It makes sense to assure that the training is current and helpful.

While all these demons are lurking in the background we go about our jobs hoping that they will not choose us to pounce upon. Ah, but if they do, perhaps we should have an Emergency plan that is current, detailed and practiced. We have seen way too many plans looked at for the first time after a disaster has happened.

Almost daily we are exposed to another huge event that has damaged the environment. Gee, wonder if that plan, with all the dust on it, is up-to-date and sufficient to get through the mess.

The bosses are on us because injuries (Evidently we caused them) are hurting production. Workers are on us because we are not doing enough to make their job safer. The insurance company rep is calling and texting because they want a plan to assure minimum exposure. Oh, and we just heard that OSHA is popping in for an inspection.

These rambling thoughts are my own and do not reflect the opinion of ISHM or any other entity.

Larry Curtis

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**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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