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Make It Safe and Make It Legal

Article by Alan Quilley CRSP

In my professional, OH&S consulting practice I often see clients who have become frustrated by chasing the regulations. Their desire to comply with the legal requirements is honourable and a very wise business choice. It also pays to make our workplace safe and healthy places for our valuable employees. This is especially true in our day and age of diminishing workforce, increased world competition and challenging economic times. A contracting company needs to stay sharp to survive. You can ill afford to be the company that is in the news for either seriously hurting someone or under investigation by the OH&S department of the government. Even worse to be known as the company that is actually being charged with OH&S violations.

Wanting to be safe and to comply isn't enough; we need a strategy to make it happen. Here's what has worked successfully for many companies that realize that making it safe is only half of the challenge; making it legal is the second half.

To further illustrate the two sides of this safe/legal coin, here's an example of safe and not legal. If you drive the streets of any small town late at night chances are that you will, on occasion, encounter the experience of being the only vehicle on the road. Imagine yourself stopped at an intersection at a red traffic light at 3:00 am in the morning. At this intersection you have a clear view of the landscape in a 360-degree panoramic view. There isn't another vehicle in sight. There are no buildings to obscure other vehicles nor is there any vegetation in the way. There is simply no one else on the road. If you were to proceed through the intersection against the red light, you would be very safe. Trouble is, in almost all jurisdictions that I'm aware of, this act of driving through an intersection against a red light is not legal. Our goal in business is to do both.

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Let's start with a simple process.

1) Find the harmful energies (Hazard Assessment)

Find the harmful energies that could cause you grief. Electrical, mechanical, chemical, kinetic, gravitational and stored energies are some examples of energies that can all find a pathway to us unless we ensure they are controlled. Being hit with unwanted energy is a sure-fire way for us to get hurt or for our equipment to be damaged.

2) Put barriers in place to stop the harmful energies (Hazard Control)

Once defined, these energies can be eliminated or, in some cases, you can put barriers in place to ensure the energies don't hit us.

For example, if I need to work in a trench, I'm concerned about gravity working on the stored energy of the trench walls. If I go into an unshored/protected trench then I'm putting myself in the way of energy. I can control that energy by barriers.

Remember, these barriers don't have to be physical barriers. I can use the barrier of my knowledge not to enter the trench. I can overcome this barrier by getting trained on how to build safe shoring. Shoring is a great example of a barrier that effectively protects us from harmful energy. I can also use a trench cage to ensure that if the walls of the trench do collapse that I'm safely inside the cage unharmed by the release of the potentially harmful energy.

3) Check the applicable legislation for details of the prescribed hazard controls.

Once I've looked either eliminating the harmful energies or finding the barriers I can put in place, I will probably have made it safe. To follow our trenching example, I could decide to shore the trench with lumber and screw jacks. This could keep me safe from cave-in. I could guess the size of lumber I need and the number of screw jacks, but I could guess wrong. My shoring design may keep the walls of the trench from moving in on me but may not meet the requirements of the local OH&S laws. This is where I need to go to the web to check the regulations or look it up in my OH&S regulation/code book.

4) Check your industry for best practices.

I should also look for industry solutions to my safety challenges in my research. Why re-invent a trench cage when I can just go buy or rent one?

What are others doing to make it both safe and legal? Industry associations focused on safety are great resources to find tried and true solutions to my safety challenges.

Use them relentlessly.

5) Develop safe work process to use

Once I've decided on how I'm going to do the work, I need to develop a work process so that when I do this kind of work, my fellow workers and I are protected by the process used.

6) Educate and train those who need to comply with the work process.

We all need to know what is expected of us and we should be trained to do the work we're assigned.

Learning how to shore using the company procedure is a barrier to me and my fellow workers from being injured or killed in a trench cave-in.

7) Observe that the work process is being followed.

Now that we have a plan to enter trenches, we need to make sure that we always do it safely, Workplace inspections and observations tell us that we're doing it right.

The old quality adage, "say what you do, do what you say and measure often" works really well in safety. Not only will you be ensuring you are following your own rules, but you will be meeting the legal requirements.

8) Celebrate or adjust the work process based on feedback.

When our employees do something right we need to tell them that they've done a great job!

If we need to adjust our processes, now is the time to make our improvements.

When you're beginning a construction project, you don't start by opening the local building code. Building codes are not designed to be a cookbook for you to follow. These are standards

for you to comply with while you go about building the finest structure your talent and resources can buy. We should look at OH&S regulations in just that way. These documents are not written to be a work procedure. If you've ever tried to look in the building code to discover how to build a building I'd be very surprised. So why in the world would you look in the OH&S regulations to find out how to do work? There is a time to start looking at the regulations, just like there's a time to ensure that the details in the building code are complied with. It's certainly not the first step.

