

Do we, as individuals and as a profession as a whole, know how to manage and reinvent our careers and advocate for our profession?

Not so much



Self Examination – So Who are We?



- “I was in the sciences in undergraduate and I sort of stumbled into it”
- “I studied engineering and really was not sure what direction I wanted to go in”
- “I grew up working in construction and saw a few people get hurt pretty badly and how grateful they were when people responded to help.”
- “Safety became personal when I was in charge of people and realized that my decisions could get someone who did not know better seriously hurt or killed; it was that moment when I really began to understand the importance of safety. Realizing that it was something I enjoyed and knowing that I made decisions and provided insight that prevented people from getting hurt was so rewarding so I pursued training and education to understand how I could be more effective and influence the industry. I met some good people along the way that showed me avenues to develop myself professionally”

- “I was an occupational health nurse and really wanted a change of direction in my career”
- “I was an IH and saw many Safety issues that were immediately dangerous and I wanted to be a part of addressing those problems”
- “I entered the construction world as a Construction Medic walking the sites and assisting the SSM with basic PPE and Focus Four enforcement. Becoming a Safety Manager was the next logical step in my career progression. Working as a EMT I saw the results of poor planning and accidents. I became very involved with the risk management side of safety and I like to think that I make a difference in helping the workforce to minimize the amount of accidents.”
- “After 28 years in construction it was natural step to start a safety profession, my experience as a supervisor, foreman with many trades helped me to make that move”

Ethics – The Guiding Principle

Once We Arrive

- No one else truly understands what we do; we are after all scientists!
- The corollary to number one is Safety and Health is often organizationally invisible **
- High Level of Responsibility
- Low level of Recognition ***
- Outcomes that cannot always be controlled
- Often the buck stops right at our door
- Organizational Failure to recognize the actual human and financial costs of a EH&S program that is not fully integrated into the business

What is one to do when?

- Few know we are here
- Fewer know the breadth of our responsibilities
- There may not be an even playing field for safety and health
- We tend to come to prominence when something goes wrong
- Organizational misplacement

**Don't call me unless
there is a problem**





**Why else do we pay little attention to
the APPROPRIATE kind of
Professional and self promotion**

Shameless Self Promotion

- It does not have to be about **selfish** promotion
- What is it and why is it important?
 - Need to reframe this concept
 - The honest, forthright and targeted advocacy of a person and/concept or both for the greater good of the organization **to the right audience**



No One Can Read Minds

If you are waiting for someone to notice all the good things you are doing, it may never happen.

- Lead with Leading indicators
 - Audit results
 - Training
 - Consistent Reporting of results with Fresh information on a frequent basis
- Lagging Indicators should show results
 - The Good, the Bad , the Ugly
- Be bold in your setting your goals
 - **Incident and Injury Free is not just a concept**
- Recognize and Take the Opportunities when offered
- Make Opportunities if none are offered
- Advocate **Relentlessly** for the Profession (and yourself)



What else to do

- Shape the Organizational Placement of the profession where is institutionally fits and empowers the Safety and Health discipline
 - Volunteer to participate in cross organizational activities whenever you can
 - Look for internal groups that have a natural linkage with Safety and Health and forge those linkages (Insurance, Security, Human Resources, Health Services)
 - Look for internal groups that do not have a natural linkage with Safety and Health and forge those linkages (operations, finance, scheduling)
 - Drive Safety and Health through the entire organization (more on that)
 - Look for opportunities to interface with trade groups
 - Benchmark against successful organizations
 - Work to get the ear of people who have an interest and can make a difference
 - An occasional pertinent drama strategically presented can be very effective

What else to do

- Learn to speak the language of business
 - Education/Experience
 - Speak technically to those who are technical
 - Speak in business terms to everyone else
 - Understand costs
 - Link actions/inactions with costs
 - Brand protection – understand what it means
 - Really seek to understand the insurance side of our profession and partner with Risk management no Silos
 - Remember to remind everyone that the human factor underlies why and what we do (it will make you feel better as well)
- Drive a **Management System (ISO Systems)** approach to Safety and Health in your organization – this approach drives Safety and Health out to every part of the organization

