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# RISKY BUSINESS!

The times they are a-changin'. Bob Dylan released this song in 1964. Well, the phrase seems especially apt in the SHEQ world today ...



CHARLEEN CLARKE

I recently read a fascinating article entitled: "Monitoring new and emerging risks", which highlighted a bundle of new risks that, of course, need to be properly managed. These risks have emerged because the world is changing. We are up against things such as globalisation, innovation and an ageing workforce.

As such, this article points out that we have new and emerging risks; which can be broken down into three main categories: physical risks and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), psychosocial risks, and risks related to dangerous substances.

Let's start with physical risks and MSDs. One of the key physical risks identified in the article is inactivity. This can have dire consequences; the World Health Organisation has estimated that, globally, 1.9-million people die a premature death each year because of an inactive lifestyle.

Funnily enough, this problem is partially a consequence of productivity measures – the emphasis on lean production leads to less walking (for instance, to fetch supplies). The growing use of computers and automated systems appears to cause an increase in sedentary work or prolonged standing at work, which results in an increase in physical inactivity.

Work commitments and other time demands are also commonly cited as reasons for physical inactivity, as are an increase in travelling time to work and having an inactive leisure time.

Physical inactivity is associated with increased health risks such as obesity, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancers and psychological disorders (depression and anxiety).

Meanwhile, psychosocial risks are fast becoming another cause for concern in modern workplaces. Chief among them are job insecurity, work intensification, violence and harassment and poor work-life balance.

For me, the insecurity aspect is especially interesting. According to this article, so-called "temporary contracts" have grown in popularity in the past two decades. Examples include temporary agency work, short-term contracts, part-time work, home-based work, on-call work, and day-hire work.

Some people – such as those who work from home, and have autonomy, flexibility and the freedom to choose their own pace of work – like the idea. Generally speaking, however, workers prefer full-time employment; they experience increased levels of angst in the case of "temporary

contracts". That's quite understandable – workers under these types of flexible employment contracts are sometimes more vulnerable than full-time staff members.

They may, for instance, carry out hazardous jobs with increased exposure to more dangerous substances in poorer conditions, and often receive less occupational safety and health (OSH) training.


Plus, they suffer from job insecurity which, according to the article, can result in reduced well-being (psychological distress, anxiety, depression, and burnout), reduced job satisfaction (withdrawal from the job and the organisation) and increased psychosomatic complaints, as well as physical strains.

The third major risk – of dangerous substances – is also fascinating. According to the article, we need to consider substances such as engineered nanomaterials, new fibres and biological pathogens. The big problem is that the human risks associated with exposure to these substances are still largely unknown.

The nanomaterials are particularly worrying, because this market is increasingly so rapidly; the article states that the market was worth many, many billions of US dollars last year (it's predicted to double this year).

Why? Well, according to the writers, engineered nanomaterials (ENMs) have unique properties that improve the performance of many products. This is thanks to their small size, apparently. They can also be used in many different industries.

A key concern with ENMs, however, is that we don't know the effect that they will have on workers. Some research has been done, but it's going to take many years to gather and analyse all the data required to perform a comprehensive risk assessment.

Thankfully, the article concludes by explaining that emerging risks in workplaces can be identified, evaluated and ranked. Significantly, it also concludes that new and emerging risks can be complex, but management of them is possible. Yay! 

The article to which I refer was collectively written by Irene Houtman, Marjolein Douwes, Esther Zondervan, and Mat Jongen from a research organisation called TNO in the Netherlands. Check it out on our website: [www.sheqmanagement.com](http://www.sheqmanagement.com).





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## KEEP IT SMARTLY SIMPLE IN THREE STEPS

For six years I studied mathematics, physics, chemistry, machine design and some other fancy subjects such as hydraulics and thermodynamics. So, when you give me a problem to solve, my mind kicks into engineering mode and I start designing a complex solution.

To implement these engineering gizmos requires resources; one of them being time, which I normally do not have. The result: a delay of weeks, sometimes even months, to get something simple done. Here are two examples:

### PROBLEM 1:

New kittens that were crawling underneath a wooden bench in the kitchen and messing there.

### My solution:

Buy some planks, screws, glue and varnish to close the gap – a four-hour undertaking.

### My wife's solution:

Just wrap a few bricks in plastic and shove them into the gap – a ten-minute job.

### PROBLEM 2

A row of roses that needed frequent watering.



### My solution:

Buy some irrigation pipes, sprayers and valves. Build a terrace to cater for the sloping ground – a weekend job.

### My gardener's solution:

Tie a redundant plastic pipe to the trellises with cable ties, punch a few holes in the right places and hook the pipe up with a quick connector to the existing hose pipe – a one-hour job.

### ACTION

Ask those people who “push the buttons and use the tools” how to solve problems that affect their work area. They will come up with simply smart (and smartly simple) solutions!

Go for a “just do something safe” culture.















Get your teams to solve their own safety problems by removing the red tape and jumping through hoops of standards and procedures. Your job should be to make sure people can help themselves by doing what is within their means and can be completed within days, without taking shortcuts and chances.

**Jürgen Tietz**

Thought leader and professional speaker

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# Centre for Business Management



## PROGRAMME IN SAFETY MANAGEMENT (72435)

This course focuses on the science of Safety Management and the safety responsibilities of both line managers and staff safety practitioners. This programme introduces line managers and safety practitioners to the very basics in safety management. Such basics comprise the sciences of safety management and the roles of line and staff functionaries pertaining to safety risk assessment, safety management in industry and the analysis of safety incidents.

The focus and contents of the programme is unique in the sense that it prepares both managers and safety practitioners for performing their roles and functions on a professional and scientific basis. The programme focuses on meeting the needs of line managers and staff safety practitioners in achieving their legal responsibilities and professional accountability in making the workplace and the work procedures as safe as possible for all involved.

### MODULES:

- Introduction to Safety Management (PSMP015)
- Assess Safety Risk (PSMP026)
- Manage Safety in the Workplace (PSMP038)
- Analyse Safety Incidents (PSMP049)

### REGISTRATION DATES

December - February

### FEE:

R6 600

### COURSE DURATION:

12 Months  
NQF level 6, Total 48 credits

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

A Senior Certificate, equivalent qualification or appropriate experience.

### CONTACT PERSON:

Mr NJF van Loggerenberg  
Email: [psmp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:psmp@unisa.ac.za)  
Tel: 012 352 4378

## PROGRAMME IN ADVANCED SAFETY MANAGEMENT (76914)

This course focuses on a broader view of Safety Management and the safety responsibilities of both line managers and staff safety practitioners. This programme investigates the advanced elements of safety management. These elements include the management of safety culture, the role and importance of safety supervisors, system safety engineering and the system safety programme plan; the importance of managers in safety and a more advanced understanding of hazards.

### MODULES:

- Managing Safety Culture (APSM01N)
- Safety Supervisor (APSM02M)
- Safety Systems (APSM03O)
- Design for Safety (APSM04P)

### REGISTRATION DATES

December - February

### FEE:

R7 500

### COURSE DURATION:

12 Months  
NQF level 7, Total 48 credits

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

A Senior Certificate, equivalent qualification or appropriate experience and completed Programme in Safety Management (PSMP) with the Centre for Business Management.

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## EQUIPMENT DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO AFRICAN FIRE DEPARTMENTS

More than 1100 sets of personal protective equipment (PPE), valued at US\$ 5 000 (over R80 000), are being refurbished by MSA Africa in a partnership with non-governmental organisation Africa Fire Mission (AFM).

The project aims to empower and uplift fire brigades and communities in Africa by improving fire safety. This PPE equipment will be donated to fire brigades in Kenya and Zambia.

Suraksha Mohun, MSA Africa respiratory and fire helmets product manager, explains that many countries in Africa still struggle with fire equipment and protection, due to a lack of knowledge, procurement and political issues. "It is often not a priority for fire departments to get the basic equipment that they require," she states.

According to AFM executive director, David Moore, the Kenyan capital city, Nairobi, had two fire engines and 154 firefighters in 2012. "Their PPE consisted mainly of construction helmets, raincoats and plastic boots. They had only two sets of working self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). They were unable to refill them, so they were rarely used."

In total, 400 sets of PPE have been distributed among 20 fire brigades in Kenya, with an additional 750 sets distributed to fire brigades in Zambia.

Approximately 100 SCBAs and 500 helmets donated by

MSA Safety came directly from the United States, where fire departments generally purchase new fire equipment every five to eight years.

