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Experiential Learning - Effective Tool for Process Safety Management (PSM) Implementation

Sangeetha B, Cholamandalam MS Risk Services, Chennai, AND, India,
Venkata Sainath G, Process Safety, Cholamandalam MS Risk Services,
Chennai, India and **Senthil Kumar R**, Cholamandalam MS Risk
Services, Chennai, India

Abstract Text:

The commitment for implementing the Process Safety Management (PSM) in facilities is gaining momentum in India across wide range of industrial sectors. Most PSM implementation programs are strategized around integrating PSM in the existing Management Systems or existing procedures of the facility. As part of it, PSM implementation program initially focuses on the competency development and majorly depends on training programs.

It is worth noting that the training programs focus on elaborating the objectives, principles and set expectations of each PSM element, which may seem understandable and easily perceivable for personnel having the context of the subject. However, the front-line personnel, who are mostly expected to carryout activities for PSM implementation can find it incomprehensible and usually take more efforts to appreciate the PSM approach and recognize their role. Few questions which may arise out of general trainings approach are How is PSM useful and different from existing management systems? Are there any specific concepts in PSM? Is PSM implemented if I finish a certain task? Etc. It has also been observed that facilities have formulated rules (e.g., cardinal rules, lifesaving rules etc.) for propagating the message of occupational safety concepts (e.g., driving, working at height etc.), which are highly effective. However, similar idea for process safety concepts is missing.

To bridge this process safety concepts retention gap and imbibe holistic process safety approach among along all personnel, particularly front-line personnel, Cholamandalam MS Risk Services has started deploying experiential learning modules as part of process safety campaigns. These modules are interactive in learning focusing on each PSM element and are targeted at a particular process safety concept (E.g., static electricity, alarm management, near miss reporting, dead legs etc.). Different experiential learning modules will be presented elaborating the learning objectives, infrastructure required and module prototypes. These modules can be used for emphasizing interrelationship between different process safety concepts, strengthening process safety trainings and process safety competency development programs. A case study will also be presented where experiential learning approach has been proved successful in process safety concept retention and effective for implementing Process Safety Management.

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Submitter's E-mail Address:

venkatsainath13@gmail.com

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First Presenting Author

Presenting Author

Sangeetha B

Email: sangeethab@cholams.murugappa.com -- Will not be published

Alternate Email: sangeethab@cholams.murugappa.com -- Will not be published

Cholamandalam MS Risk Services
Chief Manager

Chennai AND
India

Second Presenting Author
Presenting Author

Venkata Sainath G
Email: venkatasg@cholams.murugappa.com

Cholamandalam MS Risk Services
Process Safety
Manager
Chennai
India

Third Presenting Author
Presenting Author

Senthil Kumar R
Email: senthilkumarR@cholams.murugappa.com -- Will not
be published

Cholamandalam MS Risk Services
Chief Manager
Chennai
India

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