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ASSE Body of Knowledge (Body of Knowledge) Development Model

**Background.**

The world is quickly moving from a service based economy to a knowledge based economy making knowledge very valuable. This move is exacerbated by the death of “baby boomers” and the loss of knowledge accumulated over a lifetime. ASSE members and SH&E Professionals have consistently listed access to high-caliber SH&E technical and business related information as the top two reasons they join organizations such as ASSE. Additional comments from the Leadership Conferences indicate that chapters are interested in information and topics that can be used to program events. See appendix one for additional benefits and values. Lastly, we know from practice specialty surveys and feedback that members have expressed significant interest in a single point of entry for SH&E information.

**Purpose.**

The purpose of this paper is not to delve into the background of the previous attempts to capture the SH&E Body of Knowledge, but rather to describe stages that ASSE can and should implement to optimize and manage knowledge to assist the future SH&E professional still in college, the person transitioning to SH&E as a second career or to veteran SH&E professionals who need to stay competitive in the global market. The CoPs is assigned Goal number 5 and has championed the Body of Knowledge for some time.

**Discussion.**

A Body of Knowledge (BoK) *is not* just information, a professional reading list, a library, a website or a collection of websites, a description of professional functions, or even a collection of information. A BoK *is* the sum of knowledge in a profession that includes widely accepted

traditional practices, emerging innovative practices, as well as published and unpublished material. It is a living body of that requires updating and feeding to remain current.

A BoK exists within ASSE and includes information on the website, printed material, video material, and audio material. This BoK can and should be improved upon to make it the preeminent body of knowledge of the profession by increasing the amount of knowledge, validating that knowledge, and opening access to a wider audience. Any future efforts should include developing the BoK on the website and building it around the nineteen certification competency models currently recognized by ASSE.

This paper proposes improving the ASSE BoK in eight principle stages. Also see appendix three.

- Stage One - Develop a wiki-dictionary, place it on the ASSE website with basic definitions from standards, and make it available to members to change current words or even invent new words and definition. This allows our members to have input into the future words and definitions used by the professions. At twelve or eighteen month intervals words and definitions that show promise are pulled from the Wiki-Dictionary and vetted by CoPD for use in future editions of the *Dictionary of Terms Used in the Safety Profession*.
- Stage Two - Develop a wiki-pedia, place it on the website with a draft competency model, and make it available to members so they can change current competencies or even invent new competencies. At twelve and eighteen month intervals new competencies and levels of accomplishment will be provided to the CoPA for review and vetting to assist them in building a competency model for the profession.
- Stage Three - Move data to web pages where it can be searched and accessed by members. There is a lot of information that is not on the website and therefore is not searchable or downloadable by members for use in their education or daily work.
- Stage Four - CoPS gathers thesis and dissertations on safety, health, and environment from the colleges and universities with an approved curriculum.
- Stage Five - Cops empanels a board to develop the standard that will be used to vet information in the BoK. Documents that were the result of a double blind peer review would be given a “gold standard” rating while those that underwent a blind peer review might receive a “silver standard” rating. Current documents reviewed by the Editorial Review Board, books published by ASSE, and papers are included in standards development.
- Stage Six – Provide CoPS with a library intern to help manage the BoK and improve upon the cataloging and search capabilities of the knowledge.
- Stage Seven - Provide Marketing with an IT intern develop and implement the changes needed to improve the BoK.
- Stage Eight - Develop a Business of Safety Calculator and place it on the website for all to use. This provides a valuable tool for all SH&E professionals to use.

### **Summary.**

Implementing the eight stages to the BoK that already exists within the ASSE website provides ASSE members and SH&E Professionals access to high-caliber SH&E technical information and high-caliber business related information. Furthermore, it provides ASSE chapters with information and topics that can be used for chapter events programming. And finally it provides members of practice specialties one consolidated point of entry for SH&E information.

## **Appendix 1 - ASSE BoK Benefits and Values**

The SH&E professional needs access to vast amounts and varying degrees of knowledge: that is easily accessible and searchable, delivered accurately and fast, and that originates from a reliable source. Access to the ASSE BoK:

- Encourages members, academia, governments, organizations, researchers, and other professionals to voluntarily contribute their knowledge and competencies to help build and expand services and products provided by ASSE.
- Ignites ASSE members and SH&E professionals across the globe to actively engage in building their competencies through ASSE.
- Provides members access to defined workplace SH&E competencies and provides hundreds of verified competent SH&E professionals to fill a need.
- Expands ASSE membership.

The BoK services our members, chapters, regions, and councils. Our members join ASSE and utilize its resources to do things for them. We call these the *benefits and values* that come from being a member of ASSE. The BoK builds upon existing benefits and values by providing members with many other resources that do even more things for them including:

**Example 1** - Generate questions and provides answers and knowledge through a wiki-dictionary and wiki-pedia, list-serves, technical calls, PDC's, publications, webinars, symposiums, and other resources. Members benefit from a one stop shop with real-time knowledge of multiple verified sources provided in a variety of electronic formats within second. The benefit for members is that they can access this data quickly and inexpensively while seeking trusted support in areas where their knowledge is currently weak or lacking.

