Safety and Health Management in Universities - A Challenging Career Option for Today’s Safety and Health Professional

Safety and Health Professionals (SHPs) would typically seek employment in shipyards, factories and construction sites. However there is a rapidly growing industry that these professionals could find employment in Universities. Research, technology and education are the key pillars of Singapore’s new knowledge based economy. The Singapore Government has committed S$16.1 billion over 2011-2015. This is 20% more than the previous five-year budget despite the economic slowdown. (Ref: http://www.nrf.gov.sg/research/r-d-ecosystem/overview)

What can SHPs look for when working in Universities? For starters they can look forward to working a very diverse environment, SHPs will have the opportunity to work with academics from all fields – lawyers, doctors, engineers, scientists and architects.

Besides the diversity of people, the diversity of research on campus allows SHPs to gain competency in all areas of safety and health – biosafety, chemical, radiation and physical safety. As today’s research involves breaking new ground into exciting areas such as infectious diseases, nanotechnology, sustainable energy etc., where there is a lack of defined safety standards, SHPs have to be innovative and resourceful in defining how these types of research can be done safely. Furthermore, today’s research is multi-disciplinary. For example, in research involving drug delivery systems, there is a combination of chemical and biological hazards.

Universities offers a very unique and challenging employment environment for SHPs with its diversity of people and activities. It is with this diversity that will offer SHPs plenty of opportunities for learning and career development.