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F.R.E.D.O.M.S. - Determining Fact from Fiction

by Alan D Quilley CRSP

"I need an article from you by Thursday!" I heard this early this morning from my wife, Marie, who makes sure that the newsletter is created and sent. Wow, nothing like a little pressure to be creative! Read "Deadline THURSDAY! So the natural next thought is: "What the heck should I write about?" Seems in these turbulent times there should be a great deal to write an opinion piece on. Those who know me personally know I have some pretty strong views on politics which I usually keep to my "personal" side of life. There is however no mistaking that the political self is spilling over to the "personal" side of almost everyone's life, if you are aware of world events at all. So, let's talk about information and what to believe. There's a famous quote about facts that I often use, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts." - Daniel Patrick Moynihan

In today's world of information, what is fact and what is opinion often gets blurred. Recent comments about "alternative facts" seems silly to those of us who require evidence to indicate how accurate something is. Let's take a look at a few factors that can lead us to a conclusion about fact or fiction. Now, this isn't a pure science, since not everything has independent, scientifically collected evidence to back it up. But, it's a start. The acronym I use is F.R.E.D.O.M.S. Let's break it down into its components:

Firsthand - Based on what is directly experienced through the senses.

Did the person who is telling you the information experience it themselves. Or does it start with "I have a cousin who...?" Many of us get our news through on-line sources. News media, blogs, social media etc. from famous and powerful people. If your newsfeed tells you about a "new breakthrough" by an agency or group of scientists, it's best to actually read the report they are telling you about!

Reliable - Two or more people independently agree on what they observed.

The more people who have experienced the information firsthand, the better. This alone doesn't prove a fact, but it does make it more likely. Group think is alive and well but if several sources are talking about the same thing, that thing grows a bit in confidence. Of course, this on its own is just another piece of the puzzle and hardly the whole picture.

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Expert - The source of evidence is an expert on the issue in question.

If a person with proven expertise tells you something, then the power of that evidence increases the chances you are hearing a fact. This of course doesn't mean you shouldn't seek out the other F.R.E.D.O.M.S. factors to feel even more confident.

Detailed - The evidence is presented in great detail.

When the details help to support what is being told to you, it increases the chances that the item isn't fictitious. Now there are some GREAT fiction writers around so this alone hardly is the only indicator you should use. But I hope you see that the more F.R.E.D.O.M.S. factors that are being satisfied, the more confidence you can have in the information you are receiving.

Observable - The evidence can be viewed because it's still available.

The evidence is there for your viewing. The actual report you are interested in is available to you. Check it out...confirm that it actually exists through your own observation.

Measurable - A quantitative calculation can be determined by using a standard measurement.

See above. Observe the evidence yourself with a measurement tool. If you're told the table is 2 meters long...well, measure it!

Specific - The evidence is highly specific to the witness.

Some facts are specific to the individual who is expressing the information. Someone talking about their own experiences and knowledge that is only specific to them can be an additional clue that what you are hearing is a fact. At least in the mind of the person expressing the specifics.

Well there you have it. F.R.E.D.O.M.S. It's not perfect and there can be many other clues to logically support what you are hearing or reading, but at least F.R.E.D.O.M.S. increases your chances that what you are taking in has merit. Good luck and be careful of "alternative facts." Some would see that as an alternative term to use instead of the word "lies."

Alan D. Quilley (1954-2021) was a prominent figure in the realm of occupational health and safety, with a career that extended over four decades.

As a CRSP, published author, and accomplished consultant and trainer, he significantly impacted the OH&S community. His insightful writings and educational efforts are still relevant today. In tribute to his legacy, I will share Alan's earlier works in this newsletter, as they provide enduring wisdom and guidance that benefit us all. Although he has passed, Alan's dedication and passion for safety endures through his lasting words and teachings.

BCRSP - CPD Online Mandatory Ethics Course - August 1/25

Our next Ethics course, approved by the BCRSP and in conjunction with Lambton College, commences August 1/25. Registration is open until August 7/25. The course concludes August 30/25.

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

Kudos for our CRSP and CRST Virtual Coaching & Study Material

"I wanted to share that I am now a CRSP! Thank you for your wisdom and support!"

"I took part in your January course, and wrote in February! Happy to say I passed!"

"Just a quick note to let you both know that I passed the BCRSP exam from the February 14th writing...I actually think I did quite well".

"A big thanks to both of you for the resources and course. It definitely made the difference for me and I am very glad a colleague recommended the course (I say recommended but it was more of a 'strongly urged' lol)"

"Just a quick note to let you both know that I passed the BCRSP exam from the February 14th writing...I actually think I did quite well".

"I just wanted to let you know that I passed my exam in February and am now a CRSP. Really appreciate the course, well worth it!"

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 Greg McInnes CRSP (NP) (CRSP held from 1994 - 2023) The hours are broken down however you wish. There will be self-study assignments between the calls. 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?

Greg McInnes is the coach and can help you effectively study in your journey towards certification. He is a respected leader in OH&S, having over 3 decades of experience in various OH&S management positions (civic government, healthcare, aerospace, oil and gas and utilities). Greg has also been on the Board of Governors for the BCRSP, served as Chair of their Professional Conduct Committee and held positions with the CSSE at local, provincial and national levels.

Greg has developed and instructed adult OHS education programs at the University of Alberta and has co-instructed at NAIT, along with instructing OHS courses for various companies. With all his experience, and sharing the Safety Results’ techniques to help you focus your studies, why look elsewhere? Selecting a mentor is an important decision, and it's essential to evaluate their qualifications. When weighing your options against other providers, pay attention to their experience, teaching styles, and how well they match your learning objectives to ensure you make a well-informed choice. We are confident that they will not be able to match us in quality, experience, and teaching methodology.

“There are no hard questions if you know the answers”. - Alan D Quilley CRSP

CRST Virtual Coaching Package

Inclusions:

- Study material (material shipped at our cost within Canada only) based on the 2024 CRST Examination Blueprint
- 6 hours personal coaching with Greg McInnes
- CRST Exam Prep Study Manual
- CRST Exam Prep Knowledge Gap Analysis Questions & Answers Workbook
- Handbook (offered only with the Virtual Coaching Package)
- \$899.00 + tax

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If you wish to purchase only study material

(CRSP Study Manual and Workbook or CRST Study Manual and Workbook)

please visit our website:

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