**Example 2** - Promotes Networking through online list-serves, chapters/regions, events, and projects. ASSE members will have many more options available to communicate and network with BoK users. The value is a true global platform for those in the SH&E profession to exchange knowledge, thoughts, ideas, and needs. This synergy will energize BoK users.

**Example 3** – BoK provides interactive tools to help maximize the efficiency, effectiveness, reliability and quality of SH&E related knowledge. These tools are given as stand alone programs with the ability to upgrade and tap into the ASSE BoK. With the Business of Safety Calculator ASSE develops a simple tool which members use to enter data to demonstrate a ROI on the safety program. Members can run the calculator from the ASSE website or download it to their computer. Users use the program and report their ROI data back to the BoK.

### **Example 4 - Promoting Academia and Research**

Academic and student members of ASSE contribute master thesis and doctoral research projects, publications, and other resources to the BoK. These resources are then integrated into the BoK and retrievable for all users. These contributions are continuous, providing new knowledge and research. Students team up to send out periodic “freedom of information requests” and obtain millions of free government research and knowledge for placement on the BoK. Academicians will lead “peer review” teams that vet submissions and validate the quality and reliability of current resources. Academics also help integrate the BoK information into curriculum.

## **Appendix 2 – Knowledge in Place and Available Today.**

Building a world-class and expanding BoK can be intimidating, and even overwhelming. One advantage that ASSE currently boasts for this task is the massive amount of knowledge, data, and resources developed in nearly 100 years of existence. New knowledge can be easily integrated into the existing BoK providing high quality knowledge in a variety of formats for retrieval and use by members.

Members would then be energized by the BoK vision to engage in knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. ASSE Councils, along with ASSE members will keep our global BoK current and cutting edge. The knowledge that has been produced by ASSE over the years is maintained in various formats and in various locations. A table of contents of this knowledge can be found in the site map of the ASSE web page, the table of contents on the left side of the publications page on the web page, and files maintained by ASSE. This knowledge includes:

- Technical and professional publications
- Dictionary of Terms
- Scope of the Profession
- Professional Safety Journals
- Standards
- Journal of SH&E Research
- Proceedings from Professional Development Conferences
- CoPS Update and Practice Specialty Newsletters
- Chapter Newsletters and PDC material
- Symposium material
- Audio transcripts and recordings of audio conferences
- Board and meeting minutes and reports
- Business of Safety Update
- Business of Safety Articles
- President's Speeches and Presentations
- Career Guide to the Profession
- White Papers
- Position papers

### **Appendix 3 – Development of a Competency Model**

While several worthwhile attempts have been made to establish competency levels of the SH&E professional, there are several developments that can be made to improve the BoK. We propose that the next phase of development of the BoK involve eight stages.

#### **Stage One – Wiki-Dictionary**

Develop a SH&E style wiki–dictionary on the ASSE website with basic definitions from standards for members to change or invent words and definition. This allows members to have input into the future words and definitions used by the professions. At twelve month intervals words and definitions that show promise are pulled from the SH&E dictionary and vetted by CoPD and used in future editions of the *Dictionary of Terms Used in the Safety Profession*.

#### **Stage Two – Wiki-Pedia**

Develop a competency style wiki–pedia on the website with a draft competency model available to members to change current competencies or even invent new competencies. At twelve month intervals new competencies and levels of accomplishment will be provided to the CoPA for review and vetting to assist them in building a competency model for the profession.

#### **Stage Three – Move Data to Web Page**

Move data to web pages where it can be searched and accessed by members. There is a lot of information that is not on the website and therefore is not searchable or downloadable by members for use in their education or daily work.

#### **Stage Four – Thesis and Dissertation Collection**

CoPS gathers thesis and dissertations on safety, health, and environment from the colleges and universities with an approved curriculum.

#### **Stage Five – Vetting Standard**

CoPS empanels a board to develop the standard that will be used to vet information in the BoK. An example might be that documents that were the result of a double blind peer review would be given a “gold standard” rating while those that underwent a blind peer review might receive a “silver standard” rating. Current documents reviewed by the Editorial Review Board, books published by ASSE, and concept and white papers are included in standards development.

#### **Stage Six – Obtain Library Intern for CoPS**

Provide CoPS with a library intern to help manage the BoK and improve upon the cataloging and search capabilities of the knowledge.

#### **Stage Seven – Obtain IT Intern for Marketing**

Provide Marketing with an IT intern develop and implement the changes needed to improve the BoK.

#### **Stage Eight – Business of Safety Calculator**

Develop a Business of Safety Calculator and place it on the website for all to use. This provides a valuable tool for all SH&E professionals to use.