ASSE
American Society
of Safety Engineers

The ASSE Guide to Hiring the Right Occupational Safety & Health Professional

About ASSE

With more than 35,000 members worldwide, ASSE is a global association of occupational safety, health and environmental professionals that advances the interests of its members and the profession. ASSE members create safer work environments by preventing workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses. Safer organizations enjoy increased productivity, higher employee satisfaction and a better reputation, while recording less lost time, and lower workers' compensation and healthcare costs. ASSE provides a dynamic voice for the profession by providing advocacy, education, standards development, and by promoting the expertise, leadership and commitment of its members.

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Hiring Tips from ASSE

Safety positions may be found throughout all levels of an organization. Each level of position has different qualifications associated with it. By requiring the qualifications in this guide, you ensure that you are hiring or promoting occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals with the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience necessary to perform the core functions of your open OSH position.

When evaluating a candidate's work experience, focus on the aggregate amount of time s/he has spent devoted to safety engineering and/or management and performing the core functions of the OSH position (or other subdisciplines of the safety practice). Be aware that some positions you may see on a candidate's resume may have terms such as *safety*, *OSH* or *EHS* in the title, but may have involved minimal safety-related responsibilities or qualifications.

1

The OSH professional should work effectively with:

- **Human resources,** with regard to organizational culture or climate issues, return-to-work programs, training, changing employee behaviors, influencing managers, sharing tools and technology, improving legal and regulatory compliance, boosting employee morale, etc.
- **Operations, planning, design or engineering,** to ensure that safety risks are designed out of proposed process, plant or equipment changes, and/or are considered in acquisitions or expansion plans.
- **Corporate social responsibility or sustainability,** to ensure that safety and health considerations are integrated into the organization's sustainability program.
- **Environmental protection,** with regard to the handling and storage of hazardous materials, indoor air quality issues, training and regulatory compliance.

2

Beware of OSH certifications from unaccredited organizations that can be obtained without regard for the education, training, knowledge level or experience of the applicant. OSH certifications should be from organizations accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB), or a nationally recognized accrediting body that uses certification criteria equal to or greater than that of NCCA or CESB.

3

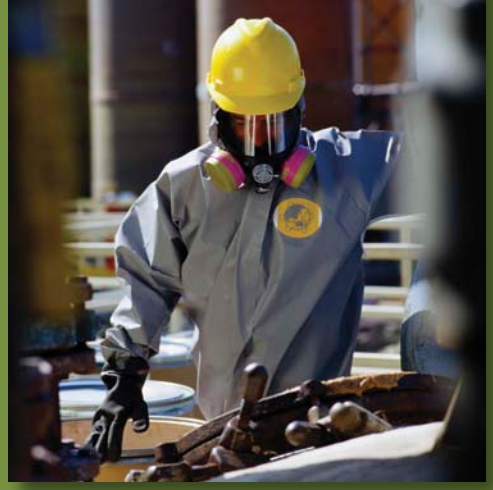
Determine whether the candidate regularly completes OSH-related continuing education courses/seminars to stay current on emerging issues and new developments. Look for courses/seminars that qualify for continuing education credits from accredited certification organizations.

4

Verify whether the candidate is a member of OSH-related professional associations such as ASSE. Professional association members have access to information on best practices and resources such as research, checklists and training materials.

5

The Interview Guide on pages 9-14 should be viewed as a resource for supplemental interview questions. The questions are designed to test the depth of the candidate's experience, analytical abilities, business acumen and understanding of organizational behavior within the context of the practice of OSH. The questions selected for the interview should be based on the responsibilities of the particular job. Ask candidates to provide writing samples in the technical subject area of the position to demonstrate their competence in this area.



Entry Level

Education
4-year degree or 2-year degree in OSH from an accredited college or university*

Preferred Disciplines
•Occupational safety and health

•Environmental safety and health

•Safety or environmental management

•Safety or environmental science

**The candidate's degree should be from a regionally accredited university. See www.chea.org for more information. Preference should be given to candidates from programs accredited by ABET (www.abet.org) or ATMAE (www.atmae.org).*

Work Experience
Previous internship experience recommended

Responsibilities
•Coordinating and performing training in all OSH areas

•Managing safety data sheets

•Writing OSH programs

•Conducting walk-through inspections

•Participating in accident investigation and/or emergency response

•Metrics and KPIs

•Recordkeeping, life safety and other applicable regulations

Skills & Competencies
•Industrial hygiene (IH)

