



The Safe Path



by Ir. Shum Keng Yan

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Now that you have a Safety Professional, does that mean the job will be done? The order of the day seems to be putting a person on the job and hoping the person stays or starting over and hiring someone new. In a small operation or low EHS risk operation, this may be short-term feasibility. But what about a more complex industry or organisation?

One way to create a learning organisation is to have a proper career path and this applies even to the Safety Professional. Let us take a quick look at a simple career path model.

A simplified model in a large organisation will have, basically, a Management Stream and a Technical Stream. Both streams can share the same job grade within the same band. The titles can be adjusted. The Management Stream is quite traditional while the Technical Stream caters to those who are more technically inclined. They complement each other in managing risk.

	Coordinators	Engineers	Managers	Director	Vice President
Management Stream	Entry Level	General Practitioner	Heads a Unit	Heads a Geographical Area	Strategic - Organisational
Technical Stream	Entry Level	Subject Matter Specialist	Heads a Subject Matter	Heads a Technical Unit	Strategic - Risk Control

At entry level, we can start with a Safety Coordinator. This role is useful for developing future professionals. Fresh graduates or those studying to become Safety and Health Officers are suitable candidates.

Next will be the move to Safety Engineer. At this level, the expectation should, at least, be a Safety and Health Officer registered with DOSH. On the higher band, we will have Senior Safety Engineers.

The move to Safety Manager will require core competencies. We shall look at competencies later on. The Safety Manager basically leads the unit and should have leadership and coaching abilities.

In a large organisation, the role can move up a few more notches. Often, a person will leave an organisation if his/her desired path is not attainable due to lack of vacancy or organisational structure. This should not be the reason why we should not put a career path in place. Have you cleared a path?

Send your comments to: pub@iem.org.my. ■

Your qualification gives you the first step. Now you need to create your path to success.