Twenty First Century Safety: A "Value-Add" to Corporate Stakeholders

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Today, with increasing globalization, greater environmental and social awareness, and more efficient communication, the concept of corporations' responsibilities beyond their drive to be merely legally compliant and profit-related has gained new impetus. In order to succeed, the corporate world now has to be seen to be acting responsibly towards the 3 P's: people, planet and profit (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2004). Corporate social responsibility is an inspiring, challenging, and strategically important development that is becoming an increasingly significant priority for large companies. This initiative is gaining more awareness in the medium sized companies, but is generally off the radar for the smaller companies. Safety, health and environmental (SHE) issues are an essential component of a large and medium sized corporation's social responsibilities in the twenty first century. The safety, health, and environmental professional ("safety professional") needs to be aware of the opportunities and challenges they face in this evolving global corporate environment. The safety profession as we now know it must realign itself as a value-add to corporate stakeholders and become the corporate champion for people, the planet, and profits.

Safety and the Corporate Decision Makers

Effective safety management requires the attention and support of decision makers in upper management (Smith, 2008). It has been said that the main responsibility of a safety professional is to seek "active support for safety function affairs from higher level management" (Adams, 2003). Speaking the language of business requires knowledge of business and financial skills combined with an understanding of the stakeholders the business serves. In the corporate environment, the upper management corporate decision makers have many obvious and not so obvious stakeholders to serve. The main stakeholder who is traditionally served by the

corporation is the shareholder or investors seeking a return on their investment. The safety

profession has recognized that to gain attention of corporate decision makers there must be an

ability to justify expenditures and present safety in terms of its positive impact on the "bottom-

line" of an organization's profits as a return on investment (Schneid, 2008). However, the value

of safety to an organization goes well beyond mere profits or losses. Corporations have ethical

responsibilities to all of its stakeholders, not just the investors. The safety professional can

promote the value of safety to the corporate decision makers by demonstrating how effective

safety management serves all stakeholders associated with the organization. This paper will

explore how safety can be integrated into the social responsibility and sustainability of the

corporation to benefit all of its stakeholders as a value-add to the organization. By doing this, the

safety professional must think in terms of creating and sustaining value for key stakeholders, no

matter what the overall purpose or direction of the business is (Freeman, Harrison, & Wicks,

2007). The safety profession must move beyond the mere business aspects of safety and focus on

how safety management demonstrates good corporate governance and social responsibility.

Corporations and Corporate Responsibilities

A corporation has been defined by Friedman (2007) as a "legal entity, chartered by a state

or the federal government, and separate and distinct from the persons who own it, giving rise to a

jurist's remark that it has 'neither a soul to damn nor a body to kick.' Nonetheless, it is regarded

by the courts as an artificial person; it may own property, incur debts, sue, or be sued. It has four

chief distinguishing features: (1) limited liability (owners can lose only what they invest); (2)

easy transfer of ownership through the sale of shares of stock; (3) continuity of existence; and (4)

centralized management. Other factors helping to explain the popularity of the corporate form of

organization are its ability to obtain capital through expanded ownership, and the shareholders'

ability to profit from the growth of the business" (J. Friedman, 2007). In a free-enterprise, private-property system, the corporate executive decision maker is an employee of the owners of the business. They have direct accountability to their employers which are the corporation's shareholders and investors. That accountability generates a responsibility to conduct the business in accordance with their desires (within certain constraints), which generally will be to make as much profit as possible while conforming to the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom (Friedman, 1970). However, in recent years, the topic of ethical customs as applied to corporate compliance issues has increased the importance of those responsible for its oversight. The increases in visible ethical lapses by many corporations have also lead to legislative and regulatory mandates for improved corporate governance.