•Engineering principles

•Machine guarding and lockout/tagout electrical safety

•Regulatory compliance laws

•Effective communication and interpersonal skills

•Managing multiple projects

•Training

•Computer skills

•Exhibits positivity, passion, integrity and responsibility

Certification**
None required, preference for GSP or seeking an accredited certification

A GSP (Graduate Safety Practitioner), awarded by BCSP, is a temporary designation given to graduates from ABET-accredited programs who are on the way to obtaining a CSP www.bcsp.com

***Certification should be from a professional safety organization accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA) or the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB), or a nationally recognized accrediting body which uses certification criteria equal to or greater than that of the NCCA or CESB, certification is an independent third-party indicator of achievement*

Visit www.asse.org/academicdirectory for the OSH College and University Directory

Safety Practitioner/ Technician Technologist

Education
4-year degree or 2-year degree in OSH from an accredited college or university*

Preferred Disciplines
•Occupational safety and health

•Environmental safety and health

•Safety or environmental management

•Safety or environmental science

**The candidate's degree should be from a regionally accredited university. See www.chea.org for more information. Preference should be given to candidates from programs accredited by ABET (www.abet.org) or ATMAE (www.atmae.org).*

Work Experience
3 years of relevant work experience in the OSH profession or one of its specialties

Experience
•Maintained recordkeeping systems

•Conducted training in all OSH topics

•Conducted inspections and audits

•Recognized hazards

•Participated in and lead emergency responses

•Addressed employee OSH concerns

•Implemented OSH measures, programs and procedures

•Maintained metrics and KPIs

•Prepared technical reports

•Performed sampling and monitoring

•Issued hot work and confined space permits

Knowledge, Skills & Competencies
•Thorough knowledge of applicable government regulations, computer skills

•Demonstrates effective communication skills, capable of managing multiple projects, has strong training and interpersonal skills

•Exhibits positivity, passion, integrity and responsibility

Certification
GSP or ASP
or
OHST, CLCS or CHST

Similar to a GSP, an ASP (Associate Safety Professional) is on track for becoming a CSP and is awarded by BCSP

The OHST (Occupational Health and Safety Technologist) and CLCS (Certified Loss Control Specialist) are certifications awarded to those who have an appropriate level of technical skills and knowledge in occupational health or safety

The CHST (Construction Health and Safety Technician) must have satisfied requirements for a combination of education or training and experience in safety, health, and construction

For more information on all of the above certifications, see www.bcsp.com

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Manager/Senior Technical Specialist

Education
4-year degree in OSH from an accredited college or university*

Preferred Disciplines
- Occupational safety and health
- Environmental safety and health
- Safety or environmental management
- Safety or environmental science
- Engineering

**The candidate's degree should be from a regionally accredited university. See www.chea.org for more information. Preference should be given to candidates from programs accredited by ABET (www.abet.org) or ATMAE (www.atmae.org).*

Work Experience
5 to 7 years of relevant work experience

Experience:
- Worked with senior management to ensure organization's OSH compliance
- Designed and implemented OSH programs
- Managed OSH programs at a facility or multiple facilities
- Conducted site inspections and audits
- Facilitated regulatory visits
- Managed emergency response incidents
- Implemented corrective actions
- Conducted or lead training in applicable OSH areas
- Evaluated programs, issued recommendations and implemented changes
- Interacted with senior management
- Liaised with all other functional first line management and supervision
- Created and managed budget for OSH activities
- Participated in tactical planning and support of corporate OSH initiatives
- Worked with HR to manage workers' compensation claims and return to work programs

Knowledge, Skills & Competencies
- Government regulations, safety compliance and industrial hygiene
- Business acumen
- Strong analytical skills
- Strategic thinking abilities
- Organizational behavior
- Communication skills
- Ability to influence
- Team player and self-starter

Certification/ Licensure
CSP, CIH, CFPS or CHMM or Professional Engineer

A CSP (Certified Safety Professional), awarded by BCSP, is certified in the comprehensive practice of safety
www.bcsp.com

CIH (Certified Industrial Hygienist) has emphasis on evaluating and controlling physical, chemical, ergonomic and biological hazards
www.abih.org/certified

CFPS (Certified Fire Protection Specialist) has responsibilities regarding the application of technologies in fire safety, fire protection, prevention and suppression
www.nfpa.org

