



Gulf Coast Chapter Newsletter



January 2018

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Interested in writing an original article or want your personal work shared in the Gulf Coast Chapter Newsletter?

Please contact Jessica Good at info@gulfcoast.asse.org

5 Ways to Promote Safety in Cross-Cultural Settings

Adapting to the global economy isn't optional for occupational safety and health professionals anymore; it's a necessity.

A new peer-reviewed article by Michael A. Flynn (NIOSH), Elizabeth Castellanos (Heineken International) and Augusto Flores-Andrade (ARSEIN), titled "Safety Across Cultures: Understanding the Challenges," examines how OSH employees and their employers can best promote safety in cross-cultural settings. The need for multicultural safety approaches doesn't just impact OSH personnel who travel abroad; it is also critical for safety professionals who regularly encounter foreign companies on their home turf.

Cultural sensitivity is particularly important for those in supervisory roles, according to Flynn, et al., because they are often required to function as translators, facilitating communication between local employees and foreign firms. Whether people working in safety are overseeing operations outside their country or employed by an international company with a different set of expectations, these five steps can help them evaluate their cross-cultural capacity and improve their effectiveness.

1. Understand Culture and Global Trends

The first step in overcoming almost any obstacle is awareness. Before OSH employees can become more culturally adept, they need to learn what culture actually means within the context of the profession. Culture goes deeper than what people wear, the language they speak and the foods they eat. It functions as a shorthand for the workplace interactions people value most: What does it mean to be a good coworker, leader or manager? How do people acknowledge each other's efforts and triumphs? How do companies persuade workers to change their behavior?

"For OSH, we can understand culture as a system of shared beliefs and behaviors that affects how workers from different ethnic and social groups perceive, understand, adapt to and address safety concerns at work," the article says.

With a clear understanding of workplace culture in mind, OSH personnel can look carefully at the shifting global power structures affecting transactional commerce and everyday interactions among workers. For example, traditionally, capital investments and safety-related technological knowledge has followed a one-way path from the industrialized world to developing countries. If this transaction is mishandled from a cross-cultural perspective, ignoring the differences that could make implementing certain safety policies more challenging or even irrelevant, workers may be at greater risk of injury, illness or death.

2. *Own Your Biases*

Do fish in a bowl realize they're swimming in water? It can be difficult to remain mindful of the fact that everyone has their own cultural environment and personal history that influences their approach to safety and work, especially when "everyone" includes you. However, this step is key to developing cross-cultural competence and embracing new ways of approaching safety and health. The results of skipping this step can be disastrous. When OSH professionals neglect to consider their own biases and think outside the ways they typically perform, they risk alienating colleagues and employees from different cultural backgrounds. Even worse, they could end up hindering their own safety efforts.

3. *Observe Differences*

At this point in the process, OSH professionals understand that global supply chains and businesses require a cosmopolitan and considerate approach. A more challenging prospect is identifying which cultural differences demand the most immediate and measurable shifts in behavior. "Safety Across Cultures" offers valuable insight into one cross-cultural challenge OSH personnel often face: Differing approaches to "teams" and "teamwork."

The article cites findings from a 2012 study titled "Minding Your Metaphors: Applying the Concept of Teamwork Metaphors to the Management of Teams in Multicultural Contexts." It says people from cultures that use sports metaphors when referring to work teams often expect their interactions to consist only of meetings at work and project-related discussions. Alternatively, people from cultures that use family metaphors when referring to a work team often expect to have more social interactions outside of work and encourage employees to share the details of their personal lives.

4. *Ask Questions*

"Safety procedures and programs that are created in one social context often fail when carried out in another," the article says.

While it can be difficult to ask questions that display a less-than-comprehensive understanding of a culture, foreign company or individual, it is also the best way to learn. If it's unclear what motivates members of a particular culture to change their habits or collaborate effectively, ask around. If there's a safety issue without a clear solution, make it clear that input is welcome, spelling out every detail and expectation. Leave no room for confusion or cross-cultural discomfort.

5. *Open Your Mind*

Assumptions are often enemies of safety, and that is especially true during cross-cultural interactions. According to the article, leaders should be aware that power dynamics can impede communication and that employees may not feel comfortable questioning the ideas or beliefs of someone in charge. It's up to those in supervisory positions to open the lines of communication and encourage constructive criticism without fear of reprisal. By embracing a free exchange of ideas and having the courage to be open to those ideas, OSH professionals can start successfully working across cultures and toward their common goals.

This entire article can be found at: www.asse.org

To read the complete version of "Safety Across Cultures: Understanding the Challenges," which originally appeared in the January 2018 issue of Professional Safety, [click here](#) or visit <http://www.asse.org/5-ways-to-promote-safety-in-cross-cultural-settings-/>.

Looking to advance your career?

Visit the ASSE's Job Board at <http://jobs.asse.org>

Stay connected:

Webpage:
<http://gulfcoast.asse.org>

Email:
info@gulfcoast.ASSE.org

ASSE:
<http://www.asse.org>

LinkedIn: 
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1834451>

Twitter: 
<https://twitter.com/ASSEgulfcoast>

Facebook: 
<http://www.facebook.com/asegulfcoast/>

Connect with us on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter!