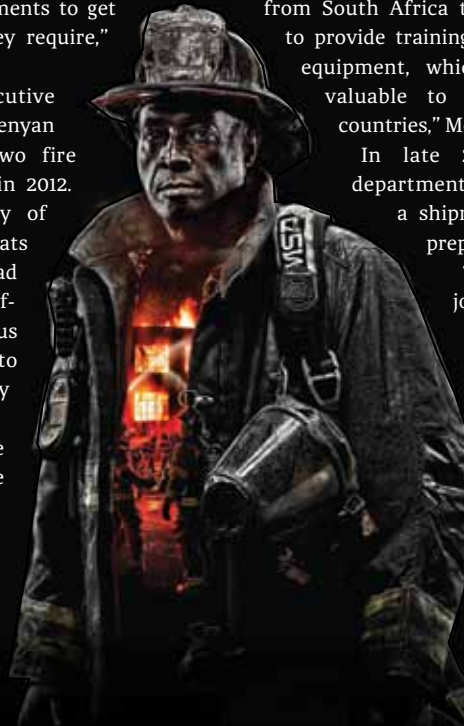
MSA Safety has provided parts and the labour to rehabilitate the SCBAs and has also rehabilitated around 50 SCBAs that will soon be donated to more African countries.

The company will also be providing the tools, training and equipment such as helmets, gloves, fall protection, BA bottles and parts, to help the local fire brigades to increase their sustainable fire protection capacity.

"Furthermore, MSA Africa has sent representatives from South Africa to both Lusaka and Nairobi to provide training and demonstrations on its equipment, which was deemed incredibly valuable to the firefighters in those countries," Mohun continues.

In late 2016, the remaining fire departments in Zambia will receive a shipment of equipment to fully prepare them.

"MSA Africa and AFM will jointly continue to provide opportunities for fire brigades in Africa to access SCBAs and other fire safety equipment. This year, MSA Africa plans to bring more knowledge and mobilise support for these initiatives, through presentations and fire industry meetings," Mohun concludes.



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## AIR PRODUCTS SOUTH AFRICA AIMS HIGH

Throughout the years, Air Products South Africa has developed a formal occupational health and safety programme, which has proven highly effective and gained industry-wide recognition.

The programme involves strictly adhering to legislation and building a culture of proactive safety awareness – resulting in a low disabling injury frequency rate (DIFR) at several of its production sites.

“At Air Products South Africa, occupational health and safety means ensuring that we provide our employees with a harm-free workplace,” says Sue Janse van Vuuren, corporate risk manager at the company.

The gas industry can be a hazardous working environment, due to the nature of its processes and products, thus, the company’s risk-based health and safety management system is highly comprehensive, and takes both local and global elements into account.

“In South Africa, our health and safety management system is designed to ensure compliance to the global Air Products systems, as well as local legislation. We also use the NOSA Integrated 5 Star System (Health, Safety and Environmental Management) as our benchmark,” explains Janse van Vuuren.

The company has received repeated accolades at the annual Noshcon conference and awards – with six of its sites winning the highest honour; a ‘Noscar’. The Noscar criteria include exceptional performance in managing occupational health and safety for three consecutive years.

Air Products won its first Noscar in 2003, and is a proud recipient of approximately 47 Noscars to date. This year, site winners of Noscar awards included Air Products Cape Town, Witbank and Springs.

“The NOSA system is regarded as a valuable benchmarking tool within the industry. It enables us to measure how well we’re providing safe workplaces in comparison to other companies,” notes Janse van Vuuren, reiterating the company’s commitment to the safety of its staff.



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Easily log incidents of varying severity from low risk potential incidents and near misses to high risk incidents.



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# Centre for Business Management

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**Duration:** 12 months

**Registration:** December 2015 and closes 15 March 2016

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## INTERNATIONAL SOS LAUNCHES NEW TRAVEL RISK MAP

International SOS, together with Control Risks, has launched *Travel Risk Map 2016* to help organisations better understand the risks in the markets in which they operate and travel.

International SOS – the world's leading medical and travel security company – has published a *Health Risk Map* since 2010. It has now been renamed *Travel Risk Map 2016* and is the industry's first integrated medical and travel security risk map.

The *Travel Risk Map* displays each country's medical risk rating and travel security risk rating. The result is a comprehensive overview of risks by destination.

Rob Walker, head of information and analysis at International SOS and Control Risks, says that education, information and training are vital to helping employees understand and mitigate threats to their personal safety while travelling abroad.

A recent Ipsos Global Advisor study found that, before they travel, less than four out of ten travellers research crime at the destination including: neighbourhoods to avoid, safety standards of public transport, or security features of their accommodation.

Dr Irene Lai, medical director of information and



analysis for International SOS, says: "We created the *Travel Risk Map* to help travellers align their pre-trip preparations proportionately with the risks they may encounter in a particular location.

"Even in countries with a low medical risk rating and state-of-the-art medical services, travellers may still need assistance with language, or navigating an unfamiliar health care system – both of which can be significant barriers to obtaining proper care."

Learn more about *Travel Risk Map 2016* and view the map online at [www.internationalsos.com/travelriskmap](http://www.internationalsos.com/travelriskmap). An interactive digital version is also available.



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## HSE ON PPE IN 2016

According to Stephen Burrow, general manager, HSE Solutions, the personal protective equipment (PPE) industry experienced a very tough year in 2015.

"The rapid fall of the rand put devastating pressure on costing. Multiple price increases were, therefore, necessary as the exchange rate reached crippling levels," he explains.

"The record lows in commodity prices also put pressure on end-users, who were subsequently forced to cut costs. This reduction in spending hurt PPE suppliers and distributors. Another significant factor was the ongoing turmoil in the labour market. All indications are that there will be no improvement in labour unrest, and, as a result, many companies are looking to mechanisation."

Burrow is realistic in his expectations of 2016: "It is almost guaranteed that 2016 will be even tougher than 2015. With the exchange rate likely to get worse before it gets better, manufacturers, wholesale suppliers and distributors are going to come under severe pricing pressure and will face challenges in terms of availability of products," he warns.

In the face of such bad news, he does,

however, offer practical advice to ease any PPE predicaments companies might face. "Restrict the number of suppliers and brands to those that provide a full basket of offerings," he suggests.

"By using reputable suppliers, who are able to provide proper PPE needs assessments, training, support, availability of products and quality, end-users will find that they will enjoy the best balance between price and cost."

On this point, he assures that, during 2016, HSE solutions will focus on competitive pricing, high levels of service, stronger support, a growing product basket and continued innovation.

"Instead of focusing purely on price, end-users should be looking towards driving genuine cost savings. Looking exclusively at cheap products ignores the value of quality, durability and support," he concludes.



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# SHARK-INFESTED SAFETY

All too often the health and safety profession is given a bad rap. It's time to change the game by seeing risk differently and by helping our organisations to find freedom from fear. Read on to find out more about Risk-Based Decision Making and how ANDREW SHARMAN finds the safer way to swim with sharks

**W**hile out for dinner in a fancy restaurant in Johannesburg not long ago, the conversation turned to business. When asked what I did for a living, I replied: "I work in safety."

My inquisitor responded promptly with: "Ah, I see. So you're that guy that stops people doing things, because they might be a little bit risky ..."

It seems that our reputation continues to precede us wherever we go. How many times have you – as a practitioner, advisor, manager or leader in occupational health and safety – found the profession at the centre of a joke that concludes that we are risk averse, action-stopping do-gooders?

Sure, while I am happy to see people enjoying a good laugh, there's a massive misconception here. If we are to truly do our job of protecting people, planet and profit, we must face towards risk, not away from it.

I was recently asked to give a TED\* talk to share my views on safety and risk. Using a very personal experience, my central point was that life is not about avoiding risk at all cost, but rather, it's about developing the confidence to manage risk appropriately and enable great things to happen. (You can watch the TED talk here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7-DQFvD5ck> or Google Andrew Sharman TED talk.)

“ Let's imagine a little more. Think outside the box. Let's not fear the sharks of safety, but, instead, step up bravely to the shoreline in our speedos and ask “What if we could...?”





### SAFER BUT LIVING IN FEAR

Despite the society in which many of us live being safer and more comfortable than ever before, we are surrounded by an ever-growing culture of fear that promotes hesitancy and over-caution.

We see this manifesting every day in our working lives. From organisational leaders anxious of anything and everything that has the most remote possibility of causing the slightest injury, to even our professional peers over-zealously ramming the “safety first” mentality to the top of corporate agendas, often causing great rifts as they jam safety head-to-head with productivity.

What happened? Fear. Our perspectives on risk have slid to a point where we often struggle to see the true picture. Media manipulation sideswipes objective thinking and skews robust decision-making.

