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A New Generation of Safety Management Prescriptions

by Alan Quilley CRSP

Doctor, What's Wrong with Me?

Recently I was speaking to a senior citizen about their health and I found it most interesting that this person had very high expectations of their health care provider. It became pretty clear to me that this senior's expectation of their doctor was that the physician would diagnose and treat whatever came into the office. All they needed to do was to follow the doctor's directions.

The health care model of the past was that a patient would arrive at the doctor's office to describe the symptoms. The doctor would diagnose the ailment, and then prescribe a treatment. Very little questioning of the expertise would ever happen and patients would most often accept the advice with little or no input or debate. Today a trip to a physician usually involves some pre-work on the patient's part. Patients often bring their own research to discuss with their doctor. There is a good chance that they have done an internet search on their symptoms, a possible diagnosis and what popular treatment options are available.

The information often includes what the latest research tells us about what medical science is trying. We have access to news on medical trials and can discuss medicine with some knowledge and detail from our exposure to information on the internet, television and radio. Haven't you heard this all too often... "Talk to your Doctor about _____ and see if it's right for you?"

This discussion about the old and new expectations of our health care systems started me thinking about how safety management has changed over the years. Safety problems used to be delivered into the safety expert or supervisor's lap like a ball of smelly goo that no-one wanted to manage. It was up to the safety expert or supervisor to then "diagnose and fix" the issue with little or no involvement from upper management or from the workers.

So what does this look like today? What will it look like in the near future? Let me make a few observations and perhaps take out my trusty crystal ball and gaze into what I believe is the most likely future. In some of the best companies, it's happening now.

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The Science of Safety is on the Internet

In Safety Management, as in most things, there are two major classes of components, the “Whats” and the “Hows”. When solving any problem or issue, first one needs to know what to do to be successful and secondly, and usually as important, is how to do what needs to be done. The best solution, poorly delivered, usually results in major failure. Whether it's building a pipeline or baking a cake, the components are certainly important, but how those components are operationalized is also critical. Safety Management has some ultra-important “whats” and “hows” to focus on. One without the other will get you less than excellent results. Let's start with the Science of Safety Management or the “Whats.” For most companies, this is their OH&S Policy and Procedures Manual. What I usually refer to as the “Binder of Intention.” This is where the plan is communicated. We typically outline the company's statement of commitment and details of who will be doing the things we think are important.

The Art of Safety Is Just As Important

No matter what “medicine” one takes for what ails them, the dosage and course of treatment is as important as what medicine you are prescribed. Safety Management is no different in this regard. The best, well written OH&S Policy Manual, will not result in any kind of Safety Excellence, without a concentrated effort to implement the desires through PEOPLE. This is what I refer to as the ART of Safety Management.

It's pretty easy to find out what one needs to do to work around construction equipment or to safely work in a trench. Your local OH&S requirements will be defined and communicated, usually through the local enforcement agency, and any safety association your company belongs to. This frankly is the easy part.

What is usually lacking is how to get people to do what needs to be done to be safe. We expect that everyone will do what needs to be done because it's the “right thing to do.” Just writing down a procedure to enter into a trench does NOT ensure that the humans who need to do this will follow the rules. To make matters worse,

we can, through our misunderstanding of human behaviour, believe that threats and punishment will force our people to do the right thing.

Safety Management Systems Are More About People than Binders of Procedures

It's been said that Safety is a “people problem” and I believe that statement is only partially true. Even the strongest proponents of behavioural safety will recognize that our environment is at least partially influencing our behaviours. Tools, equipment and work spaces need to be managed along with the human behaviour. If you give a human only broken tools or under rated equipment to use, their behaviour is predictable. They will use them!

Doing “Safety to People” never gets very good results. It indeed is better than not doing anything, but we've discovered through this somewhat historical approach that the select few (usually the management team and supervisors) who inflict safety on their employees and contractors, aren't as efficient and effective as it may seem. A much better way is to ensure that the ownership of creating safety is at the “sharp edge of the saw”, where the work actually gets done. Workers can and do want to work safely. We can allow them greater ownership of the decisions on how to actually accomplish that goal. Working with the people who do the work to create processes, which result in safe production, is not only possible, it provides outstanding results.