The safety professional is good at managing the safety, health, and environmental aspects, but not always successful at demonstrating how they contribute to profits. On the other hand, the corporation was good at managing profits, but not so good at demonstrating a commitment to safety, health, and environmental issues. The corporation and its shareholders ability to focus purely on profit do have limits under the new global framework of good corporate governance and social responsibility initiatives. The safety professional of the twenty-first century must recognize this transformation in the corporate world and seize upon it as an opportunity. The role of safety management must expand within the corporation's governance system for the safety professional to gain recognition as a value-add to the corporate decision makers and the stakeholders they serve. This can be achieved by having the ability to promote people (safety and health), the planet (environmental), and profits (value-add) for their corporate stakeholders.

The Corporate Decision Makers and the Stakeholders They Serve

It is important for the safety professional to recognize who the corporate decision makers are within the organization they serve. It is also important to recognize who the corporate stakeholders are as well. The range of stakeholders whose concerns must be addressed by corporate decision makers has expanded over the years from owners or shareholders to a broader stakeholder perspective. Corporate stakeholders now include those who effect or are affected by a firm's goals (Freeman et al., 2007) or have a stake in the firm's operations (Werther & Chandler, 2006). Corporate stakeholders now include customers, suppliers, employees, financiers, communities, and managers as key parts of the businesses organization (Freeman et al., 2007). Thus, effective safety management must promote benefits and values which address all stakeholders. This will allow the safety professional to be better recognized, understood and appreciated by corporate decision makers. The corporate-level safety professional has the vital role of a teacher or educator for the corporate decision makers and stakeholders to stress the "importance and beneficial aspects of safety in the operations" (Schneid, 2008). The beneficial aspects of safety now go well beyond just demonstrating how safety provides a positive impact to the bottom-line of an organization; the safety professional must design a safety management program which addresses the needs of not just stockholders, but all corporate stakeholders.

As originally detailed by R. Edward Freeman (1984), the stakeholder theory identifies and models the groups which are stakeholders of a corporation, and both describes and recommends methods by which management addresses the interests of these stakeholders. The traditional view of the corporation is the shareholder view. The shareholders or stockholders are the owners of the company, and the firm has a binding fiduciary duty to put their needs first, to increase value for them. In the old input-output models of corporate governance, inputs of the

shareholders, employees, and suppliers are transformed into usable outputs which their customers buy. This then returns some capital benefit or profit back to the corporation. Under this model, corporate decision makers only address the needs of those four parties: investors, employees, suppliers, and customers, with an emphasis on investor's wishes. However, the stakeholder theory argues that there are other parties involved, including governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, trade unions, communities, associated corporations, prospective employees, prospective customers, and the public at large. Sometimes even competitors are counted as stakeholders. The stakeholder view or strategy is an instrumental theory of the corporation, integrating both the resource-based view as well as the market-based view, and adding a new and expanding socio-political level (R. Freeman, 1984). This socio-political aspect of a corporate stakeholder is taking roots in the emergence of corporate social responsibilities (CSR).

Effective communication with stakeholders is fundamental for successful implementation of CSR, and employees, in particular, are vital for changing companies' social or environmental performance. This presents an important area of potential synergy with safety and health at work where participation and dialogue with employees has long been recognized as an essential element for success (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2004). Consequently, this gives the safety professional a key role to play in the corporations' adoption of CSR and become recognized as a "value-add" to their organization.

Going Beyond Regulatory Compliance

Federal law requires that businesses perform certain socially responsible activities. In fact, several government agencies have been established and are maintained to develop such business-related legislation and to make sure the laws are followed. Federal criminal law has