CHMM (Certified Hazardous Materials Manager) is involved in environmental protection, waste management, dangerous goods transportation, safety and materials handling
www.ihmm.org

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Director/Senior Management

Education
Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university*, master's degree and knowledge of finance preferred

Preferred Disciplines
- Occupational safety and health
- Environmental safety and health
- Safety or environmental management
- Safety or environmental science
- Engineering

**The candidate's degree should be from a regionally accredited university. See www.chea.org for more information. Preference should be given to candidates from programs accredited by ABET (www.abet.org) or ATMAE (www.atmae.org).*

Work Experience
8 to 10 years relevant experience

Experience
- Directed OSH function at multiple facilities regionally and corporate-wide
- Conducted due diligence projects (mergers, acquisitions, divestitures)
- Managed subordinates (Sr. Manager, Manager)
- Monitored regulatory arena for new/changing regulations and rulemaking
- Communicated with all business units pertaining to OSH
- Conducted comprehensive audits
- Liaised among executive management, business units, divisions, regions and global colleagues
- Issued OSH directives and corporate standards
- Compiled metrics and KPIs for all business units
- Provided recommendations to executive management
- Appropriated budgetary resources
- Acted as a consultant to business units
- Provided support for business units during regulatory inquiries
- Conducted global, regional and divisional OSH conferences
- Oversaw workers' compensation process

Knowledge, Skills & Competencies
- Applicable regulations, including all appropriate Inquiries environmental regulations
- International regulations and certifications
- Strategic approach and support of OSH for all business units
- Understands financial implications, P&L, bottom line, ROI and payback
- Business acumen
- Strong analytical skills
- Strategic thinking abilities
- Organizational behavior
- Communication skills
- Ability to influence
- Team player with passion, drive and the ability to self-start

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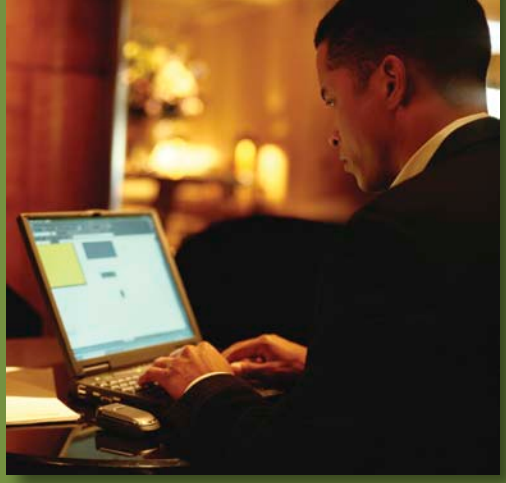

Executive VP/SVP/EVP

Education
Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited* college or university, master's degree and knowledge of finance preferred

Preferred Disciplines
- Occupational safety and health
- Environmental safety and health
- Safety or environmental management
- Safety or environmental science
- Engineering

**The candidate's degree should be from a regionally accredited university. See www.chea.org for more information. Preference should be given to candidates from programs accredited by ABET (www.abet.org) or ATMAE (www.atmae.org).*

Work Experience
10+ years

Experience
- Oversaw OSH function at multiple facilities corporate-wide
- Performed duties relevant to a C-Level Suite position
- Conducted activities related to Corporate Social Responsibility, sustainability and/or stockholder Inquiries
- Acted as liaison: between governmental agencies and executive management, global OSH functions and executive management; to Board of Directors (BoD), industry groups
- Conducted global, regional and divisional OSH conferences
- Appropriated resources and support from executive management for the broader OSH function
- Interacted with executive management for all other functional roles to establish common goals
- Issued specific OSH direction and directives
- Managed subordinates (Sr. Director, Director)
- Experienced in shaping and pursuing strategic vision, goals and objectives

Knowledge, Skills & Competencies
- Applicable regulations
- International regulations and certifications
- Business acumen
- Strong analytical skills
- Strategic thinking abilities
- Organizational behavior
- Communication skills
- Ability to influence
- Team player as well as passion, drive and the ability to self-start

Certification/ Licensure
CSP, CIH, CFPS, or CHMM or Professional Engineer

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Interview Guide:
Practitioner/Technician/Manager Level

Training

Q: How do you verify that safety training given to employees was effective?