Managers are reluctant to take decisions without having employees sign away their lives. And the audit companies, which we call to ask us to check how our organisations are doing with safety, send us 100-page reports telling us we need more policies, procedures and rules ...

### BUT WHAT IF?

Sure, there are serious incidents that occur – recall the pedestrian bridge collapse on the M1 in Sandton, in October 2015, which killed three people and injured many more.

We can, however, all think of stories about “how safety has stopped something” – whether it be hanging flower baskets taken down for fear of them falling on someone’s head, to children’s playgrounds razed to the ground in case the kids take a tumble and hurt themselves. The modern mantra associated with these “safety risks” is always “Ah yes, but what if ...?”. The response: over-precaution, red tape and a restriction on life as we know it.

Hang on a second; it is fear, not risk management, that has caused these reactions. Forty years ago, Hollywood released a movie that injected so much fear into society it still has millions of us panicked each time we go to the seaside. That familiar: “Du-dur. Du-dur.-Du-dur-du-du-du-du-durrrrr” tune plays through our heads as we swim out into deeper water – and then hastily splash back to the shore. Come on folks, *Jaws* was a movie!

Yes, I know that in Jeffreys Bay, Plett and elsewhere from KwaZulu-Natal down to Cape Point, there are moments where a shark bumps a surfer or two, but, statistically, there are more people killed by falling coconuts, or falling down stairs, or choking on boerewors and biltong, or while they are under the influence of a Klippiess and Coke. These don’t make the headlines, however, sharks do and the perception about these gracious creatures as “man eaters” continues.

### LET’S KEEP IT REAL

It’s exactly this type of paralysing fear that I speak of in my TED talk. Though perhaps, rather unusually, my fear is of the water itself, rather than what was in it. You see, from a very early age, I wasn’t scared of sharks, but indeed fascinated by them.

It was this fascination that led me to work on overcoming my fears of the water, and perhaps even drove me to become a risk management professional. It may be an unusual hobby for a safety person, but several times I year I come here, to my second home, South Africa.

Whether it’s the sardine run from Port St Johns, the ragged tooth sharks of Aliwal Shoal, the tigers at Amanzimtoti and Umkomaas, or the magnificent great whites of Gansbaai and False Bay, you’ll find me getting up close and personal with these gentle giants of our oceans.

Man eaters? More misunderstood, I say. I’m not denying the risk involved in diving without a cage with these wild animals, but I’m also not going to fall for the negative spin and misperceptions either.

### WE’RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER, SAFER BOAT

We all have fears, but if we let go of the media hype, once free of the elements that paralyse us, we become enabled



to achieve goals that we previously may have thought unattainable.

The real value proposition for us as occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals, then, is our ability to take an inherently risky human endeavour – like shark diving, or the construction industry, mining, oil and gas, utilities, or, indeed, any modern business today – and use our unique skill set to enable success without loss.

How? We begin by changing our language. Stop asking “What if ... ?” and start saying “What if we could ...” Then demonstrate how we can manage the risks to an acceptable level. We engage employees and leaders in identifying actions that both decrease risk and increase the chance of success.

We precisely define the risk problem, then partner with our people to solve it and enable the satisfaction of organisational needs. We lead the effort to shift our corporate culture from polarised perspectives on risk to informed and balanced decision-making.


In the terms of our profession, we must become energetic advocates and facilitators of Risk Based Decision Making (RBDM). This is a decision-making process by which you systematically identify hazards, assess the degree of risk and determine the best course of action to achieve the goal with an acceptable level of risk.

The United States Department of Energy has come up with a slick acronym for its method of RBDM, which it calls S.A.F.E.R. Here are the five steps:

1. Summarise the critical steps in the work process.
2. Anticipate/discuss errors for each critical step and relevant error precursors.
3. Foresee the probable and worst-case consequences during each critical step.
4. Evaluate existing and proposed controls at each critical step to prevent, catch, and recover from errors and to reduce their consequences.
5. Review previous experiences, accidents, near misses and lessons learned relevant to the specific task and critical steps to see what else you can learn in order to make the task even safer.

### THE PASSIONATE PURSUIT OF SAFETY

Just thinking about risk will not overcome fear, but action will. It's time for a new approach in 2016. We must passionately lead our organisations to evolve from being fearful of risk to a point where they embrace functional practices that result in maximised organisational success with regard to people, planet and profit.

This “Triple Bottom Line” of workplace safety can be yours. Let's imagine a little more. Think outside the box. Let's not fear the sharks of safety, but, instead, step up bravely to the shoreline in our speedos and ask “What if we could...?” 

TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a global set of conferences run by the private non-profit Sapling Foundation, under the slogan “Ideas Worth Spreading”.



Sharman on Safety is a series of extracts that SHEQ MANAGEMENT is running this year, from Andrew Sharman's new book: From Accidents to Zero: a practical guide to improving your workplace safety culture. Andrew is an international member of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (SAIOSH) and chief executive of RyderMarshSharman – consultants on leadership and cultural excellence to a wide range of blue-chip corporates and non-government organisations globally. More at [www.rydermarshsharman.com](http://www.rydermarshsharman.com). SHEQ MANAGEMENT readers will receive 20 percent off the price of Sharman's book at: [www.fromaccidentstozero.com](http://www.fromaccidentstozero.com) using the code SHEQSA.

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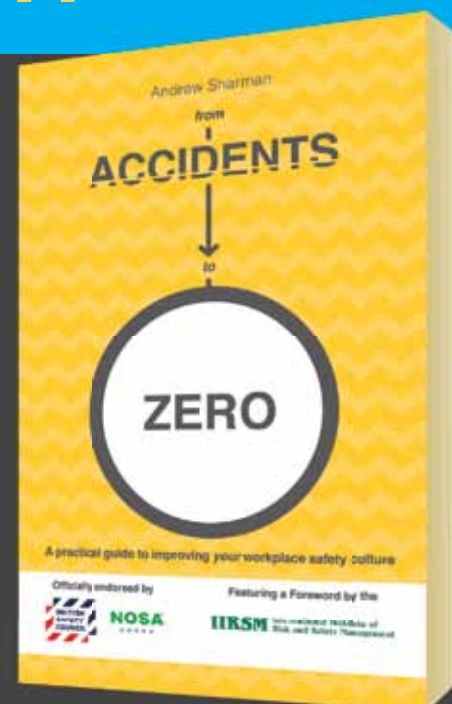
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# DON'T LET YOUR SAFETY CULTURE COLLAPSE

It's very easy to blame accidents on human error, but, as BRETT SOLOMON warns, we need to do much more than just point fingers after an accident has occurred ...

I was sad to hear the news of collapse of the pedestrian bridge over the M1 freeway near Johannesburg, in which three people were killed and 21 injured. It is at times like these we are reminded just how critical it is to work safely, and how devastating the impact can be when things go wrong.

In no way do I want to negate the gravity of this incident and the shattering impact it will have on so many lives. My concern is how the investigation might be approached. When I did a Google search, the very first hit read: "Murray and Roberts to face the music after bridge collapse."

As I switched between radio stations, the same sentiments rang out loud: "Who is to blame? Someone must be held accountable! Who is at fault for this catastrophe?" While these questions need answers, they are based on a perspective that is troubling.

The premise is that someone is to blame and they must be held accountable. In essence, I agree that people need to take responsibility for their actions. My caution is we should shun the knee-jerk reaction of looking for a scapegoat at the cost of finding the real causes.

Our underlying philosophy will determine how we approach investigations. The stance we take will determine the questions we ask. This will influence the answers we find. Too often, such incidents are attributed to the loaded term "human error." If we assume someone is at fault, we will taint our search for answers to confirm our predispositions.

Is it possible to take a different approach? Is it not more important to try find out what happened? Surely one of the goals of investigating incidents is to use these as learning opportunities to avoid similar disasters in the future.

Todd Conklin, human and organisation performance consultant, urges that we "have to look beyond procedures and behaviors in order to find the reasons for success or failure".

Sidney Dekker, renowned author of *The Field Guide to Human Error*, explains that "underneath every simple, obvious story about error, there is a deeper, more complex story. Take your pick: blame human error or try to learn from failure".

Dekker further proposes that human error is not the origin of failure, but is a symptom of failure. It is the beginning point of the investigation, not the conclusion. The reason investigations often take the route of seeking a guilty party is because it's cheap and easy; it diverts attention away from the larger, but not so evident, faults within the company's systems, and often allows senior leadership to save face.

If we put aside our need for justice for a moment, would we not agree that employees do not maliciously and intentionally do unsafe work, or choose to put themselves and others in harm's way?