expanded dramatically as a result of criminalized regulations governing the environment, consumer and employee safety, and business practices. Many federal regulations, such as those issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), both prevented firms from taking otherwise profitable actions and contain imprecise standards governing the boundary between legal and illegal conduct (Arlen, 2008). Under regulations such as these, the federal government does indeed have the authority to require businesses to adhere to certain socially responsible safety and environmental standards. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-204) was written with the intent of addressing some of the issues brought to light during the incidents with Enron and Arthur Andersen. An offshoot of this legislation is the impact that it could have on SH&E Professionals, who work at companies subject to Security and Exchange Commission reporting requirements (Council on Practices and Standards, 2003). The provisions of Sarbanes-Oxley, while not specifically containing a reference to safety, does apply to safety management as a matter of law and could apply as a matter of defining ethical standards and best practices of a corporate organization. Adherence to legislated social responsibilities represents the minimum standard of social responsibility performance that corporate safety professionals must achieve (Hall, 2003). The safety professional must also determine how far beyond minimum regulatory compliance they should attempt to go. This is a difficult and complicated question that requires balancing the positive and negative outcomes of performing socially responsible activities. Only those activities that contribute to sound corporate governance addressing the welfare of all stakeholders should be undertaken (R. Freeman, 1984).

Safety's Expanding Visibility and Role with Corporate Stakeholders

Corporate stakeholders may eventually come to demand the same rigorous integrity, independence and objectivity of the corporate safety professional that they require or insist upon for financial auditors. These corporate decision makers will be relying increasingly on the safety professional's auditing ability for reliable information with respect to all safety and environmental matters which may be material to the organization's financial picture. In addition, there is likely to be an increasing role for the corporate safety professional in developing internal programs to ensure the reliable flow of information relating to safety and environmental matters to corporate decision makers and their Board of Directors (Hall, 2003). Corporations now realize that good corporate governance founded on a strong ethical climate represents a significant best business practice for the benefit of all stakeholders (Verschoor, 2007). The safety professional must incorporate this good corporate governance practice into the management of safety so that safety best practices become how good corporate business is conducted.

It has been argued that the safety professional's effectiveness has been hampered by a lack of business skills which would establish improved communication and gain recognition with corporate decision makers (Adams, 2003). A recent study by the American Society of Safety Engineers found that too many hiring professionals and other business professionals still do not understand what safety professionals do or the value they add to an organization. They also believe that safety professionals are too technically focused and these technical skills are under valued by the corporation (ASSE, 2008). If this is the case, the definition of a safety professional as presented by the BCSP below requires a significant overhaul. Consider this limiting definition of a future safety professional from the BCSP (Board of Certified Safety Professionals, 2006):

What is a Safety Professional?

A safety professional is a person engaged in the prevention of accidents, incidents, and events that harm people, property, or the environment. They use qualitative and quantitative analysis of simple and complex products, systems, operations, and activities to identify hazards. They evaluate the hazards to identify what events can occur and the likelihood of occurrence, severity of results, risk (a combination of probability and severity), and cost. They identify what controls are appropriate and their cost and effectiveness. Safety professionals make recommendations to managers, designers, employers, government agencies, and others. Controls may involve administrative controls (such as plans, policies, procedures, training, etc.) and engineering controls (such as safety features and systems, fail-safe features, barriers, and other forms of protection). Safety professionals may manage and implement controls. Beside knowledge of a wide range of hazards, controls, and safety assessment methods, safety professionals must have knowledge of physical, chemical, biological and behavioral sciences, mathematics, business, training and educational techniques, engineering concepts, and particular kinds of operations (construction, manufacturing, transportation, etc.)

The definition above does not address the value-add of the safety professional to their employer and associated stakeholders. Too often when the value of safety is demonstrated to stakeholders it has the limited business focus of showing that safety is not a cost, but an investment that has positive returns (Adams, 2003).

There is a belief in the safety profession that when the safety and health professional becomes concerned with promoting the cost-effective use of organizational resources, it will be further empowered through membership among top management ranks (Hansen, 1993). Thus,

there have been many initiatives within the safety profession to assist the safety professional's ability to demonstrate to their organization that safety pays. The popular theme in the safety profession is to move away from being just technical experts on regulatory compliance and more as a value-add to the corporation's bottom-line. This has been termed by OSHA as "Safety Pays" or by professional safety associations such as the American Society of Safety Engineers and the National Safety Council as "The Business of Safety" where the safety program is demonstrated to have a return on investment or a positive impact on the bottom-line profits of an organization. These programs have improved the safety professional's ability to gain the attention and interest of the corporate decision makers, but fall short of making safety management part of sound corporate governance.