A: Some ways are to observe employees to verify that they are following the correct procedures, question employees on certain aspects of the training, ask employees for feedback on ways to improve the training and review near-miss incidents (incidents that, if repeated, could result in an injury or illness).

Q: What are some important factors to consider when designing or developing safety training?

A: The training should be developed with the target audience in mind (e.g., education and skill level, language comprehension). To the extent possible, safety training should be woven into the employees' required job-related training. The design of the training should account for ongoing refresher training, rather than being a one-time event.

Inspections & Audits

Q: In performing safety inspections, what did you do when you found an employee violating a corporate safety policy?

A: The immediate focus is on stopping the employee's behavior that violates the safety policy to protect the employee from potential harm. Next, the candidate should talk about coaching the employee who violated the policy. The candidate should demonstrate that s/he has interacted with employees while performing inspections, rather than simply "writing up" employees. You may want to ask the candidate to discuss ways in which s/he coaches employees, focusing on his/her experience in influencing employee behavior. Finally, the candidate should mention an analysis of the breakdown in the process that led to the noncompliant behavior (e.g., inadequate training, managers ignored the behavior in the past) and follow-up steps that were taken to ensure that the noncompliant behavior was not repeated (e.g., department meeting, retraining).

Q: How did you use the information collected during safety audits?

A: This question will provide some insight into the candidate's critical thinking capabilities. The candidate should discuss how s/he analyzed the information to look for trends, breakdowns in processes or other deficiencies in the safety program. S/he should be able to give examples of instances where the candidate's analysis led to modifications of the safety program (e.g., new training, additional inspections, increased involvement by managers). The candidate should also discuss how s/he communicated the findings to management or employees (e.g., "I used the information as a way to interact with employees to keep safety in the front of their minds" or "I would celebrate our successes with them and ask for their input on ways to improve our performance.").

Problem Solving

Q: How would you respond to a report from an employee that one of his/her coworkers only wears required head protection when you are in the area?

A: You want to ensure that candidate corrected the noncompliant behavior immediately so that the employee is not at risk. The candidate should verify that other employees are following required safe work practices, even beyond the issue of head protection. Finally, the candidate should be sensitive to the fact that the employee who informed him/her of the noncompliant behavior may be ostracized by coworkers if the details of the report were made public. One approach a candidate may take is to have group or department meetings to reiterate rules and enforcement policies (including a discussion of wearing head protection), increase awareness, identify gaps in training and to remind employees of their safety-related responsibilities.

Metrics

Q: How do you calculate an organization's incidence rates using the OSHA 300 Log?

A: Some examples:

•From the Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses (Log), OSHA's Form 300, count the number of OSHA recordable cases for the year, or

•From the Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses (Summary), OSHA's Form 300A, add the number of recordable cases entered in Column H (cases with days away from work) + Column I (cases with job transfer or restriction) + Column J (other recordable cases), or

•An incidence rate of injuries and illnesses may be computed from the following formula: (Number of injuries and illnesses X 200,000 hours) / Employee hours worked = Incidence rate. The "200,000 hours" in the formula represents the equivalent of 100 employees working 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year and provides the standard base for the incidence rates.

Q: Give some examples of leading indicators used to measure safety performance.

A: Some common leading indicators are the number of:

•inspections or audits completed;
•safety audit recommendations closed out on time;
•employees trained or training units/hours completed;
•safety committee meetings held;
•employee perception survey results of the organization's commitment to safety.

Accident Investigations

Q: I have been told that an accident investigation does not end when an employee admits that the accident in question was caused by his/her failure to follow a corporate safety rule. Do you agree with that statement? If so, why?

A: The primary objective of an accident investigation is to identify root causes, not to set blame. The candidate should want to avoid the trap of laying sole blame on the injured employee. Even if injured workers openly blame themselves for making a mistake or not following prescribed procedures, the accident investigator must not be satisfied that all contributing causes have been identified. The error made by the employee may not be even the most important contributing cause. For example:

•The employee who has not followed prescribed procedures may have been encouraged directly or indirectly by a supervisor or production quotas to "cut corners."

•The prescribed procedures may not be practical, or even safe, in the eyes of the employee(s).

•Sometimes where elaborate and difficult procedures are required, engineering redesign might be a better answer.

In such cases, management errors—not employee error—may be the most important contributing causes.

Communication, Awareness & Motivation

Q: How do you keep your employees involved in your safety program?

