

Linking CHEMunity to Sustainability

While this by itself is a stand alone article, it is the second in a 3 part series that explains how one SME in the chemical recovery business embarked upon the journey to serve CHEMunity by building a sustainability framework and culture (see Chemuncator Winter Edition 2011 for Part 1). This article describes the integration of credentials and work procedures into one framework.

MANAGING CREDENTIALS - RATHER THAN THEM MANAGING YOU

As members of CACD, we are united by our pledge to a credential - Responsible Distribution. We all develop systems to meet the Codes of Practice and we all produce work procedures that describe what we do to honour those systems. It was relatively easy when we were managing just one credential. But like so many others in the chemical industry, Responsible Distribution® is one of several other credentials we acquired; our journey also included ISO 9001, ISO 14001, Responsible Care® and the Ontario Environmental Leaders Program. Each credential imposed its own standards and elements, certification processes and language. Notwithstanding that accreditations spanned over several years, it was daunting, while running our business, to create a framework that integrated each credential; to develop a system (both paper and electronic) that made work procedures simple to find and simple to audit.

ONE SYSTEM

From the beginning our intent was to integrate all credentials into one system we call the Total Quality Management System (the "System"). We created a roadmap that shows auditors where in the System they can find a work procedure that speaks to the standard and element they are auditing. All our credentials are indicated on this roadmap. Seldom is this roadmap used by employees because they don't need to know if they are following procedures that speak to an element of ISO or an element of Responsible Distribution®. They just need to know how to **Find, Follow and Further Improve** a procedure. **Finding** is easy – it's a matter of

entering key words. **Following** is a matter of training and performance expectation. **Further Improving** is achieved through a decentralized approach we take to document and data control. One system for all credentials - common language, easy access and performance expectation. These are all important pillars that underpin our framework for sustainability – for CHEMunity. Sounds too easy doesn't it. Well, we sure have had growing pains.

CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN GENERAL WORK PRACTICES AND THE SYSTEM

Even though we had one system, there was always a mad scramble before the auditors arrived to ensure we had done what the standards said we had to do and that we had the paperwork to support it. The flurry of activity spearheaded by the fear we would end up with a long list of non-compliances said to us that we had a gap to close.

We knew we were doing work that met the standards of the credentials we had acquired, but we neglected to integrate standard management practices into the System. For example, each year we completed intense budgeting and planning meetings that culminated in the setting of corporate goals, management goals, key performance indicators and a capital budget. To meet ISO, we also held Management Review meetings that dealt with specific agenda items and Objectives and Targets; two different processes generally involving the same people - Cost. Now we use our yearly planning and budgeting meetings to meet the standards of our Management Review meeting. Our list of Objectives and Targets includes the capital budget as well as key performance indicators and the names of the employees who have accountability to deliver on all. Now we include this information in the System. It exceeds the requirements of the credentials we carry. But an auditor doesn't care that there is more information included than what is required by a standard. An auditor cares that a process is defined and followed and that there is traceability. The "AHA" moment for us was the

recognition that we could save time – COST – by leveraging and optimizing what we already do. Again, it's about managing the Credential rather than having it Manage You.

EXPANDING THE SYSTEM



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Historically, our System has included human resource management procedures and accounting procedures that met relevant standards. For instance, our Education Policy and procedures were covered in the System, but how to apply for vacation was not. Procurement procedures were covered in the System, but how to complete an expense report was not. In the future the System will include all our procedures. Some will meet a

standard within a credential, while others will be outside the scope of a credential. One system – one stop – easy to use, easy to edit, easy to audit.

SUMMARY

CHEMunity, like sustainability, is about approaching our business with the commitment to be in business today and tomorrow and tomorrow. That means managing and protecting profits, people and the environment. We can demonstrate our commitment through adherence to credentials - Responsible Distribution® and perhaps others. And demonstration requires a system that evidences people are doing work to honour the credential. Developing a framework that integrates all credentials, all management disciplines and all procedures will help a company stay on the path for sustainability.

In the final article of this trilogy, I will discuss the use of branding to advance your company's sustainability. Should you wish to ask me any question about our journey, please email me at ellenm@fieldchem.com



SafetyMatters

Introduction of CACD's Health and Safety Committee

Reducing injuries, improving the safety culture and increasing employee participation in safety activities are just a few of the challenges many organizations face with their health and safety programs. Along with these challenges are the health and safety success stories. As a way to bridge this gap, the CACD has created the Health and Safety Committee. The mission of this committee is to:

Help the membership to better understand the requirements and guidelines needed to achieve an optimal health and safety rating.

Share tools, resources and best practices to educate the membership on ways to proactively stay current on health and safety issues and concerns.

Challenge the membership to inspire a first class health and safety atmosphere and culture within their organization.

The Health and Safety Committee members have recently met to discuss our action plan moving forward. The committee is comprised of a diverse group of individuals; all who bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the meetings.

Our goal is to raise awareness about health and safety, generate dialogue, share ideas and help CACD members strive towards health and safety excellence.

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