The business movement in safety provides a limited tunnel vision on good corporate governance by only focusing on profits which satisfy the wishes of the corporate decision makers and their stockholders. While the "business of safety" movement is a critical step towards elevating the image of safety in the business community, more work must be done to educate the corporate suite decision-makers and board of directors of the value of safety (ASSE, 2008). Effective safety management of the twenty first century must promote the value of safety to all corporate stakeholders. In *The 8th Habit*, business guru Covey (2004) recounts his fifth habit: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood". This catch-phrase would be great advice for the twenty first century safety professional. From the perspective of corporate stakeholders, SH&E professionals can get managers to listen—to understand that SH&E professionals are not technicians, regulatory compliance specialists, or "necessary evils," but well-educated professionals who are concerned with promoting the cost-effective use of organizational resources to immediately affect the bottom line (Adams, 2003). The corporate world is changing

and means and methodologies through which safety professionals accomplished safety management objectives in the past may not work in the future. Safety professionals are encouraged to "think outside of the box" and anticipate major changes within the safety profession in the very near future (T. Schneid, 2000).

<center>Improving the Corporate Value of the Safety Professional</center>

The safety profession has acknowledged the importance of promoting the value of the safety professional to all stakeholders within an organization for nearly five decades. In 1961, John Grimaldi, then president of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), discussed the safety professional of the next fifty years at the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Society. In his article "Safety Engineering in a Changing World", Grimaldi (1961) stated, "In America, where competition weeds out the ineffective so swiftly, mere survival is an achievement in itself. Steady growth, however, represents something special. Any group which approximates a position of eminence must be representative of enterprise, intelligence, energy, and character". He goes on to say, "Today the Society's members are accepted professionals and have international prestige. Tomorrow, our stature will be greater if we meet the changing world's larger challenges and richer opportunities. To do this we must plot a true course, discipline ourselves so that we are not distracted, and appraise our progress critically so that our contributions may have the greatest affect" (Grimaldi, 1961).

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) continues to meet the new challenges and opportunities which affect the safety profession well into the twenty first century. In 2007, the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) embarked on a "Value of the Safety Professional" project with three main areas of focus: repositioning safety, repositioning the safety professional, and preparing the safety professional to be the "value-add" employee. The

ASSE project has found that the value movement for safety has taken roots in corporate

America. Through its "Value of the Safety Professional" project, ASSE wants to ensure that the

value proposition for the safety professional is clearly understood by the business community by

ensuring safety professionals have the skills they need to compete in this new workplace

environment (Lawrence, 2008).

The 33,000 members of ASSE represent a significant portion of safety professionals

throughout the world. The ASSE Council on Professional Affairs "Value of the Safety

Professional" project is the largest (and possibly the only) current movement towards promoting

the value of safety to corporate stakeholders. As previously stated, this plan will serve the three

focus areas of repositioning safety, repositioning the safety professional, and preparing the safety

professional to be the "value-add" employee to the corporation. This ambitious plan identifies

ten goals and more than thirty specific action items to be completed by multiple teams of

volunteers and ASSE staff (Lawrence, 2008). A brief discussion of these focus area goals is

summarized below.

 Focus Area 1: Repositioning Safety

As discussed above, past efforts to improve the value of safety was to focus on educating the

safety professional on how to make a business case for safety. The new ASSE initiative "seeks to

supplement these efforts by putting more focus on safety as an important part of good corporate

governance and social responsibility" (Lawrence, 2008). There are three goals established under

repositioning safety:

Goal 1: Increase the business community's awareness of the importance of safety as part

of good corporate governance and social responsibility. Proposed action items include

outreach articles on safety as part of social responsibility and good corporate governance

in a major business journal with a series of shorter articles in association and trade magazines targeted toward business leaders. Workshops will be developed on how businesses should fully integrate safety into the organization's business strategy and organizational culture. Position statements would be constructed in increase safety standards internationally and model corporate safety principles would be developed to guide organizations on how to incorporate safety into good corporate governance and social responsibility. The final action item develops relationships with organizations which focus on corporate social responsibility and pursue partnerships with ASSE and the safety profession.