What we quickly forget is that workers are trying to make the best decisions under immense pressure, as well as in ambiguous and constantly changing situations. Their decision-making is what makes sense to them at that moment. It is too easy to say after the fact "they should have".

The mystery of an investigation is to find what contributed to someone making certain decisions. If a person's actions (or decisions) are taken in context, it usually reveals that they are not appalling, malevolent, or surprising. In the same situation, others would have made exactly the same decision.





“ If we assume someone is at fault, we will taint our search for answers to confirm our predispositions.



The trick is to avoid the trap where we attribute failure to one single reason. If the investigation concludes that the only contributing factor is human error, it is highly unlikely that genuine learning has taken place. If there is a possibility that another similar incident could occur, then the source of the breakdown hasn't been rectified.

If we understand that incidents cannot be blamed only on human error, then we should be asking different questions. Here are a few questions that you could use as a starting point:

- Are team members encouraged to take responsibility and bring safety concerns to management's attention, or is there a "culture of blame" where people may even hide incidents?
- Have you ever had a knee-jerk reaction to an incident, and, if so, what could be done differently?
- If you have resorted to only finding the "guilty person(s)", has it had any detrimental impact on your organisation?
- Are unsafe practices a reflection of deeper shortcoming within the organisation?
- How can you take a proactive approach to safety by looking beyond just the human contributing factors to incidents?

Let us be leaders who learn from our mistakes and those of others. Let us avoid knee-jerk responses to unfortunate incidents and be dedicated to finding the deeper contributing factors. Let us construct a safety culture that won't collapse under the pressure of quick fixes. **SM**



Dr Brett Solomon is a principal consultant at Sentis, and has been involved in numerous safety culture change initiatives with progressive thinking organisations such as Anglo American, Glencore Alloys, PPC and Aveng Moolmans. Currently he is working closely with BHP in South Africa and Impala Platinum.

# LOOKING AHEAD: OHS IN 2016



ROBIN JONES, president of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Saiosh) gives us his three wishes for occupational health and safety in 2016



ROBIN W JONES

**F**or our Institute, 2015 was a splendid year. We either broke records (passed the 5 500 member mark), or set new records: we achieved an average of 175 new members per month – in July we peaked at 248 new members for the month!

More packages were added to benefit members: access to updates on any one of 256 legislative acts, and a 50-percent discount if a member took out a subscription on a specific Act.

Looking ahead, my three wishes for Occupational health and safety (OHS) in 2016 are:

1. When investigating accidents or incidents, I want the senior managers to have an open mind, with no preconceived ideas about who was wrong. I would like them to focus on fact finding instead of fault finding. Rather than point fingers, use the opportunity to develop positive steps to prevent a recurrence of the incident.
2. If this has not already been done, place the status level of the OHS function on the same level as the production, engineering, quality control and finance departments. Don't put occupational safety and health in a silo by itself. The entire purpose of the OHS Act is to prevent harm occurring in the workplace and/or associated disruptions to the smooth running of the business.
3. When I read safety journals from the United Kingdom, they contain articles which indicate where an accident occurred. The article includes the name of the company, the contravention of the law, as well as the consequences of such action, for example: a fine, or criminal prosecution. I would like the Department of Labour to


publish the same type of information, so that the South African public is aware of all the major accidents that have occurred.

My purpose for such a request is to create a learning opportunity for industries across the board. If an offence occurred and it was due to a lack of explaining a workman's scope of authority, for example, then industry in general should be asking the question: "Have we covered that eventuality extensively in our organisation?"

Saiosh is currently looking into extending the benefits that are available to our members. One of these benefits is an insurance policy. Among the categories of cover is a public liability policy for our members, particularly in the consulting fields.

Planning for the Annual OHS Conference, to be held on May 24 and 25 at Gallagher Estate, is progressing smoothly. We have already lined up our 11 speakers (including international speakers).

There will be more Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshops around the country this year. Currently we have Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban on our tour route. These workshops are free for members (visitors have to pay). We can also consider holding workshops in other areas where we have more than 50 members.

I know that it is exciting when the balance sheet shows a profit at the end of a financial year. At that time, the shareholders, the board and the top management rejoice. However, that excitement comes nowhere near the excitement felt when an OHS practitioner finds that one or more corrective actions have prevented, or eliminated, the potential for an accident in a workplace. 





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# BBF SAFETY GROUP – TAKING BACK THE SA MARKET, ONE SHOE AT A TIME

With seven safety footwear brands under their umbrella, BBF Safety Group is the largest manufacturer of safety footwear in the country. Peter Gerbrands, group marketing manager, provides insight to the Group's recent bold and innovative moves

**F**or more than a decade virtually all local manufacturing sectors have been affected by the continual threat of Chinese imports. The South African safety footwear manufacturing industry has certainly been no exception. Imported safety footwear accounted for only 17 percent of the total market in 2005 – today this figure is 51 percent.

It was thus that, in 2014, five of the most-respected businesses in the industry merged to form South Africa's largest manufacturer of safety footwear; the BBF Safety Group. Today, the Group operates throughout South Africa, Africa, Australasia, the Americas, the Middle East, and Europe.

"In an effort to preserve local manufacturing and save South African jobs, we decided to face the challenge with a merger," explains Gerbrands.

Collectively, BBF Safety Group shares more than 200

years of experience in Africa and houses seven top South African safety footwear brands – Bova, Frams, Fuel, Inyati, Lemaitre, Sisi and Wayne.

"This allows us to compete across multiple pricing tiers, and to achieve significant economies of scale. The result is high-quality, locally produced products – each offering great value for money," Gerbrands adds.

With Chinese imports dominating the 51 percent of the market that buys economically priced safety footwear, BBF Safety Group knew that this was an area in which to focus. "Previously, this segment of the market was under-served," Gerbrand continues.

"Our merger gave us the ability to produce footwear at the right price point for this segment – without compromising on quality and service. In 2015, we repositioned Frams, the original South African safety footwear brand, to champion this challenge."

Frams is safety footwear for those on a budget or for



“BBF Safety Group shares more than 200 years of experience in Africa and houses seven top South African safety footwear brands

contract workers. It is a product buyers can rely on and it comes with a quality and service guarantee.

"All of our footwear is fully compliant to either SANS/ISO 20345 or EN 20345 standards," Gerbrand notes.

"Furthermore, the import sector experiences problems with regulatory compliance, aftersales service and delivery lead times. We will be focusing on remedying these issues from within South African borders – we believe this will allow us to differentiate ourselves," he continues.

"Market response to our new Frams range has been exceptional. Key to our success will be to ensure that we can continuously meet this demand and deliver on our service promise.

"We're also expanding further into the African market, which is a key part of our overall business strategy. We believe that we have value to offer these markets, whose needs are in many aspects similar to those of the South African market," Gerbrands concludes. <sup>SM</sup>



**BELOW:**

Peter Gerbrands, group marketing manager at BBF Safety Group.



# IT TAKES MORE THAN MONEY TO MAKE A HAPPY WORKFORCE



If your employees enjoy high levels of job satisfaction, you'll have a competitive edge in the market. Retaining employees can help drive down the costs of recruitment and training. Anton van Heerden, managing director of Sage HR & Payroll, explains how you can enhance the quality of a workplace and have happier employees

**P**eople who are satisfied in their jobs tend to be more productive and motivated, which can help boost company performance and improve customer service.

Many companies imagine that the elusive concept of job satisfaction is mostly about money. Although there are a few people who work purely for financial reward, most employees also look for purpose, achievement and personal development in their careers.

With that in mind, here are some of the things managers and human resource (HR) departments should be doing to lift job satisfaction in the workforce.

## **1. Offer a comfortable working environment and provide the right tools**

It's important that people are happy in the workplace and that they have the right tools to do their jobs. Getting this right is about understanding the sort of workplace culture you want to create and actively encouraging collaboration and healthy workplace relationships.

It's also about benefits such as flexible working hours, or even a comfortable workspace. A spacious and well-lit office, ergonomic workstations, a clean kitchen or canteen, and reliable technology all do wonders for productivity and morale in the workplace.

## **2. Respect the work-life balance**

Most employees these days want to strike an optimal balance between home and work life. That's why it's important to offer flexible hours – where practical – and to allow workers to work remotely when it makes

sense. Mobile technology is a boon, since it lets people be productive wherever they are.

## **3. Provide opportunities for advancement**

Most employees want to grow and develop in their jobs – they want opportunities to learn new skills, take on more responsibility, and, ultimately, move up the ranks in the organisation. Formal career paths and training programmes can help employees feel like they have a career with the organisation rather than just a job.