A: Some possible answers include:

•keeping employees involved in regular communications (e.g., safety/toolbox talks, one-on-one coaching, involvement in corporate or department safety committees or teams);

•getting input from employees on decisions related to the safety program (e.g., how to develop training);

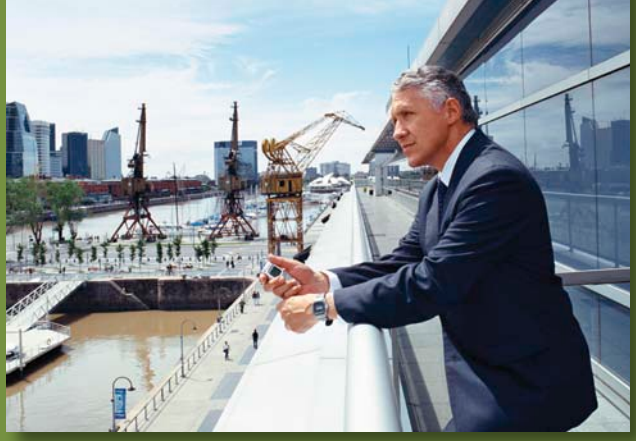
•including employees in regular safety activities (e.g., have them perform safety inspections or conduct safety training);

•making sure employees are regularly reminded of the importance of safety and the role that they play in maintaining a safe workplace.

Q: How do you gain support for your safety program from managers?

A: Some possible answers include:

•clearly defining their roles and responsibilities with regard to safety;
•positioning them as leaders of the safety program;
•including them in decisions relating to the safety program;
•regularly communicating with them on safety performance;
•Educating them on the impact of accidents on:
  •production—training replacement workers is costly and involves a learning curve. Employee



morale suffers when an accident occurs, thereby creating a negative impact on production.

•corporate profits—the direct and indirect costs of accidents, the impact on the reputation of the corporation

Business Acumen

Q: How do you integrate safety into the day-to-day operations of your business?

A: The important point here is that safety should be viewed as an integral part of day-to-day operations rather than a separate program managed by the safety department. It is not enough to simply develop a safety program; a well-thought-out implementation strategy is critical. The safety department should work closely with the various business groups or departments to ensure that safety is woven into regular job-related inspections, training and metrics.

Q: How would you make a case for your organization to invest in safety equipment that, although not required by law, you believe will reduce accidents?

A: The candidate should discuss how to calculate and prepare a return-on-investment analysis. This would include a discussion of the cost of the new safety equipment, the anticipated savings from investing in the equipment, how the anticipated savings were determined (e.g., from looking at the experience of other companies) and how the company should determine whether the investment is a wise one from a business perspective.

Legal Requirements

Q: What is the OSHA General Duty Clause?

A: Pursuant to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Section 5:

"Each employer shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees."

Q: Where would you look to find the federal OSHA regulations?

A: In the Code of Federal Regulations, 29 CFR 1910 (for general industry), 29 CFR 1926 (for the construction industry), and 29 CFR 1915, 1917 and 1918 (for maritime).

Q: What is the hazard communication standard?

A: An OSHA regulation (29 CFR 1910.1200). The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced or imported are evaluated and that information concerning their hazards is transmitted to employers and employees. This transmittal of information is to be accomplished by means of comprehensive hazard communication programs, which are to include container labeling and other forms of warning, material safety data sheets and employee training.

Q: Which work-related injuries and illnesses must be recorded on the OSHA 300 Log?

A: Work-related injuries and illnesses that must be reported include those that result in death, loss of consciousness, days away from work, restricted work activity or job transfer, or medical treatment beyond first aid. This is the basic answer. Technically, there are other requirements such as any work-related case involving cancer, chronic irreversible disease, a fractured or cracked bone, or a punctured eardrum.

Q: When must you post the OSHA 300 Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses?

A: You must post the Summary only, not the Log, by February 1 of the year following the year covered by the form and keep the Summary posted until April 30 of that year.

Q: How long must you keep the OSHA 300 Log and Summary on file?

A: You must keep the OSHA 300 Log and Summary for five years following the year to which they pertain.

Q: Do you have to send the OSHA 300 Log and Summary forms to OSHA at the end of the year?

A: No, you do not have to send the completed forms to OSHA unless specifically asked to do so.

Interview Guide:
Director/Executive Levels

Strategic Thinking

Q: What are the keys to successfully managing safety at multiple facilities?