Goal 2: Increase the number of companies implementing ANSI Z-10. Proposed action items include preparation of workshops aimed at how to implement ANSI Z-10 for non-safety professionals. Additional steps include sponsoring research to compare Fortune 500 companies that have safety management systems contrasted against those who do not document the benefits of such a system. The final action item is to prepare a whitepaper on the role of the safety professional in safety management systems to be submitted to OSHA for posting on their website.

Goal 3: Promote the risk assessment approach of safety to the business community and OSHA. Proposed action items include compiling research and determining additional research gaps that demonstrate the value of the risk assessment approach as a basis for dialog with the business community, legislators, and other policy makers to regulating safety.

Focus Area 2: Repositioning the Safety Professional

The ASSE Value of the Safety Professional study (ASSE, 2008) found that too many hiring professionals and other business professionals still do not understand what safety professionals do or the value they add to an organization. Furthermore, the study found that non-safety senior corporate managers perceive safety professionals as too technically focuses, not able to view issues from a big picture perspective, and not able to integrate programs into the organization. More disturbing was that senior managers also viewed the safety professional as lacking key adaptive-type skills such as evaluating the effectiveness of safety-related programs. Goals in this area are aimed at communicating the skills and abilities of the safety professional through a long term plan to keep the value of the safety professional messages in front of targeted audiences.

Goal 4: Increase the business community's understanding of the value of the safety professional. Action items include the development of video profiles of the safety professional, creating ads that promote the safety professional as a value-add employee, creating a web presence on the value of safety, and a target marketing plan for cultivating alliances with non-safety organizations whose members may have oversight of workplace safety. The final action item would be to develop strategic alliances with safety associations to promote the safety profession.

Goal 5: Gain consensus on a definition of the term safety professional with the safety community. There is a great need for establishing levels of competency and subsequent certification or validation of these competencies in the safety profession.

Goal 6: Evaluate the training and education needs of the safety profession. Action items include determining the education and training needs of safety professionals and re-

evaluating the Certified Safety Professional requirements with the Board of Certified

Safety Professionals.

Goal 7: Increase the number of opportunities for safety-related research. Action items

include developing a plan to pursue private and government grants that will increase

safety-related research and the number of doctorate programs in safety.

Focus Area 3: Preparing the Safety Professional to Be the Value-Add Employee.

ASSE believes that the professional development of the safety professional must be positioned as

a matter of survival. The safety professional will not longer be valued for just doing a good job.

The safety professional must be able to articulate what their position is, why the hold it, and what

it means to the future of the corporation. Three goals are listed under this focus area:

Goal 8: Improve the business skills of the safety professional. Action items include

determining the viability of an ASSE Business Institute or partnering with a university to

develop certificate related business-training programs and a MBA-type program.

Additional action items include the development of a mentoring program which will

assist the safety professional determine what education and training they need to follow a

successful career path.

Goal 9: Educate safety professionals on the importance of articulating their value position

to employers. Action items include the development of a plan to educate safety

professionals on the importance of articulating and delivering a value proposition as

defined in the ASSE Value of Safety Professional study and campaign.

Goal 10: Improve the technical skills of safety professionals. Action items take into

consideration the development of training programs related to diversify the safety

professional into risk management through exposure to risk assessment/risk prioritization,

computer literacy, using and interpreting statistics, and prevention through design.

Additional training would cover consensus standards on safety management systems such

as ANSI Z-10 and also expanding into non-traditional safety-related issues such as the

environment and wellness programs.