Training

- Training – not all is created equally
- Need to focus on building a **broad solid knowledge base of Environmental, Safety and Health expertise**
- Become an **“Expert”** in something
- Higher Education helps if **you have a focus**
- **Improve Communication skill set**
- **Improve Presentation skill set**
- **Improve Basic Business skill set - MBA**
- **Identify your own areas of weakness and do what is necessary to bolster them**

Professional Credentials

- Determine what your area of focus will be and go for the premier certifications if possible
 - PE
 - CSP
 - CIH
 - MBA
- Work your way up to those Certifications
- Nurture them –
 - The professions are constantly changing
 - Keep up

The Job - The Key

QUALIFIED

- Don't be afraid (to take on a position that you don't think you are fully qualified for)
- Remember No one is fully qualified for any new job (because you simply cannot know everything that you will be expected to do, internal organizational and professional challenges and present conditions based on a series of interviews)
- If you have a **solid base** you can do anything
- Sometimes you just have to take the plunge
- Don't be afraid to change your job
 - It may work out very well
 - It may not work out well
 - It will **always** give you more experience
- The Path you take will not always be straight and may involve stepping back



Do you have a collaborator?

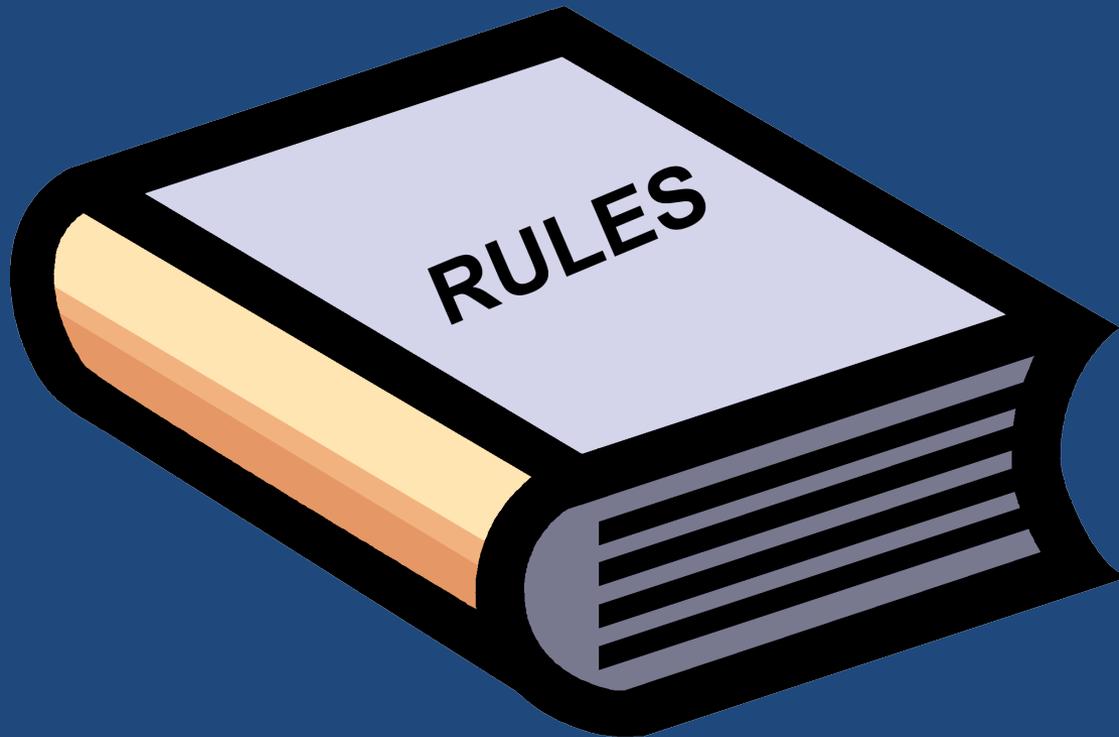
- Mentors and other partners in crime
- If no one steps up **Ask** someone to be your mentor (it is not a full time job)
- I don't think it should be a Safety and Health Person
- They will help you navigate the pitfalls if they respect you and the profession and think you have something to bring to the table
- They will Open doors for you
- They will push you
- You need to be willing to walk through those doors
- Bring something to the Table
- Political and Organizational guidance
- Be One