## **4. Make sure employees are engaged and invested in the company's success**

Employees need to feel like they have a stake in the success of the business. For some companies, this translates into performance bonuses, or share incentive schemes, that reward people when the business is doing well; but it also means listening to employees' feedback and empowering them to innovate.

## **5. Be transparent**

It costs nothing to be transparent; it simply demands that management keeps an open channel of communication with employees. There might be some things you can't disclose, because of regulations or customer confidentiality agreements, but, where possible, keep your people informed about the truth of the company's performance and strategy. This gives them peace of mind and helps nip rumours and speculation in the bud.

## **6. Listen and learn**

Use informal meetings, or structures such as monthly one-



on-one discussions, or performance reviews, to listen to your employee's views. Mechanisms such as anonymous employee/job satisfaction surveys can give insight into your employees' loyalty levels.

#### 7. Have a coherent approach to rewards and recognition

This isn't just about the bottom line; it's about the employee's perception of how fairly he or she is paid compared to the wider market and co-workers. It is also about ensuring that people feel they'll be compensated for hard work, or exceptional achievement – whether through a salary increase during the performance review process, or a performance bonus.

In addition to performance management and financial incentives, be generous with your praise for good work and focus on public recognition.

#### 8. Don't stretch your people too thin and too far

A company where people are routinely working for 15-hours a day (outside of crunch times like financial year-end), and where there are constant last-minute deadlines, is usually a stressful and unhappy environment.

These are symptoms of poor management or under-resourcing, and they can churn the morale of even the most dedicated employee. It's up to managers to monitor the stress levels and workload of each employee, and

ensure that the company is utilising its human resources correctly.

#### 9. Management support matters

A common misconception among bad managers is that all employees should be self-motivated and able to work without guidance. The truth is that most employees value feedback and direction, even if today's workplace isn't the hierarchical command-and-control environment of the past. People like to know what they're doing right and where they can improve, and they also value structure in their jobs and relationships with their bosses.

#### 10. Understand that everyone does not have the same needs and motivations

Different personalities, and people in different life stages, will value different aspects of the workplace environment. There is some truth in the cliché that Generation Y yearns for feedback and guidance, whereas Generation X is more self-motivated and independent.

Young graduates trying to prove themselves might care more about opportunities for advancement, while a new parent might be looking for better work-life balance. That's why it's important to segment your workforce, as you would your customers, and create employee value propositions that appeal to the different kinds of talent you'd like to attract and retain. <sup>SM</sup>



### Public Course Schedule: 2016 – Johannesburg

NAME OF COURSE	DAYS	PRICE	DATES
<b>SHE LEGAL</b>			
Compliance Management - Module 1: OHS Act (Week 2)	5	R 12 020	7-11 Mar
Compliance Management: Module 2 (HIRA, LCA & COID)	5	R 8 610	4-8 Apr
Construction Regulations	1	R 1 650	17 Mar 24 May
Legal Responsibility and Accountability	1	R 1 590	12 Apr
OHS Act: A Holistic Approach	1	R 1 270	8 Mar

NAME OF COURSE	DAYS	PRICE	DATES
<b>SHE STANDARDS</b>			
ISO 14001 Awareness	1	R 1 460	15 Mar
ISO 14001 Implementation	2	R 2 870	6-7 Apr
ISO 9001 Awareness	1	R 1 460	16 Mar
OHSAS 18001 Awareness	1	R 1 460	4 April
OHSAS 18001 Implementation	2	R 2 870	9-10 May
<b>SHE MANAGEMENT</b>			
Incident Investigation Course (CAM)	3	R 3 880	8-10 Mar

NAME OF COURSE	DAYS	PRICE	DATES
NEBOSH: International Certificate in Construction Health and Safety (ICC)	15	R 20 220	4-22 Apr
NEBOSH: International Certificate in Environmental Management	10	R 16 330	11-15 Apr
<b>SHE TECHNICAL</b>			
First Aid Levels 1&2 combined	4	R 1 980	28-31 March
<b>SHE GENERAL</b>			
HIRA (Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment)	1	R 1 460	3 Mar
SHE Representatives Course	1	R 1 250	30 Mar 25 May





## MOVING THE WASTE INTO **RESOURCE**

The Department of Environmental Affairs recently announced that South Africa will soon have a waste management plan for the paper and packaging industry. THATO TINTE looks at the impact of this plan and what it requires from businesses

**T**he announcement of this plan, which the Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, says will bring significant change in the current waste management regime, followed the regulations published under the National Environmental Management Waste Act, 2008.

In addition to the paper and packaging industry, the electrical, electronic equipment and lighting industries were also mandated to prepare and submit industry waste-management plans for approval.

Molewa notes that a household-level “separation-at-source” mandate will be included in this industry plan, so that the department’s five-year, national waste-management strategy can be reached.

Separation at source – which is a requirement of the

Waste Act – is the practice of ordinary citizens sorting their recyclable waste material (plastics, metals, paper or glass) at home before disposing of it.

Molewa reiterates that the department’s goal is to work at improving the minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste. Objectives required to attain this include: diverting 25 percent of waste away from landfills; ensuring that all metropolitan municipalities, secondary cities and large towns drive and promote separation-at-source initiatives; and achieving the industry-specific objectives of reducing waste and attaining the set recycling targets for the paper and packaging, pesticide, lighting and tyre industries.

The waste-management plan for the tyre industry was introduced in late 2012 and has seen 31 percent of waste



**LEFT AND BELOW:**

A new waste management plan is currently under discussion, which could be positive for the country, but not necessarily for industry.

tyres being diverted from landfills for re-use, recycling and recovery purposes. According to Molewa, through this plan, 3 000 jobs and 200 small, medium and micro enterprises (SMME) and co-operatives have been created to date – a feat she is hoping will be replicated in the other identified industries.

It is hoped that the plan will change the current state of waste that is seen in the streets. Through this plan and the commencement of separation-at-source initiatives, the department hopes that the amount of waste going to landfills will be minimised. It also hopes that the economic potential of this waste stream will be unlocked – ultimately facilitating the establishment of businesses in the sector and changing waste into a resource.

In a notice issued by the department to the identified industries, in July 2015, “producers” of waste were required to register with the minister within 60 days of the notice. They were then given 12 months (after registering) to prepare and submit an industry waste-management plan to be approved by the minister.

Producers are identified in the notice as “any persons or institutions engaged in the commercial manufacture, conversion, refurbishment or import action of new and/or used paper and packaging materials, lighting equipment or electrical and electronic equipment, which is intended for distribution in South Africa”.

Content requirements of industry waste-management plans are specified in the Act, the regulations and the notice. These include: providing annual projections over a five-year period on quantities and types of waste re-used, recycled, recovered and disposed of; providing the best measures to be implemented for best environmental management practice; indicating how the plan will raise national awareness of management of each waste stream; and identifying incentives that will be applied to encourage end-users to practise good waste management.

Failing to comply with the department’s requirements will result in hefty penalties and convicted offenders may face fines or imprisonment.

According to a presentation by Charles Muller, executive director of Packaging SA, the pricing strategy discussion document, which was gazetted for comment earlier




last year, suggests that there will be a collected waste-management charge or tax imposed on the industry.

Noting some industry concerns, Muller says this double taxation (voluntary levy and the mandatory waste-management charge/tax) could negatively impact the packaging sector – highlighting that the industry may seek to recover these costs through increased automation and job reduction.

Another concern raised by the packaging sector in their comments to the minister’s notice, was the severity of the penalties that would be imposed on the offending producers.

Muller says other issues on which the sector still requires clarity include who in the value chain will be obliged to pay the mandatory charges; for example, whether this will be the raw material producers, converters, brand owners, retailers – or a combination of all of these. The sector also needs to know how the tax or levy will be calculated, and whether financial and operational support will be provided to municipalities.

Despite these uncertainties, Muller concludes that success is crucial, as the industry has no option but to ensure that the country becomes a better place for current and future generations. 



# DOES RENEWABLE MEAN CLEAN?

South Africa is joining the renewable-energy bandwagon with solar and wind technologies being added into the energy mix. We take a look at whether these sources are truly pollution free

**T**he South African Department of Energy states that the country has a high level of renewable energy potential. Presently, there is a target in place of 10 000 GWh of renewable energy. “The minister has determined that 3 725 MW needs to be generated from renewable energy sources to ensure the continued uninterrupted supply of electricity,” the parastatal points out.