The ASSE Value of the Safety Professional campaign has moved forward on Grimaldi's nearly

fifty year old vision of the future safety professional. This new initiative will increase the breadth

and depth of skills that will allow the safety professional to stand out as viable candidates for

evolving hybrid positions by providing resources that will help navigate options for future

employment (ASSE, 2008). These skills will be important if the safety professional is to

successfully integrate safety into good corporate governance and social responsibility for the

benefit of all corporate stakeholders (Lawrence, 2008).

The "New" Safety in the Corporate Social Responsibility Movement

Good corporate governance with be redefined in the future to include Corporate Social

Responsibility (Strandburg, 2008). A simple definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR)

has been defined by the European Commission as the integration by companies of social and

environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their

stakeholders on a voluntary basis (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2004).

In a larger context, CSR has been defined as "the broad concept that businesses are more than

just profit-seeking entities and, therefore, also have an obligation to benefit society. Strategic

CSR is "the idea that CSR should be integrated into the firm's strategic perspective and

operations because of the long-term benefits this brings to the organization" (Freeman et al.,

2007). CSR has also been explained as a principle that businesses should actively contribute to

the welfare of society and not only maximize profits. Most corporate annual reports will

highlight what the company has done to further education, help minorities, give to the arts and social welfare agencies, and in general improve social conditions. The concept is also used by investors in picking companies that are fair to their employees, do not pollute or build weapons, and make beneficial products (Downes & Goodman, 2006).

Werther & Chandler (2006) finds that the entirety of CSR can be discerned from the three words contained in the term:

- Corporate – CSR covers the relationship between corporations and the societies;

- Social – CSR defines society in its broadest terms, on many levels, to include all stakeholders, and constituent groups that maintain ongoing interests in the organizations operations;

- Responsibility – The mutually inherent responsibilities between corporations and the societies in which with they interact.

Traditional stakeholder and constituent groups discussed earlier in this article include clearly defined consumers, employees, suppliers, creditors, and regulatory authorities. However, under corporate social responsibility initiatives there are more nebulous constituents to consider such as government agencies, the local community interests and even the environment (Werther & Chandler, 2006).

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2004) identified some commercial drivers pushing CSR up the corporate agenda:

- informed investors recognize that the business risk (both internal and external) for companies that successfully manage their social and environmental impact is lower than the business average;

- large companies recognize that their shares will be sought by a wider group of shareholders and institutions, potentially driving up the share price;

- consumers that have a large choice in a range of products, all of reasonable quality and price, are likely to prefer products that are produced in a socially responsible way. As a result, such products will enjoy greater market share or better profit margin.

The safety professional must also recognize and be sensitive to the fact that many in the corporate world do not believe corporations have social responsibilities. Nobel Prize winning economist Milton Freidman commented against efforts on corporate social responsibility by stating "the corporate executive would be spending someone else's money for a general social interest. Insofar as his actions in accord with his 'social responsibility' reduce returns to stockholders, he is spending their money. Insofar as his actions raise the price to customers, he is spending the customers' money. Insofar as his actions lower the wages of some employees, he is spending their money" (Friedman, 1970). Regardless of which argument or combination of arguments corporate decision makers might support, they generally should make a concerted effort to perform all legally required socially responsible activities, consider voluntarily performing socially responsible activities beyond those legally required, and inform all relevant stakeholders of the extent to which their organization will become involved in performing social responsibility activities (R. Freeman, 1984).

A recent Canadian study found that "firms that are well managed from a CSR perspective are predicted to benefit from improved shareholder value. Boards, however, should stay away from a focus on procedural issues. They need to focus instead on identifying potential opportunities and threats or risks. Firms (and their boards) that stop at risk management and legal

compliance and overlook the innovation and opportunity side of CSR are less likely to generate

positive long-term value" (Strandburg, 2008). A sound safety management program will not only

address risk management and legal compliance, but also includes innovation and opportunities

which benefit all corporate stakeholders. Corporate social responsibility is an inspiring,

challenging, and strategically important development that is becoming an more important

priority for large and medium sized companies, and gradually more important to smaller sized

firms. Health and safety in the workplace is an essential component of CSR and this means that

safety professionals need to be aware of the opportunities and challenges they face (European

Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2004).