I hope you find this useful. A simple process to make it safe, and to make it legal. Hopefully this will reduce any frustration you have around meeting the details of the regulations. Don't miss a step-your employees and your company's well-being is relying on it!

Alan D. Quilley (1954-2021) was a distinguished leader in occupational health and safety, with a career spanning over forty years. As a CRSP, published author, and skilled consultant and trainer, he made significant contributions to the OH&S community. His impactful writings and educational initiatives continue to resonate today. In honour of his legacy, I will feature some of Alan's published works in this newsletter, as they offer timeless insights and guidance that remain beneficial to us all. Although he is no longer with us, Alan's commitment to safety lives on through his enduring words and teachings.



BCRSP - CPD Online Mandatory Ethics Course - June 1/26

Our next Ethics course, approved by the BCRSP and in conjunction with Lambton College, commences June 1/26. Registration is open until June 5/26. The course concludes June 30/26.

To register for the course, please click [here](#).

Kudos for our CRSP and CRST Virtual Coaching & Study Material

"I got my letter on Friday and according to that, I was successful with the writing. Thank you for assisting me with my prep for this exam".

"You want to pass the CRSP exam? There's no quick-fix solution to attaining a 'pass' but I can verify that a strategic study approach WILL be the answer. I was successful in my first attempt thanks to the Safety Results CRSP Prep. The manual, questions, and the data-based approach really helped me to focus my study efforts in the correct categories. Thanks so much; your course was worth every penny!"

"Thanks for following up. I just received my results and I was one of the 55% that passed. Thank you for the great prep that enabled me to be successful. I made the plan and stuck to the plan that I had made".

"Thank you! I passed! So happy with how I did. I could not have done this without your study material and coaching!"

What are you waiting for?

Testimonials from our valued clients serve to reinforce that along with their own hard work, our study material/coaching packages and process, prove without a doubt that WE have the right formula. Visit the [website](#) or contact [Marie](#) for more details!

CRSP AND CRST VIRTUAL COACHING EXAMINATION PREPARATION

As it has always been our commitment to help candidates with their studies for both the [CRSPEX](#) and the [CRSTEX](#), we offer Virtual Coaching Packages. These packages are available to those that are writing the 2025 Blueprint CRSPEX or the 2024 Blueprint CRSTEX. We will provide all of the material (shipped at our cost within Canada only). We are delighted to extend discounts to active members in good standing of WOHSS or the HSPC (not combinable and proof of current membership is required). For more information, please contact [Marie](#).

This virtual package includes 6 hours of personal coaching with Cherlyn Hudson CRSP. The hours are broken down however you wish. Calls are individualized and held via phone or Zoom Video Conference, your choice. Virtual Coaching packages must be used within 6 months of purchase.

“It’s really important to know who is trying to teach you something”. - Alan D Quilley CRSP

Who is your Coach?

Cherlyn Hudson CRSP is a seasoned Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) professional with nearly 30 years of experience spanning construction, utilities, oil and gas, and defense sectors. After obtaining her HSE Certificate from NAIT, she progressed through HSE positions with companies such as TransAlta Corporation and Raytheon Canada, ultimately establishing her own firm, SkyView Safety Consulting Corp., in 2016.

In 2021, Cherlyn participated in one of our Virtual Coaching packages. She earned her CRSP designation, which acknowledges her extensive technical knowledge and dedication to excellence in workplace safety. She currently leads a team that provides practical and compliant safety solutions to over a dozen clients, leveraging her comprehensive understanding of OHS legislation, strong leadership skills, mentorship, and a collaborative approach to foster enduring safety cultures.

Cherlyn's extensive experience and her previous engagement with our Virtual Coaching Package make her an ideal candidate for this role. Her expertise in sharing Safety Results' techniques will effectively guide your studies. Choosing a mentor is a significant decision, and it is crucial to assess their qualifications carefully.

When comparing different providers, focus on their experience, teaching methodologies, and alignment with your learning goals to ensure a well-informed decision. We are confident that no other provider can match our quality, experience, and instructional approach. As our founder, Alan D. Quilley CRSP, aptly stated: “There are no hard questions if you know the answers!”

CRST Virtual Coaching Package

Inclusions:

- Study material (material shipped at our cost within Canada only) based on the 2024 (current) CRST Examination Blueprint
- 6 hours personal coaching
- CRST Exam Prep Study Manual
- CRST Exam Prep Knowledge Gap Analysis Questions & Answers Workbook
- Handbook, includes more practice questions & offered only with the Virtual Coaching Package

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If you wish to purchase only study material

please visit our website:

[CRSP Study Material](#) or [CRST Study Material](#)