“This 3 725 MW is broadly in accordance with the capacity allocated to renewable energy generation in the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2010 to 2030.” The Department also developed an Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme “to contribute towards the target of 3 725 MW and towards socio-economic and environmentally sustainable growth, and to start and stimulate the renewable industry in South Africa”.

Quartz Africa, a digital news outlet, adds that, by the end of June 2015, about five percent of South Africa’s electricity requirements were being provided by renewables (excluding hydro), of which one third is being supplied by solar. “By 2030, the plan is to have 21 percent of the total energy capacity being derived from renewables.”

How clean are these alternative energy sources? *The Journalist’s Resource*, named one of the best reference websites by the American Library Association, answers this question in its piece: Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from solar and wind energy: A critical meta-survey.

“A key question, with respect to renewable energy growth, surrounds the greenhouse-gas emissions associated with specific technologies. While renewable power sources are, themselves, carbon-free – it’s just sunlight, wind and water, after all – the components and facilities have to be manufactured, built and maintained. At the end of their lives, plants must be retired or replaced and their

components disposed of or recycled.”

The reference website highlights a 2008 study, published in the international peer-reviewed journal *Energy Policy*, which examined nuclear power from this perspective. “It found that the mean value of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, over a reactor’s lifetime, was 66 g per kWh of electricity – less than the best fossil fuel (natural gas), but more than the most carbon-intensive renewable (biomass).”

It adds that another research review and meta-analysis was published in *Energy Policy* during 2014. The piece: Assessing the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from solar PV and wind energy: A critical meta-survey, tackles the same question for renewables.

The authors were Daniel Nugent and Benjamin Sovacool, of Vermont Law School. Sovacool is also at Aarhus University in Denmark and authored the 2008 nuclear-power study.

“In their research, they examined more than 153 studies on the life-cycle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of a range of wind and solar photovoltaic (PV) technologies,” *Journalist’s Resource* points out. “They selected 41 of these for deeper analysis, allowing the scholars to better understand the emissions of current technologies, as well as to pinpoint where emissions occur and under what circumstances. All the studies chosen for inclusion were peer-reviewed and more than 70 percent were published within the last five years.”

## The key findings include:

- Based on the studies examined, wind energy emits an average of 34,11 g of CO<sub>2</sub> per kWh over its lifetime, with a low estimate of 0,4 g and a high estimate of 364,8 g.

The mean value for solar PV is 49,91 g of CO<sub>2</sub> per kWh, with a low estimate of 1 g and a high estimate of 218 g. The large ranges in the estimates were due to factors such as resource inputs, technology, location, sizing and capacity

“ The same manufacturing process in Germany would result in less than half of the total emissions that such a process would entail in China.



**ABOVE AND LEFT:**  
Manufacture and disposal of renewable energy equipment needs to be eco-friendly.

and longevity, as well as different calculation methods used by source studies.

- The sources of energy used to manufacture components can be critical: “The same manufacturing process in Germany would result in less than half of the total emissions that such a process would entail in China. This was primarily due to China’s significantly greater dependence on black coal for electricity production compared to Germany’s much greater reliance on natural gas and nuclear power.” (The same issue plays into the lifetime emissions of electric cars.)
- The “material cultivation and fabrication stage” of renewable-energy facilities was responsible for the greatest proportion of emissions – just over 71 percent for both solar PV and wind.

Facility construction and related transportation were responsible for 24 percent of lifetime CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of wind power and 19 percent for solar PV, while operation contributed 19,4 percent of lifetime emissions for wind farms and 13 percent for solar.

- Decommissioning or reuse was a net gain for both solar and wind, offsetting the equivalent of 19,4 percent of the lifetime emissions of a wind farm and 3,3 percent of a solar PV facility.

This is because “reclamation is not a standard practice for wind energy (the pads are often left or reused), and a majority of the steel towers, plastics, and fiberglass blades are recyclable.” These practices allow future emissions to be avoided.

- On average, larger wind turbines were found to have lower lifetime emissions per kWh than smaller ones: “Higher capacity wind turbines, both with taller hub heights and larger rotor diameters, correspond to lower greenhouse gas intensities.”
- Solar greenhouse gas intensity also fell with increasing size, despite the fact that panels are modular and should theoretically have the same efficiency at all sizes. This was possibly due to gains in transportation and logistics.
- Lifetime emissions decreased substantially as lifespan increased: Studies that assumed a 20-year turbine life resulted in an average of 40,69 g per kWh, falling to 28,53 g for 25 years and 25,33 g for 30 years. Solar followed a similar pattern, with an even sharper drop over time, from 106,25 g per kWh for five years to 17,5 g per kWh over 20 years.

The authors note: “By spotlighting the lifecycle stages and physical characteristics of these technologies, which are most responsible for emissions, improvements can be made to lower their carbon footprint.”

The *Journalist’s Resource* concludes: “Looking forward, they recommend that future studies should be more methodologically rigorous and that key questions, such as the impact of energy storage on lifetime emissions, be examined.”

Developing countries such as South Africa should definitely continue to join the renewable-energy bandwagon, however, if our planet is to survive. <sup>SM</sup>



# FIRST AID

## AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Emergency situations can happen anywhere and at any time. It's therefore important that first-aid knowledge is always on hand. Knowing what to do when someone is choking can make the difference between life and death. THATO TINTE explores South African first-aid apps

**T**he beauty of technology in our world today is that we have a wealth of information at our fingertips.

Realising the need for basic first-aid skills in the prevention of unnecessary loss of life, a few local organisations have launched first-aid mobile apps suitable for the South African landscape.

One of the first of these was launched by Netcare 911 in 2013. The app, called Netcare Assist, can be downloaded free of charge on Apple, Android and Blackberry phones.

Although Netcare Assist is a multi-functional emergency app that allows users to manage their healthcare needs holistically, it also features first-aid assistance functionality, which, according to the company, "provides information on how to handle a range of incidences, from

choking to heart attacks".

This function allows users to listen to clips, or read the information provided, which is accompanied by illustrations on actions to be taken. The app also provides a step-by-step guide on procedures to follow in different emergency situations.

During the xenophobic attacks in the country last year, the South African Red Cross Society launched its first-aid app in a bid to assist those under attack, who may not have had access to medical facilities.

The Red Cross Society's first aid app: First Aid on the Go, can be downloaded on the Apple app store and free of charge from the Google Play store.

The app provides assistance on how to handle common emergencies such as choking, treating spider and snake



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**LEFT:**

Having basic first-aid instructions at hand can save precious moments in an emergency.

bites, along with other basic first-aid functions such as how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Users are required to register on the app for ease of access to the content and functions.

In a similar vein, the Red Cross Society's first-aid app is tailored specifically for the South African audience and context. It makes use of videos, animations and interactive quizzes, along with simple step-by-step instructions on everyday first-aid scenarios.

In addition, the app is fully integrated with 10177 (toll-free) ambulance services that can be called at any time. It also features safety tips that will assist in preparing for emergencies such as extreme weather conditions and disasters.

Pre-loaded content allows for instant access to all safety information at all times – even if there is no cell reception, internet connection, data, or airtime loaded.

The St John Ambulance first-aid app also provides invaluable information and is free for download on Android, Blackberry and iPhone mobile devices. It can also be downloaded from the St John Ambulance website.

This app also gives illustrated guides, protocols to be followed and voice instructions on basic knowledge of first aid in common emergency procedures.

A range of first-aid scenarios provided by the app include: CPR; diabetic emergencies; choking and allergic reactions.

To prevent death in emergency situations, remaining prepared and knowledgeable is key! These pioneering apps not only assist in dangerous home, work or natural-disaster situations, but can also be used to brush up on basic first-aid skills, as content is continuously updated.

However, even though technology has helped us with valuable life-saving advice on hand, we must remember that these apps are not a substitute for proper first-aid training. SM

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# FUNCTIONAL FIRST AID

First-aid training is not something to be taken lightly. The Order of St John explains

**T**he importance of having competently trained first aiders in the work environment cannot be stressed enough – that's why it is a legal requirement in South Africa.

In any working environment, employees (and even customers) can become injured or fall ill while performing their work. It is important that they receive fast and appropriate first-aid treatment to prevent the injury or illness from worsening – simply put, it can make the difference between life and death.

The upside to investing in your employees' safety through first-aid training is that they become more safety

conscious and more alert regarding potential hazards in the workplace.

with the skills necessary to provide emergency scene management and to treat medical emergencies including: unconsciousness, suspected spinal injuries, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), severe bleeding, burns, and medical conditions such as seizures, diabetic emergencies and allergic reactions.

