Staying Current and Advancing Your Career: Professional Development for Safety Practitioners

Robert Emery, DrPH, CHP, CIH, CBSP, CSP, CHMM, CPP, ARM
Vice President for Safety, Health, Environment & Risk Management
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
Professor of Occupational Health
The University of Texas School of Public Health
Professional Development

- Staying abreast of developments in the field is a constant challenge for many professions.
- Since the health & safety professions represent a compilation of a number of disciplines, change can be fast and dramatic.
- Management must be made aware of the need for professional development, and support the effort.
Professional Development Strategy

- A three legged stool
  - Progressive work experience
  - Academic accomplishments
  - Professional certification
Staying Abreast

- Develop professional networks
- Join and actively participate in professional organizations
- Further academic pursuits
- Credentials such registrations, certifications, or licensure
Professional Networking

• Interacting with peers important since proficiency in all areas impossible

• And nice to learn from others about practical problems, issues

• Good informal sounding board

• The safety business freely shares information

• And they love to talk about what they do!
What is a “Credential”

• Formal definition:
  “...attests as being true or as meeting a standard...”

• Practical definition:
  “qualified in the eyes of your peers to do something.

• Required in many settings: medicine, law, engineering

• Usually consists of:
  – minimum qualifications: academic & experience
  – application, fees
  – references
  – exam
  – continuing education
Forms of Credentials

- **Certifications**: granted by non-governmental agencies for meeting certain education and training requirements
- **Registrations**: acknowledgement by a governing body that a person possess a set of qualifications
- **Licensure**: government agency grants permission after finding that applicant has attained minimum level
Why Pursue Certification?

A) to increase professional knowledge
B) to improve professional standing
C) to increase marketability
D) for licensure or insurance purposes
E) any of the above
In Other Words...

A) to learn more about your profession
B) to get a new job
C) to get a raise
D) to keep current job
E) any of the above
Major Areas of Certifications in the Health and Safety Professions

• Radiation Safety
• Chemical Safety
• Physical Safety
• Biological Safety
• Hazardous Waste
• Security
• Risk Management
Age of Selected Safety-Related Organizations

- ABSA: (CB$P)
- NEMA: (CHP)
- HPS: (CPP)
- ASIS: (ARM)
- RIMS: (CIH)
- AIHA: (CSP)
- NEHA
- NSC
- ASSE
- APHA

Years

0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160
## Number Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Radiation (HPS/AAHP)</th>
<th>Chemical (AIHA/ABIH)</th>
<th>Physical (ASSE/BCSP)</th>
<th>Biological (ABSA/NCRM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active members</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technologist-level certified</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionally board certified</td>
<td>1,250 (19%)</td>
<td>5,800 (46%)</td>
<td>9,000 (27%)</td>
<td>165 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary

- Chose professional development path carefully
- Understand the commitment involved
- If new, take small steps to build confidence
- Prep for the prep courses!
- Successful test takers think like test makers
- When multiple choice: cross out distracters
- Don’t be afraid to fail!
- Don’t be left behind!
- With initials comes responsibility!
- Commitment to learning (and paying)
Some Test Taking Strategies

• You can’t over-prepare – so start studying early
• Start by examining the exam content – project the numbers of questions by category – budget accordingly
• Use the study question wrong answers (detractors) as a study guide
• Learn key features in “bundles”
• Test makers love exceptions to the rule
• Keep an eye on your time – answer everything!
Stated CBSP Exam Content

• 150 total questions:
  – 10 on disinfection, decontamination, sterilization
  – 26 on work practices and procedures
  – 33 on risk assessment and hazard identification
  – 28 on regulatory aspects, standards, and guidelines
  – 23 on program management and development
  – 18 on equipment operation and certification
  – 12 on facility design
Exam Results

• 150 total questions:
  – 10 on disinfection, decontamination, sterilization  50% (5 right)
  – 26 on work practices and procedures  72% (19 right)
  – 33 on risk assessment and hazard identification  75% (24 right)
  – 28 on regulatory aspects, standards, and guidelines  78% (22 right)
  – 23 on program management and development  86% (20 right)
  – 18 on equipment operation and certification  66% (12 right)
  – 12 on facility design  91% (11 right)

  – Passing score: 111, Emery score 112 😊
## Bundle and Exception Example – BSC’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Face Velocity</th>
<th>Airflow Pattern</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class I</td>
<td>75 lfpm</td>
<td>No recirculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II A1</td>
<td>75 lfpm</td>
<td>70% recirculation/30% exhaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II A2</td>
<td>100 lfpm</td>
<td>70% recirculation/30% exhaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II B1</td>
<td>100 lfpm</td>
<td>30% recirculation/70% exhaust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II B2</td>
<td>100 lfpm</td>
<td>No recirculation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Translating to Effort Into Dollars!
Translating to Effort Into Dollars!

$\text{Working years}$
Translating to Effort Into Dollars!
The Major Areas of Certification for EH&S Professionals

- Insurance & Risk Management
- Security
- Hazardous Waste

- Physical Safety
- Chemical Safety
- Radiation Safety
- Biological Safety
The Major Certifications for University EH&S Professionals

ARM
CPP
CHMM
CSP
CIH
CHP
CBSP
Skills and Traits of Good Managers and Leaders

- **Basics**
  - Truly likes what they do
  - Money, while nice, is not the primary motivator

- **Work Skills**
  - Ability to solve problems
  - Formulates creative solutions
  - Technically competent
    - pedigree: academics, certifications, experience
  - Reliably on time – in fact, ahead of time
Skills and Traits of Good Managers and Leaders

- **Work Skills (con’t)**
  - Reliability never a source of question
  - Thinks before speaking
  - Ties activities to mission of unit
  - Able to see big picture
  - Leads by example
  - Performs lowest task

- **Work Skills (con’t)**
  - Able to delegate and praise
  - Readily adapts to change
  - Keeps it simple
  - Able to effectively multitask
  - Recognizes political realities
Skills and Traits of Good Managers and Leaders

• Work Skills (con’t)
  – Understands how budgets work
  – Knows who the customers are and what their needs are
  – Able to access information quickly
  – Able to plan the work and work the plan – even in the long term

• Work Skills (con’t)
  – Able to justify existence at any given moment
  – Able to anticipate trends
Skills and Traits of Good Managers and Leaders

• Personal Skills
  – Superb communication skills – both verbal and written
  – Able to communicate succinctly
  – Able to speak in front of people with conviction
  – Follows through – once assigned considered done unless otherwise notified

• Personal skills (con’t)
  – Able to market self and program
  – Able to network, active in profession, even outside of work
  – Does not let little things get in the way
  – Extreme patience
  – Well known in the business
  – Considered a valuable reference
Skills and Traits of Good Managers and Leaders

- **Personal Skills (con’t)**
  - Accepts criticism as an opportunity to improve
  - Can offer constructive criticism without sounding like whining
  - Doesn’t hold grudges
  - Doesn’t let home life interfere with work
  - Exudes energy

- **Image**
  - Appearance, actions, decorum
  - Willingness to move to move up
  - Resilience – handles adversity appropriately
  - Loyal to program – if unhappy go quietly
  - Trustworthy and humble
  - Someone folks wish to follow