A: In developing a multi-site program, the objectives are to identify any unique hazards, risks or potential barriers associated with particular locations (based on work processes, operations, equipment, facility layout or location, skill set of employees, potential language or cultural barriers, etc.); to involve local employees in the program design; and to the extent possible, take a systems approach to managing safety. Once the program is in place, some key activities are to build relationships with local management, set clear expectations, set goals and objectives, share best practices, communicate regularly, use technology where possible, regularly audit and report location-specific safety metrics to relevant business managers.

Organizational Synergism

Q: How do you deal with a situation in which the only apparent relationship between the OSH professionals and other staff functions (human resources, law) seems to be when they are forced to the table together as a result of a particular incident, accident, regulatory compliance initiative or budgetary crisis?

A: Building meaningful relationships requires these functions to work together to analyze processes to identify leveraging opportunities, to coordinate strategic planning efforts, and to develop shared goals and objectives. Strategic planning among these functions can sometimes be fragmented. This issue-by-issue approach to working together results in missed opportunities to change employee behaviors, influence managers, share tools and technology, improve legal and regulatory compliance, boost employee morale and, ultimately, reduce the organization's costs.

Q: What role do OSH professionals play in corporate social responsibility and sustainability?

A: Mounting evidence suggests that incorporating the principles of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development into organizational decision-making processes has fundamentally changed the way business is being conducted. Driven in large part by consumer and investor demand, organizations' business strategies now commonly consider the impact of corporate activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities and other stakeholders. This has led to new approaches to problem solving, redefined corporate priorities, reallocated budgets and redesigned staffing responsibilities. These changes have significant ramifications for safety management. Occupational safety and health is generally categorized as part of an organization's commitment to social responsibility. Several key safety indicators are included as part of the leading global sustainability indices. OSH professionals must drive safety sustainability efforts by ensuring that their organizations recognize that the safety, health and well-being of workers, customers and neighboring communities are among the primary considerations in any business practices, operations or development. OSH professionals also need a good working knowledge of environmental issues related to sustainability, key sustainability metrics and the key drivers of sustainability.

Organizational Culture

Q: What steps would you take if you were told by several employees that safety is an afterthought in the current culture of the organization?

A: One of the first steps is to get a better understanding of the situation by measuring organizational culture or climate through employee assessments or surveys that incorporate safety concerns. If problems with the safety program are verified through these assessment tools, an immediate plan of action should be developed to help reset the culture. The plan should include:

- gaining support and involvement of the entire senior management team;
- a detailed analysis of the current safety program (including audits);
- discussions with employees pinpointing lapses in the safety program or asking for their input on how to improve it;
- employee and management training or retraining;
- a communication and awareness program to keep safety front of mind for employees.

Understanding Business

Q: What is the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and how might it affect the organization's safety program?

A: The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 "generally was designed to protect investors by ensuring corporate responsibility, public disclosure, and improving the quality and transparency of financial reporting and auditing" (29 CFR 1980). OSHA has responsibility for investigating complaints and enforcing the whistleblower provisions of Sarbanes-Oxley related to workplace safety and health regulations. The whistleblower provisions would apply if it is alleged that an employer retaliates against an employee by taking unfavorable personnel action because the employee engaged in protected activity. Such activities could include any related to workplace safety and health, commercial motor carrier safety, pipeline safety, air carrier safety, nuclear safety, the environment, asbestos in schools, corporate fraud, SEC rules or regulations, railroad carrier safety or security, or public transportation agency safety.

Influencing

Q: What approaches have you used to get senior management involved in supporting safety?

A: Some possible answers include:

•getting key safety leading and lagging indicators integrated into corporate scorecards or dashboards and ensuring that the senior team understands and reacts to these metrics;

•educating senior management on the negative impacts of a poor safety record on the organization, such as a poor reputation (from a social responsibility and sustainability perspective, with regard to the investment community, customers or potential employees), decreased productivity, increased costs and decline in employee morale;

•ensuring that they understand their roles in the safety program and that they visibly demonstrate support for safety by regularly discussing it in meetings with their direct reports and staff, on field visits, in training and in communications;

•importance of a corporate board of directors having oversight of safety, ensuring that safety has support from the highest levels of the organization.

Analytical skills

Q: With regard to low probability/high impact events, how do you overcome complacency by senior management and the "let's deal with the issue later" mentality?