Don't Hesitate

- To take on the tasks that no one else wants to do
- To take Career Risks
- To accept Travel as part of your job



**If you have too many rules it
may hold you back**



The Nice Thing about Safety and Health

- Broad diversity of opportunities
- Once you have the basics down
- Easy to adapt
- Easy to reinvent yourself
- Opportunities across all types of organizations



How to recession proof your career

- Stay Fresh with your old skill sets
- Keep acquiring new skill sets that are adaptive across a broad swath of industries
- Be involved in Professional Organizations (like this one)
- If your Industry is cyclic, understand those business cycles and be prepared to do something else if necessary

How to Manage Changes in Technology

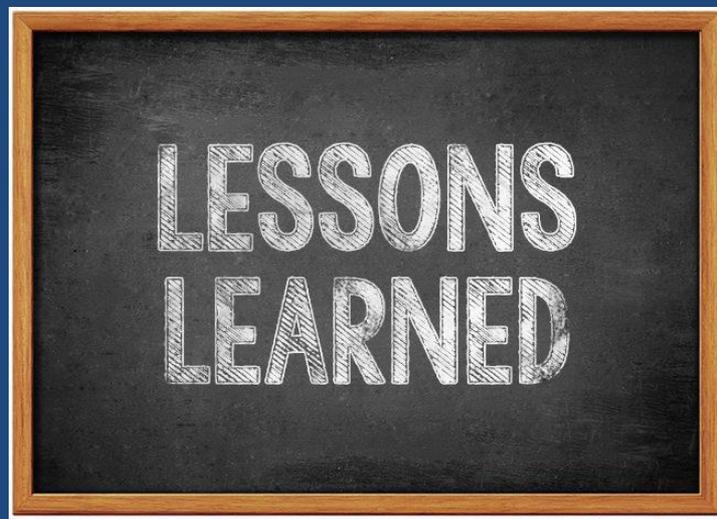
- Be Aware of Everything that is happening in your Industry



- New Focus for the business
- Are they moving in another direction - Different Products/off shoring
- Monitor Market Conditions
- Read and Understand Business Reports/listen in on Broadcasts
- Learn the New Technology

The things that can trip you up

- Thinking that it is all about you (applies in all life situations) *
- Taking things too personally (you need a little of this but too much is toxic)
- Assuming that anyone outside of your immediate group really understands what Safety and Health people do
- Completely in over your head technically (you should know the difference between something you can learn in a reasonable amount of time and a skill set that needs another degree)
- Completely in over your head Organizationally (too many sharks in the water and you may be the bait)
- Taking yourself too seriously all the time (If you are pompous or strident people will run away when they see you)
- The Organizational sociopath - familiarize yourself with the concept and Hope you never run across one
 - You will learn much
 - Try to limit your exposure and Cut your losses



- Anything can be accomplished given the passion to do it
- People are the same everywhere – you just need to find their particular motivation
- The importance of creating and nurturing the team
- Make time for the fun even when the pressure is on
- Don't stay stuck with a formula; be willing to tweak it or throw it away when it no longer works
- Don't forget about Job fulfillment
- Boredom Can be a powerful motivator to change
- Don't be Afraid

Why me ?

1. Leadership
2. Proven track record
3. Aligned with ethical values
4. Passion
5. Not afraid to stretch out of the comfort zone
6. Personal Desire to make a difference
7. Technical know how
8. Adaptive
9. Thrill seeking person who does not mind wearing funny hats and clothes and climbing long ladders

Marianne on top of the world