This is not to say that safety becomes an “anything goes” proposition. We certainly must work within the legislated framework and meet the desired requirements. Safety is very much about how we accomplish those challenges



and that is best left to the people who actually do the work. This requires some assistance and support from the management team, and the experts in a variety of related fields, but employees can, and do, in many companies, produce far superior safety outcomes when given the accountability and responsibility to meet the safety challenges.

Today, employee access to a unlimited amount of information (ranging from well researched, scientifically tested/supported information to myths and ill supported opinions), has created new challenges for our solutions to OH&S related issues and opportunities. On one hand, our employees are far more prepared to be involved in conversations and participation related to their issues. On the other, misinformation and myths tend to distract from the real issues we face.

All in all, I'd have it no other way. The outcomes are richer, because of the high engagement of our employees and contractors in their own safety. Many working on a problem is usually better than only a few. Who knows what the future will hold, but in this case the newer approach of higher employee and contractor involvement is safety creation is the best medicine.

Alan D. Quilley (1954-2021) was a distinguished safety professional whose career spanned over 4 decades in the field of OH&S. As a CRSP, published author, and highly successful consultant and trainer, Alan made invaluable contributions to the OH&S community. His insightful articles and teachings remain relevant today. In honor of his legacy, I will periodically include Alan's past writings in this newsletter, as they contain timeless wisdom and guidance that continue to benefit us all. Though he is no longer with us, Alan's passion for safety lives on through his enduring words and teachings.



BCRSP-CPD Mandatory Ethics Course May 1/24

Our next Ethics course commences May 1/24. Registration is open until May 6/24. The course concludes May 31/24.

This comprehensive and thought-provoking course, designed specifically for the BCRSP by Safety Results Ltd, is sure to enlighten and challenge a CRSP's thinking of ethics in their professional practice. This course will take approximately 3.5 hours to work through. Professionally presented, with individual feedback provided by our facilitators, Marie Quilley and Greg McInnes, as well as an in-course quiz and an end of the course submitted assignment, makes this course your only choice.

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

Kudos for our CRSP/CRST Study material and Virtual Coaching

"I am happy to have achieved my CRSP designation using your study material".

"I just wanted to circle back to thank you for your assistance in preparing for the CRSP exam. I'm thrilled to report that I have passed and am now awaiting board approval"

"Wanted to send a quick note that I received my CRST exam score today. I'm completely shocked, but also very proud, to share that I passed the exam on the first attempt!"

"There's no way I would have been successful without the study material from Safety Results, and Greg's support and guidance while studying for the exam"

"Thanks so much for all of your support. Passed the CRSP Exam! So happy!"

"I wanted to follow-up! I did pass the CRSP examination, I received the confirmation last week. I had a bunch of people ask me what resources I would recommend, and I gave them the website as the material and practice questions were very helpful"

"I am grateful for both the CRST and the CRSP study material-both helped me pass in the first writing!"

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 are continuing our Virtual Coaching Packages. These packages are currently available to those that are writing the 2020 Blueprint CRSPEX and the 2024 Blueprint CRSTEX.

We will provide all of the material (shipped at our cost within Canada only). We are also delighted to offer generous discounts to current members in good standing of the CSSE and WOHSS (not combinable). For more information on those discounts, 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 homework assignments between the calls. Calls are individualized and held via phone or Zoom Video Conference, your choice. CRSP Virtual Coaching packages are valid only for candidates writing their CRSPEX in 2024. CRST 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 our 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.

He is a retired CRSP who consults to industry helping them create and implement their Health and Safety program. 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 our techniques to help you focus your studies, why look elsewhere? When selecting your mentor, take the time to research who other providers are. We believe that they simply won’t measure up with us in terms of quality, experience and teaching style.

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

CRSP Virtual Coaching Package

Inclusions:

- Study material (material shipped at our cost within Canada only) based on the 2020 CRSP Examination Blueprint
- 6 hours personal coaching with Greg McInnes
- CRSP Exam Prep Study Manual
- CRSP Exam Prep Knowledge Gap Analysis Questions & Answers Workbook
- Handbook (offered only with the Virtual Coaching Package)
- \$899.00 + tax

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

If you wish to purchase only study material

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

please visit our website:

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