Chapter Highlights

January Monthly Meeting

Thank you Mr. Carl W. Heinlein, ARM, CSP, OHST, Senior Safety Consultant with American Contractors Insurance Group, Inc. (ACIG) for presenting on Serious Injury and Fatality (SIF). Members and visitors were able to network, enjoy lunch and hear a wonderful safety talk! A huge thank you also to the University of Houston-Clear Lake for letting us hold our January meeting at their facility!



Holiday Social

Thank you to all the members and non-members who joined us for our 2017 Holiday Social at Dave and Busters!



Region III PDC

Annually, the Gulf Coast Chapter sponsors the Region III Professional Development Conference (PDC). In September several members attended the event and look forward to attending 2018 Region III PDC in Oklahoma City.



Member Highlights

Congratulations to all members celebrating 25 and 40 years of membership milestones! Thank you for your outstanding commitment to the Gulf Coast Chapter.

Thomas Alvarado	25
S Billiter	25
Eric Bowers	25
Clayton Curtis	25
Greg Duncan	25
Michael Eisenbise	25
Grace Kilgore	25
Kimberly Knotts	25
Michael Maisey	25
Mark Milliken	25
Chris Parks	25
Kevin Rice	25
Cynthia Rogers	25
Michael Roop	25
Wayne Seelbach	40
William Walker	25
John David Watts	25
David Worthington	40
Elizabeth Cunningham	25
William Edelman	25
Robert Kohr	40
Carolyn Levy	25
Melvin Siquefield	25
Alan Bretz	25
Kevin Currey	25
Robert Daves	40
Gary Elkin	40
Terry McSween	25
David Vroom	25
Alan Williams	25

Thank you!

FREE Safety Trainings February - April 2018:

- Hearing Conservation
- Gender Culture & Communication
- Successfully Navigating Safety-Related Investigations and Legal Proceedings
- Regulations, Hierarchies, and Conditioning: The Three Levels of Hazard Controls
- Coaching for Managers and Leaders
- Fatigue Management

<http://www.com.edu/gcsi/free-training>

Upcoming Meeting and Events

ASSE & AIHA Gulf Coast General Chapter Meeting

Date Thursday, February 1st, 2018
Time 11:00-1:00pm
Location San Jacinto College (Central)

REGISTER ONLINE: <https://gulfcoast.asse.org/events/electronic-cigarettes-in-the-indoor-environment/>

Speaker: Cheryl L. (Cheri) Marcham, Ph.D., CSP, CIH, CHMM
Topic: Electronic Cigarettes in the Indoor Environment

Speaker Bio:



Cheryl L. (Cheri) Marcham, Ph.D., CSP, CIH, CHMM, FAIHA, is an assistant professor in the College of Aeronautics Worldwide Online Campus for Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Prior to this, she was the environmental health and safety officer for a major university for more than 25 years. She holds a B.S. in Biology from Arizona State University, and an M.S. and Ph.D. from University of Oklahoma. Marcham has served on the both the AIHA and BCSP Board of Directors. She is a professional member of ASSE's Oklahoma City Chapter, a member of the Oklahoma Local Section of AIHA, and is the past chair of the AIHA Local Sections Council.

Energy Corridor Section Meeting

Date Thursday, February 8th, 2018
Time 11:00-1:00pm
Location Wood Group – Stallion Building: 17325 Park Row, Houston TX

Topic Respirable Silica Rules

Speakers **Stephanie Wright Blado**
Global Vertical Marketing Manager, 3M Personal Safety Division
Alex Vasquez
Lead Core Safety Specialist, 3M Personal Safety Division

Airgas has graciously offered to provide lunch for meeting attendees, so please RSVP button to let us know if you will attend. This will allow us to order enough lunches. To RSVP, email Liz.Cunningham@ch2m.com.

Register for Safety 2018

<https://safety.asse.org/registration/>

**June 3-6, 2018
San Antonio, TX**

2018/2019 Gulf Coast Chapter of ASSE Executive Committee Nominees Announcement

This is the time of year when we seek nominations of Gulf Coast Chapter members to run for various leadership offices in our chapter.

All elected positions are open and include:

1. President/Delegate #1 (President)
2. Sr. Vice President of Communications/Delegate #2 (Sr. VP of Communications)
3. Vice President of Member Services/Delegate #3 (VP of Member Services)
4. Secretary/ Delegate #4 (Secretary)
5. Treasurer/Delegate #5 (Treasurer)
6. Program Chair/Delegate #6 (Program Chair)
7. Newsletter Chair/Delegate (Newsletter Chair)

To run under the current Bylaw Qualifications you must be a chapter member in good standing and you must be an ASSE member or a year. If you would like to run for a position, please review the elected position responsibilities in the [Bylaws](#). Please complete the [candidate profile](#) and write a brief bio summarizing your experience in safety.