## What should people ask about a company providing first-aid training?


- Is it registered with the Department of Labour?
- Is the course recognised internationally?
- Does the course offer the right balance of theory and practical training?
- Is the training suitable for learners with limited reading and writing skills?
- Is the training in line with your company's particular risk register?
- Are the instructors regularly monitored and evaluated?
- Is the company registered with the Resuscitation Council of SA to ensure current CPR protocols are being taught?

## How has first-aid training evolved over the years?

Other than resuscitation protocols, which are set internationally by ILCOR every five years, very little change has taken place. However, first-aid training organisations need to familiarise themselves with industry changes, so as to provide the necessary, specialised first-aid training for these sectors.

## What trends, within the first-aid training sphere, are you most excited about at the moment?

E-learning benefits both employer and employee – the employee gains valuable skills at times convenient to them and the employer has less downtime while employees are off site and sitting in the classroom.

First-aid training can no longer be viewed as the “poor relative” by employers and staff. It is an essential skill and more important than ever – not only for compliance, but because it is included as a foundation skill in more and more qualifications. 



## What skills do people learn during basic first-aid training?

The most important rule of performing first aid is to do it safely! Emergency scenes can be filled with potential hazards. Once the first aider has taken control of the scene and assessed each casualty for life-threatening injuries, casualty care can begin based on the severity of each individual's injuries.

A basic first-aid course, referred to by the Department of Labour as Level 1 training, will equip the first aider



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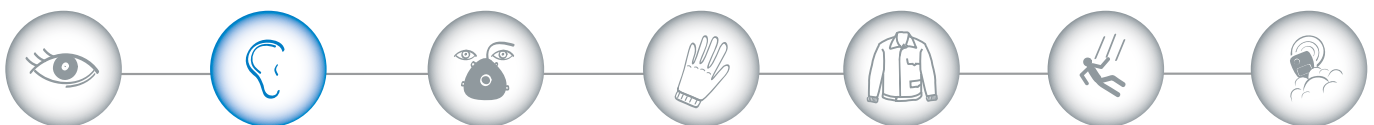
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# KEEP EMPLOYEES SAFE

We live in a world where bad things happen to good people every day. However, if you are a leader in the workplace, you are responsible for the safety and security of those you lead

**A**ccording to an article by Mark Sanborn on the *Entrepreneur* website, here are seven very important thinking points:

**1. Come to terms with reality.**

It can happen in your workplace. A perpetrator can be someone you know, or a complete stranger. Living in denial is the riskiest strategy of all. Post-tragedy interviews prove the point: "I could never imagine it happening here," you'll often hear.

**2. Be aware and teach awareness.**

Criminals use the element of surprise. By paying closer attention to unusual or suspicious behaviour and challenging it, you can reconfigure the odds. Don't be afraid to enquire or report. Be polite, but assertive, in challenging anyone acting strangely.

**3. Get expert advice.**

Law enforcement officials are usually willing to offer suggestions, and even courses. Private enterprises can teach and provide security. Find someone in your community who is a proven expert in workplace safety. The safest and most effective behaviour isn't always intuitive, but an expert will know what works best.

**4. Develop a plan.**

Make sure every employee understands what needs to happen should there be a crisis, whether by a violent person or a natural disaster. A written plan of action should be included in your policies and procedures manual. It is a good idea to vet this plan with your legal counsel.

**5. You need to be ahead of the game.**

Don't put off doing what needs to be done to ensure your safety and that of your team. Many alarm systems are purchased only after a break-in, for example.

**6. Do the drill.**

It isn't enough to have a plan that others can't implement. Every quarter, or at least every six months, alert your employees to a drill and practise it so that people know what to do, and where to go, in case of specific emergencies.

**7. Find leaders within your team.**

These individuals can serve as captains to help coordinate and take additional responsibility in case of an emergency. Make workplace security a team effort.

**8. Consider providing a basic self-defence and safety course to all employees.**

It's an employee perk that will not only be appreciated, but could potentially save lives. SM



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# DOING IT DIGITALLY

You have to make yourself invaluable if you want to gain a foothold, or a promotion, in today's trying economic times ... We talk to Richard Leeming, Dean of Academy of York, to see how online learning can help you do just that

**W**hy should people consider online learning/home study (as opposed to conventional learning) and what benefits does it provide?

Conventional classroom-based learning is, by far, more expensive and more time-consuming than online or distance learning. Travelling to classes, paying for expensive text books and not earning while you study can impact your ability to complete your course.

By studying while you work, you can reduce the time it takes to get your qualification while using your industry knowledge to assist you in understanding the material. You can also network with your fellow industry professionals, via our study groups and online forums, to advance your career.

## What challenges are associated with this form of learning?

Being able to juggle family life, work life and your chosen course takes discipline and dedication.

## How can students overcome these challenges and what resources do you offer?

We offer dedicated support and study groups to assist distance learners to share information, while a student forum allows online students to interact with fellow learners and their lecturer. We believe in completion, rather than just enrolment, and our student advisors are trained to motivate and assist students at every stage of their study journey.

## What should people consider when they are looking for an online learning provider?

Students should look at how user-friendly the portal is, how much support is provided to them (by way of interaction with the course coordinator and the lecturer) and also look at bursary opportunities.

Academy of York offers bursaries for many of our students, making it more affordable and incentivising students to successfully complete their course.

## What new developments are taking place in this industry and how is the Academy of York utilising these?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), such as workplace experience, is becoming something that education providers are looking at.

Academy of York has launched its RPL in Human Resources, which is accredited by the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP). Students can get their certificates or diplomas in six months, for example, if they can provide evidence of work corresponding to specific HR or National Qualification Framework (NQF) standards.

## What does the future hold for online/distance learning?

Online learning is outstripping traditional classroom-based learning worldwide. Academy of York has recognised this trend and is one of the few private colleges to offer online education, supported by academics with years of industry experience – ensuring that students get industry specific courses that are relevant to the South African marketplace. <sup>SM</sup>

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# MINI CRANE

## ANYONE?

As a result of rapidly growing urban centres on the African continent, space is limited and working at heights is now more prevalent. Solutions such as mini cranes are now in the spotlight. CLAIRE RENCKEN reports

**E**azi Group, a specialist in mobile work-at-height solutions, offers a technologically advanced, cost-effective and safe solution – the Maeda mini crane. At first sight, it resembles a robotic spider sitting on long crawls: compact and stable, with a long arm coming out of its core, ready to move into position to get the job done.

The Maeda mini crane is versatile lifting equipment, developed and designed to tackle ambitious tasks in constricted areas.

As one of the largest construction and equipment manufacturing companies in Japan, Maeda has been producing mini cranes since 1980. These are available on a rental basis throughout Africa, through Eazi Access Rental – a South African-owned company that offers the largest fleet of tele-handlers and work-at-height equipment in southern Africa.

The company has its head office in Midrand, north of Johannesburg, with 13 branches across various provinces in South Africa.

Chad Pope, business director for Eazi Access Rental, says:





Clients prefer to rent equipment first. Renting increasingly leads to more sales.



#### ABOVE AND LEFT:

The specialised Maeda mini cranes are now available in South Africa.

“The focus right now is to provide South African companies with safe work-at-height solutions that are cost-effective and enhance productivity.”

The Maeda mini cranes are ideal for use in a variety of different industrial sectors. The range offers a lifting capacity from one to six tonnes, with a lift height ranging from 5,5 to 16,7 m.

For specialised applications, such as glass handling or cladding, customers can choose from a variety of below-the-hook accessories. The smaller series can all be operated by remote control, allowing precise lifting. They also work on environmentally friendly electric power with zero emissions.

Maeda offers a wide range of models, starting with the MC104 Mini Crawler Crane. Its body is only 600 mm wide – well below the size of a standard doorway. The MC104 comes with a lifting bracket for easy lifting into place by a second crane or helicopter. Transmission is hydrostatic.





Customers have the option of choosing white rubber tracks to avoid damage to sensitive flooring. Pressure on the ground is very low. Loads are lifted by a pentagon-shaped automatic four-stage telescopic boom. The MC104 weighs only just over a tonne and can lift up to one tonne.


The next model, the MC174, comes with a lifting capacity of 1,7 t, and the most popular model, the MC285-2, boasts a massive lifting capacity of 2,82 t. All three models are compact machines with the same specs as big cranes, yet easy to load and transport.

The advantage of the various Maeda mini cranes is their versatility. It is possible to position them close to loads. Previously, such applications were dangerous and much larger, more expensive cranes had to be used.



