



CRISIS MANAGEMENT'S ROLE IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
Developed by the Society of Product Safety Professionals
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The field of product safety is constantly changing and evolving. Professionals need to be knowledgeable, versatile, and able to work effectively during challenging situations. Crisis situations can be expected in any company, at any time, in any market. The ability to navigate crisis situations calmly and carefully adds great value to the product safety professional and their company. This series examines the evolving field and key skills which can add to the credentials of a professional.

Sept. 20, 2022. (all times are central daylight times)

10:00 – 11:30 a.m. *Growth and development of the professional's career.*

Marie Claude Simard, product safety manager with Canada-based BRP recreational products manufacturer, has organized a panel discussion to examine the skills and progression of a product safety professional. She is recognized as a rigorous professional able to inspire, train and development multidisciplinary teams. As product safety professionals grow, their skills and opportunities increase. They spend more time managing others, than managing a specific process or activity. Panel members are **Guillermo Rodriguez**, Global Senior Director of Product Safety & Compliance and **Kimberly Mason**, Senior Director, Compliance, for Five Below.

11:45 a.m.– 12:45 p.m. *Managing CPSC pre-and-post CPSIA.*

Former CPSC Chairman **Inez Tenenbaum** arrived at the agency from a background of working in a regulatory setting. She notes the agency had to implement the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) along with promulgating a large number of rules required under the act. Added to this challenge was the investigation and resolution of “Chinese Drywall,” which was closely monitored by Congress, consumers, and the media. “Responding to this pressure helped set the tone for the rest of my term as Chairman,” she says. Don Mays, SPSP Vice President will be interviewing Ms. Tenenbaum.

Sept. 22

11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. *Managing During a Time of Transition*

Marie Ann Buerkle, Former Commissioner and Acting Chair of the CPSC, was in a variety of positions at the State, Regional, National, and International levels prior to her appointment to the agency in 2013 as a Republican member, nominated by President who was a Democrat. In 2017 she was named as Acting Chairman of the agency during a period when there was a Republican President. She was able to apply her prior experiences in government and politics to help her navigate as a leader committed to the agency's mission, while the governing dynamics were in constant transition. It was a period of continued

growth and challenge that she was able to reflect on given her commitment to public service and keeping the agency focused on its mission. She was known as a leader who reached out to many stakeholders within and outside of government, including consumers, industry associations, social advocates, and business “When you are in a challenging situation, the need to remain objective as well as to remain faithful to your principles becomes more difficult. It is at times like this a professional can grow and mature in our leadership roles.” Don Mays will be interviewing Ms. Buerkle.

1:00 – 3:00 P.M. *Crisis Management Workshop*

Steve Epner has been training professionals for 40 years covering critical thinking, influencing others, active listening, self-management, social awareness and empathy. He is on the business faculty at Saint Louis University and has authored a business guidebook: “*Simplify Everything*” which will be provided to all participants in the webinar program. For the “Crisis Management’s Role in Professional Development program,” Steve will utilize team exercises that examine 3 different processes that are critical to crisis management and professional growth:

- Understanding Knowledge (what we know, what we don’t know and what we don’t know we don’t know)
- Understanding Time (when must a decision be made)
- Understanding Reality (the need to course correct when theory and reality diverge)

The group will examine how a team knowledgeable about product safety issues communicates to a group that knows very little about product safety but needs to approve decisions that affect consumers, the community, the company and their employees. Ultimately, Steve explores how people respond to circumstances and each other. More importantly is how to use this knowledge in handling crisis situations.

September 27, 2022

10:00 – 11:00 a.m. *Case Study: Building an International Program During Crisis*

In 2015 **Tim Sullivan’s** firm, a large children’s toy and entertainment company, received three notifications in Europe of broken plastic noses on a very high-profile plush toy product line. The size, shape, position of these nose parts is historically vulnerable to child abuse impacts and very sensitive in design and manufacturing details for assurance to specifications. The company has well refined policies for plastic parts on plush toys.

He recalls: The staff pushed a controversial policy to eliminate plastic eyes and noses on all the firm’s plush products by October of that year... favoring non-hazardous fabric and embroidered alternatives. The proposed policy immediately entered the firm’s executive committee, debated and approved the proposed policy. The resulting outcome (1) elevated product safety integrity to parity with product design, engineering, and finance in addition to executive visibility. (2) Product creative outcomes pressured, and ultimately eclipsed, the original plastic versions in both design and unit sales. (3) Over 40 million units sold since, with zero safety reports, solidified this policy and illustrates best-in-class model for high production plush for the entire industry.

Key experiences: Safety engineering can and does coexist with innovative design. Safety engineers must intimately recognize unique tolerances in design, manufacturing, scale, user patterns that endorse product’s viability.

September 27, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. *Product Safety Investigations Under Pressure*

Brandan Mueller is a Partner with Husch Blackwell, a national law firm with 700 attorneys located in 18 offices around the U.S. He is associated with the St. Louis office and has been involved in more than 150 product failure investigations, including many related to catastrophic events such as fires and explosions. Brandan points out that product investigations are often conducted while organizations are under demands from business partners, government regulators or hostile parties. These investigations may also be happening while there is public and media attention seeking answers that may not be readily available. These circumstances create stressors on the investigatory process and an organization's ability to conduct a thorough investigation. Brandan's presentation will address how to balance those pressures while working towards the resolution of the investigation.

As a proactive measure for his clients, Brandan counsels on compliance issues, product recalls and potential exposure to lawsuits. He drafts product warnings, warranties and instructions, and he guides clients in product testing and product warning analysis. Brandan also advises clients on reporting requirements to the Consumer Product Safety Commission and often addresses state, federal, and international regulations as well as industry and consensus standards. He notes the connection between product investigations and crisis management: Product investigations are often conducted while organizations are under demands from business partners, government regulators or hostile parties. These investigations may also be happening while there is public and media attention seeking answers that may not be readily available. These circumstances create stressors on the investigatory process and an organization's ability to conduct a thorough investigation. This discussion will address how to balance those pressures while working towards the resolution of the investigation.

September 29, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. *Ethics in Product Safety: Crossing Boundaries*

A positive culture and emphasis on ethics are essential to consumer product safety in a manufacturer, retailer, or any organization that wants to be known as a leader in its field. **Kenneth d'Entremont** has based his entire career on practicing ethics in the design of products that reflect safety engineering. These are values that Professor d'Entremont, Ph. D., P.E. and Associate Professor (lecturer) at the University of Utah Department of Engineering, has long held in whatever role he plays. This would range from a product safety director in a recreational products manufacturer, an engineering expert in a consulting firm, as well as his current career in A positive culture and emphasis on ethics are essential to consumer product safety in a academia. Though the settings may change, his focus on values and safety has not changed at all. He is known for his holistic approach to product safety and engineering ethics across many products, fields, and industries. His popular textbook, "Engineering Ethics and Design for Product Safety," is a significant addition to the literature of product safety. His new book, which focuses on doing 'the right thing,' provides the product safety world with an important view by a leader who has devoted his professional life to product safety. His book was among those named as 'Best New Product Design Books To Read In 2022' by BookAuthority, as featured on CNN, Forbes and Inc.

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