A: The key is to convince senior management that there are cost-effective ways to mitigate low probability/high impact events. These events present real risks and should be incorporated into the organization's safety program. Senior managers should be educated on the typical causes of low probability/high impact events, from the accident/incident history of the organization, from within their industry or other industries that perform similar tasks and ways to address these deficiencies. Analyzing low probability/high impact events will allow senior managers to better understand the need for the development of new processes and controls, and the importance of their involvement in oversight and management of the program.

Q: In a recent survey, senior corporate financial decision makers indicated that more/better safety training was their most preferred safety-related intervention. How would you respond to this statement?

A: The most important safety intervention will depend on the situation at hand. Safety training plays an important role, but the candidate should mention that training alone will not prevent accidents. From a technical standpoint, the candidate should mention the hierarchy of controls in evaluating how to determine the best safety intervention. This hierarchy is used to identify the best methods for eliminating or controlling hazards.

The hierarchy is as follows:

•engineering—directly eliminating a hazard (the most effective control);

•administrative—limiting exposure to hazards (training is an example of an administrative control);

•work practices—hazard control programs, rules, policies, safe work practices, etc.

•personal protective equipment—protect the employee from the exposure.

From a perspective that looks at the overall program success, the candidate should discuss the need for management involvement, employee participation and the development of an occupational safety and health management system.

FAQs

What are the general obligations for employers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act?

In addition to specific OSHA safety and health standards, Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act (the General Duty Clause) requires employers to "furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees." Section 5(a)(2) requires employers to "comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under this Act."

Are employers required to hire OSH professionals?

There are currently no specific standards regarding the hiring of OSH professionals. However, OSHA standards, preambles to final rules (background to final rules), directives (instructions for compliance officers) and standard interpretations (official letters of interpretation of the standards) in many instances require employers to use a "competent person." The definition of *competent person* will vary according to the type of hazard presented. However, a competent person is typically capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions that present hazards to employees, the public or the surrounding community, and is capable of and authorized to design and implement appropriate control measures. For a complete list of the OSHA competent person requirements, visit **www.osha.gov/SLTC/competentperson**.

Are there licensing or registration requirements for OSH professionals?

There are no licensing requirements for practicing OSH professionals. However, a number of states have registration requirements for OSH professionals working as loss control representatives for the insurance industry. Numerous safety and health related certifications exist.

Which certifications should I look for when hiring safety professionals?

ASSE recognizes OSH-related certifications from related certifying organizations that have been established to improve the practice and educational standards of the OSH profession by certifying individuals who meet their education, experience and examination requirements. These organizations must have existed for at least five years and also be accredited by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB) or a nationally recognized accrediting body that uses certification criteria equal to or greater than that of NCCA or CESB. Certifications including GSP, ASP, OHST, CLCS, CHST and CSP are all awarded by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP).

Is there a specific number identified for an appropriate ratio of OSH professionals to employees?

Ratios in OSH staffing models help determine adequate staffing levels for OSH professionals based on the types of risks present in an organization. There are a variety of methodologies available for determining appropriate staffing model ratios. Several are identified on the ASSE Business of Safety Committee website: **www.asse.org/shestaffing**.

Are there any data showing that it makes financial sense to hire full-time OSH professionals?

Several studies have demonstrated that hiring OSH professionals is a solid investment for business and industry. A Liberty Mutual poll of executives said that for every $1 their company spent on workplace safety, they saved at least $3. More information can be found at **www.asse.org/bosc**.

Where can I find information on the salary ranges for OSH professionals?

Salary information can be obtained from:

- Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP): **www.bcsp.org/Salary_Survey**
- U.S. Department of Labor: **www.online.onetcenter.org/find/quick?s=safety**
- National Safety Council: **www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/9391-safety-salary-survey-2013**

Does ASSE have any data regarding the most effective reporting structure for the OSH professional position?

ASSE has collected information on reporting structures and has asked members about the advantages and disadvantages of various reporting relationships. This information may be found at **www.asse.org/sherelationships**.

Where can I find additional information on OSH professionals?

In addition, to **www.asse.org**, the Department of Labor's online O*NET tool has detailed descriptions of the tasks, knowledge, skills, abilities, work activities and employment trends for OSH professionals. The relevant job categories to search are industrial safety and health engineers, occupational health and safety specialists, and occupational health and safety technicians. For more information visit **www.online.onetcenter.org/find/quick?s=safety**.

Are your OSH Professionals Members of ASSE?

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