Bo Börjesson, an industry veteran and technical advisor at Maeda Sweden, explains: "Proximity is more important than sales. In Europe, we have learnt that clients prefer to rent equipment first, before committing to buying, but we also know that renting increasingly leads to more sales. Most of our clients are looking for intelligent solutions for complicated tasks."

Maeda mini cranes are easy to operate, and hands-on training is provided to the customer to ensure that strict safety procedures are followed when using the equipment; something that is becoming increasingly important in the industry.

"Eazi Group offers competitive sales and rental services; with possible leases of three or five years. As the economy is under pressure, clients prefer to work more cost-effectively," says Larry Smith, managing director of Eazi Sales and Services, the sales arm of the Eazi Group. 

## Liviero's site safety earns two awards

Reflecting the group's continuous drive for the safest sites, Liviero Building was the proud winner of two awards at the 2015 Master Builders South Africa (MBSA) National Safety Competition.

This is the second consecutive year that Liviero has taken top honours in two of the ten categories of this prestigious industry competition, reports CEO Neil Cloete.

The company's Durban University of Technology site won Category D, for contracts between R10 and R25 million, while its Jelf Taylor project in Durban edged out the competition to earn first place in Category E, for contracts between R25 and R75 million.

Liviero Building was also the runner-up in the competition's Category F – for projects between R75 and R150 million – and in Category H – for contracts between R300 and R500 million.

The regional competition winners compete for The National MBSA Safety Awards. Liviero Building secured no less than five regional awards, all of which went forward to the national competition.

"We are extremely proud of our achievements in the construction industry's leading health and safety competition. I must commend the outstanding team effort of our Liviero Building executives and staff that helped us to win these awards," says Cloete.

The MBSA National Safety Competition saw around 45 sites judged according to strict criteria. MBSA appoints independent, qualified and experienced auditors to assess the sites, using the audit system of the MBSA.

The 2015 awards were presented at a gala dinner in Johannesburg, during the annual Master Builders SA Congress.



# WHAT'S THE BUZZ IN PPE?



Employees who do the dirty work aren't made of stone! Fortunately, there are various suppliers of personal protective equipment (PPE) that are committed to providing solutions to keep them safe from on-the-job hazards

**O**ne such supplier is Select PPE, which was recently awarded the Frost & Sullivan 2015 "Southern African Personal Protective Equipment Visionary Innovation Leadership Award" at a ceremony that hosted 140 of Africa's top innovative executives at Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town.

The annual client-nominated award recognises outstanding achievement and superior performance in areas such as leadership, technological innovation and strategic product development.

Select PPE sales director, Dries van Tonder, accepted the award on behalf of the 400-member South African-based company. Select PPE received the award for its innovative PPE solutions for women, and for software that facilitates greater control of PPE to previously unreachable markets.

Frost & Sullivan analysts independently attributed Select PPE's worthiness of this award to the following three aspects:

## 1. PPE for women in mining and industry:

To date, PPE has been specifically designed for men and does not properly fit a woman's form; reducing its protective functioning as well as its popularity among women in the industry. Select PPE, one of the few suppliers of female PPE, has pioneered more accurate form-fitting equipment that significantly enhances overall industry safety standards through its field-researched programme: "Women in Industry".

## 2. Innovative software to enhance PPE management:

The company has developed innovative software that challenges decades-old business models in a move away from paper-controlled business transactions towards online integration. This software, named "PPE Solution", is controlled by an application-specific issuing protocol (IP) and provides real-time information on all PPE users and daily usage. This IP includes an assessment of the type and quantity of protective equipment needed and provides for automatic replenishment of stock. It also alerts the head of safety when an employee is at risk.

## 3. Solutions for small-scale PPE:

This unique online capability has enabled Select PPE


to capture markets that have traditionally been hard to access. Previously, smaller operations with 150 to 350 employees were difficult to supply with PPE, as it was not economically viable to have on-site facilities. Select PPE's software, online store and "vending machine" for PPE, affords these smaller customers access to the full benefits of a holistic PPE solution.

Select PPE is also expanding its African operations by taking its PPE Solution to distributors across the continent.

Reflecting on the award, Van Tonder says: "The fact that this award is nominated by our clients is a great achievement. To get acknowledgement that our PPE systems are pushing boundaries and helping clients address real concerns shows us that we are living up to our slogan of 'Protecting People Every day'."

Last November, it was Afrox that was in the news, with the AfroxPac 35i. Underground miners entrust their safety and well-being to AfroxPac 35i self-contained, self-rescuer (SCSR) devices on a daily basis, and manufacturer Afrox was celebrating the production of its 100 000th unit in a record time of just two years.

The AfroxPac 35i is designed to supply life-saving oxygen to a miner in the event of an irrespirable or toxic atmosphere developing underground. It is unique in that it is one of the few mining devices expected to be permanently attached to the body and carried by miners throughout the duration of their shift.

Designed for use in harsh hard-rock mines, the AfroxPac 35i and its predecessor, the AfroxPac 35, have shown remarkable durability. Typically an AfroxPac 35i can be carried for 15 000 to 20 000 hours during its lifespan, with units used cumulatively in over a million worker hours daily. 







# FEET OFF THE GROUND?

Discussions around working at heights tend to focus mostly on hazardous workplaces, or occupations performed on elevated structures. THATO TINTE looks at the risks associated with indoor ladder use in traditional workspaces and the recommended safety guidelines

**D**aniel Smith, a general worker, has been asked to fix the bent overhead door guard in the office. For perfect reach, he decides to use a stepladder and places it in front of the door.

While working, the door unexpectedly pushes the ladder and Daniel loses his balance. As he falls, he hits his head on the floor and sustains a mild concussion that leads to persistent headaches – he also fractures a shoulder and cracks multiple vertebrae.

Fortunately, Daniel makes a full recovery, but not before spending a painful and costly three months in rehab and having to be out of work.

Many similar negligent and preventable ladder falls of this nature have taken place in workplaces around the country. The safe use of ladders in office environments, or smaller enclosed sites, is downplayed and often taken for granted despite the dangers and debilitating injuries that can be caused by falling off a ladder.

Any work that is performed in an elevated position should always be considered risky and given the required caution and care – whether one is one metre above the ground, or 20 stories high.

According to the South African labour guide, some of the major factors that contribute to ladder accidents in the workplace are: defective or poorly maintained ladders; dangerously positioned ladders (ladders placed at improper angles or near electrical lines); and workers not properly trained on the correct and safe use of ladders.

Evidenced in our dramatic example, Daniel broke one of the known “golden rules” of ladder safety – to never set a ladder against a door, or where the door could open onto it. Having your office employees trained on such basic rules of ladder safety can prevent unnecessary accidents.


The General Safety Regulations 6, 13A of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (OHS Act) provides a number of guidelines for ladder safety in the workplace.

These include: ensuring that the correct ladder is used for the task performed; never using ladders with missing or damaged stiles or rungs; and ensuring the bottom ends of the ladder are fitted with non-skid devices and hooks on the upper ends of the stiles before each use.

The Health Society of South Africa (HSSA) also gives valuable advice on safe ladder use. For stability, it recommends the 4:1 rule be followed when setting up ladders – that is, for every 1,2 m of ladder height, position the ladder’s base 30 cm away from the vertical support.

On extension and straight ladders, the HSSA recommends staying off the top three rungs and off the top two rungs on stepladders. Metal or wet wooden ladders must never be used near power lines. Ladders made of non-conductive material such as fibreglass are recommended to prevent electrocution.

The organisation also provides some basic, but often forgotten, rules: always pre-check ladders before use and ensure your ground surface is flat and stable; never skip rungs when climbing; tie shoelaces and fold trouser legs before ascending; ensure the soles of your shoes are clean; always use three points of contact on the ladder (two feet and a hand or two hands and a foot) and prohibit any persons with medical conditions, such as epilepsy or hypertension, from using ladders.

The reality is that walking under a ladder should not be the concern – failing to take ladder safety and its protocols seriously will instead be the true cause of “bad luck” for your business and for the health and safety of your workers. 



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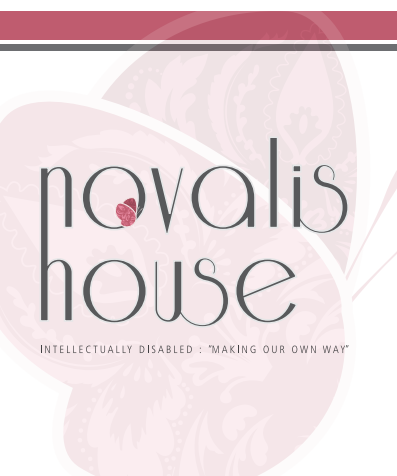
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