If you are uncertain about running for an elected position, please consider volunteering your time on one of the many committees that bring additional value to our Chapter membership. As the largest chapter in ASSE, there are plenty of opportunities to strengthen our Chapter by committing to volunteer to serve on a committee.

Submit you completed form and Bio to: William Gonzales – Past President and Nominations Elections Committee Chair william.gonzales@brockgroup.com. Your name and bio will be used for publications in the Newsletter and Website. **The Candidate Profile (a.k.a. Nomination Form) and bio must be submitted to William no later than [Feb 1, 2017](#).**

Continuing Education Needs Survey

By: Robert Phalen, PhD, CIH (Associate Professor of Industrial Hygiene and Safety at the University of Houston Clear Lake)

The University of Houston Clear Lake (UHCL) is planning to offer continuing education courses to support the professional development of our graduates and health and safety professionals in the Houston region. The courses will be designed to prepare individuals for professional certification (e.g., CIH or CSP), as well as provide continuing education credits for those already certified. We wish to serve the profession the best we can and help our graduates and other professionals advance their careers, make Houston workplaces safer and more productive and help support our local economy.

Your answers are anonymous.

You will be able to see the combined results of all respondents upon completion.

Here is the link to the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SDFQNBD>

Thank you for your time and input.

Professional Development



ASSE's educational philosophy is that learning should be immersive, engaging and relevant to what you're doing in your workplace today. Our goal is for you to immediately apply the knowledge you've gained at SeminarFest to benefit you personally and professionally. Bring back the newest ideas and approaches within the OSH industry, and emerge as a leader in your organization. Visit seminarfest.asse.org for more details!



To register and get more details on Safety 2018, visit safety.asse.org!

Volunteer Opportunities

2018 Science and Engineering Fair of Houston Dates

Registration Deadline: Friday, February 10, 2018

Check-in: Friday, February 23, 2018

Competition: Saturday, February 24, 2018

Awards Ceremony: Saturday, March 3, 2018

Volunteers are needed on the afternoon of the 23rd. Students will begin arriving at 4:00 p.m. on that day to begin setting up their projects and then the Rules & Safety Committee members will begin walking around to assess these projects. Volunteers are free to stop by for a couple of hours that day either at 3:30 p.m. or after they get off of work. Free parking will be available in the parking lots directly across the street from the fair exhibit hall (U of H Athletic & Alumni Canter).

ASSE members who would like to assist and serve as volunteer are encouraged to contact Robert Gussman at either 832-424-7196 or robert.gussman@nov.com. All volunteers will receive a t-shirt and certificate (Annual Awards & Honors Banquet).

Here is the link to the fair's website:

<https://www.sefhouston.org/welcome-message>

Have something exciting going on at your school and would like it broadcasted in the Gulf Coast Newsletter?

Please contact Jessica Good at info@gulfcoast.asse.org

Student Section

Spring 2018 Student Membership Drive

The Spring 2018 Student Membership Drive is underway! Recruit new members during the Beast of Safety Student Membership Drive and your student section will be eligible for prizes (\$200 for the winning student section, complimentary dues renewal for the winning student section Faculty Advisor, and ten \$25 Restaurant.com gift cards).

To join in on the fun, ask new student members to enter the promo code 18STUREF on their application. And that's it! Your student section will be entered into a drawing for every new member who joins using this code. Make sure new members chose a free practice specialty on their application or the promo code will not work.

[Visit our website for more information!](#)

The deadline for the Spring 2018 Membership Drive is March 16, 2018.

Register Early for Safety 2018

The ASSE Safety 2018 Professional Development Conference & Exposition is June 3-6 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, TX. Begin building your professional network with the tools you need to begin a successful career in safety. It's never too early to connect with your future colleagues.

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On or before February 18: \$105
 March 1- April 13: \$165
 April 14- May 31: \$195
 June 1-June 6: \$225

There's much to take advantage of at Safety 2018:

Student Roundtable Discussions: Tuesday, June 5 | 2:30-4:00PM, OSH professionals from various industries and backgrounds will share their career experiences, discuss communication skills, professional development and other relevant topics. Get a broader perspective on what it is like to be an OSH professional to prepare for your career.

Career Center: Stop by and view internships and entry-level job opportunities provided by companies from across the country. Visit company tabletop booths to learn more about potential employers and connect with reps from top companies.

Young Professionals Networking Reception: Sunday, June 3 | 7:00-9:00PM, \$10 registration

Click [here](#) to view all of the Networking Events; and here to register for Safety 2018 and any of the events planned. We hope to see you in San Antonio!

Click on the video below for a testimonial to ASSE's PDC & Exposition:
<https://youtu.be/IntS4orLQWY>

Questions? Contact Us

Gulf Coast Chapter

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 2065

League City, TX 77574

OSSA Applications Due April 1

Attention Student Sections: The Outstanding Student Section of the Year Award (OSSA) applications are due April 1st. This is a great opportunity to earn recognition for your student section's achievements. As you set goals and plan meetings and events please keep the OSSA requirements and criteria in mind.

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Please visit <http://www.asse.org/membership/ossa/> for the annual reward requirements, the application, and to see past winning applications.