Wearing Many Hats: Defining the New Safety Discipline

Significant areas where CSR will impact corporations point to global climate change. Consider

the fact that the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Al Gore and the Intergovernmental

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *"for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater*

knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are

needed to counteract such change" (Nobel Foundation, 2007). Other environmental and social

issues that CSR will focus on include water, land access, product stewardship, diversity,

compensation, workplace safety issues, labor shortages, aging populations and other

demographic challenges, health care, human rights, ethics, and community and customer

relations (Strandburg, 2008). The safety professional will recognize many of these

CSR topic areas as either directly or indirectly associated with an effective safety, health and

environmental management program. It is therefore apparent that the safety professionals who

recognize the role of CSR related topics of safety, health, and environment will be able to be a

more visible "value-add" to the stakeholders they serve.

Besides CSR, the term 'corporate sustainability' is also increasingly used to describe the triple P (people, the planet, and profits) aim for businesses, while 'environmental sustainability' is a closely related concept, often preferred by those in the environmental community (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2004). Common use of the term "sustainability" began with the 1987 publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development report, *Our Common Future*. Also known as the "Brundtland Report", this document defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This concept of sustainability encompasses ideas, aspirations and values that continue to inspire public and private organizations to become better stewards of the environment and that promote positive economic growth and social objectives. The principles of sustainability can stimulate technological innovation, advance competitiveness, and improve our quality of life (USEPA, 2007).

The safety profession represents a vast array of backgrounds, experiences, competencies, and responsibilities. Management of safety also covers a range of subject areas. Internationally, the systems approach to safety, health, and environmental management was promulgated by the adoption of the international standard, ISO 9001: Quality Management Systems and the subsequent standard, ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems. In addition, there are the British Standard, OHSAS 18001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, the OSHA Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) and the ANSI/American Industrial Hygiene Association (ANSI/AIHA) Z10, Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. In the past two decades, these standards have increasingly been employed as a consistent framework for incorporation into business management systems. All of these standards comprise

complementary elements that facilitate the execution of both the health and safety professional responsibility and the environmental professional responsibility.

Globalization and the advent of the systems approach to business management, combined with the similarity in content of the standards, have prompted many organizations to overlap SH&E professionals' responsibilities into one collective discipline (Camplin & Evans, 2008). Corporate governance, social responsibility, and sustainability also add to the collective discipline of the safety, health and environmental profession and the competencies necessary for their management. The corporate world is evolving. The safety profession must adapt to the new vision of the corporation or face extinction as a recognized "value-add" to their stakeholders. The safety professional can no longer "just do a good job" by being technically competent on regulatory compliance issues. The safety profession cannot just learn to speak the language of business by putting safety, health, and environmental issues in terms of mere profits. The safety professional of the twenty first century must become a champion for people, the planet, and profits to survive in the new global corporate environment.

Conclusion

The safety professional must take notice of how the corporate world is evolving and take steps to capitalize on these opportunities or cease to exist as a profession. The American Society of Safety Engineers has undertaken an enormous project to reinvent the safety professional and the professional to underscore the value they provide to our society. The Value of the Safety Professional campaign is an excellent vision for providing the safety professional with the competencies and awareness to be properly recognition as a value-add to their employers. Corporate employers now expect their employees to be able to explain what value their job, and

their role in performing it, brings to the organization (Lawrence, 2008). The safety professional of the twenty first century can do this.

To echo ASSE's past president John V. Grimaldi (1961) and his vision nearly half a century ago, "*Tomorrow, our stature will be greater if we meet the changing world's larger challenges and richer opportunities. To do this we must plan a true course, discipline ourselves so that we are not distracted, and appraise our progress critically so that our contributions many have the greatest effect*".

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