

THE safety mosaic

FALL 2004 Volume 7 No 3

ONTARIO SERVICE SAFETY ALLIANCE

TSC stores

Stocking Up on Health and Safety

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Protecting your business against food safety and hygiene issues

STRESSED OUT!

Reducing stress can provide key to healthier lifestyle

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Cover

TSC Stores Ltd. is a Canadian company with 23 retail stores in Ontario and a distribution center located in London, Ontario. Billed as “The Incredible Country Hardware Store”, TSC Stores have been in the hardware and farm supply retail sector for over 35 years in Canada. Featured on our cover, from left to right, is **Don Foster**, District Manager; **Shelly Pickering**, Human Resources Manager; **Ben Hughes**, District Manager; and **Jim Amsden**, District Manager.

Measuring Health and Safety Through Performance Appraisals

For many organizations, appraising an employee’s performance involves measuring the level at which employees are achieving both their own personal goals and the company’s expected performance standards. This process is often referred to as the performance appraisal process but is also known as performance evaluation, performance review and employee evaluation. And while there are a wide variety of performance appraisal systems to choose from, consideration is not always given to the value of integrating health and safety into the appraisal.

Why is that so important? Integrating health and safety into a performance appraisal system provides management with a unique opportunity to tie the employee’s accountabilities and achievements to the company’s objectives and strategic plans. Most importantly, if an organization begins to integrate health and safety into job descriptions, policies, procedures and organizational standards, they begin to communicate consistently the type of behavior they are looking for.

Other ways in which an integrated performance appraisal process can be used to aid an organization include:

- Communicating information to employees on how well they are meeting the health and safety performance expectations of their jobs.
- Identifying areas for coaching to help employees improve their health and safety performance and develop safe work practices.
- Providing opportunities to further communicate the organization’s health and safety performance expectations.
- Supporting the organizational succession plan.
- Providing feedback to the organization about its recruitment and selection process as well as its integrated health and safety training/development program. The performance appraisal may also provide feedback about the employee’s perceptions of the company’s health and safety performance and standards.

For example, employees need to know that meeting the health and safety expectations of a job requires them to:

- report hazards or hazardous conditions to their supervisor
- work in a safe manner at all times by using appropriate protective gear and controls on equipment
- follow company policies and procedures
- wear personal protective equipment as instructed
- participate in health and safety initiatives (e.g. ergonomic assessment, hygiene testing etc.)

Supervisors, on the other hand, need to know that meeting the health and safety expectations of a job requires the ability to:

- coach employees on safe work practices
- enforce company policies and procedures
- act as a positive role model for staff with respect to safe work practices
- support any staff who are members of the joint health and safety committee
- be aware of their legal requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act
- review new jobs/tasks/processes/equipment for safety concerns
- follow-up on reported concerns in a timely fashion
- encourage employee input into safety-related concerns and solution-finding processes
- discipline staff when required for failure to follow safety procedures

A performance appraisal system should clearly quantify the health and safety areas being monitored and should provide qualitative feedback on employee health and safety performance. When these policies and standards are measured, the organization will have a true assessment of its overall success — including health and safety performance. 📌

How Integrated is Health and Safety into Your Performance Appraisal Process?

1. How is employee performance evaluated on a regular basis?
2. Does the appraisal system (verbal or written) include questions and observations about an employee’s safe behavior? Specifically, does the company consider if an employee is:
 - reporting hazards or hazardous conditions to their supervisor?
 - working in a safe manner at all times by using appropriate protective gear and controls on equipment?
 - following company policies and procedures?
 - wearing personal protective equipment as instructed?
 - participating in health and safety initiatives (e.g. ergonomic assessment, hygiene testing etc.)?
3. If a rating scale for performance is used, do supervisors know the criteria established for the scale with respect to safe behavior? (e.g. An employee meeting expectations would be reporting hazards, wearing PPE etc.)
4. Does the performance appraisal system evaluate the supervisor’s effectiveness in managing health and safety issues in their department or area of responsibility? Have specific criteria been established for minimum health and safety standards? Are these criteria included in the appraisal evaluation as an expectation for the supervisor/manager?
5. Does the appraisal system positively reinforce business issues such as customer service (i.e. Is it rewards-based??) If yes, is safe behavior also reinforced in a positive manner?

OSSA’s Dare to Care training program is designed to assist new managers and young workers in recognizing, assessing and controlling workplace hazards. For more details about Dare to Care call the Client Services Line at 1 888 478-6772.



In the restaurant and foodservice sector, reputation means everything. Few restaurateurs can afford to ignore increasing food safety and hygiene issues. In light of this, many business owners are bolstering their investment in prevention and training to ensure that they keep their customers, employees and businesses safe.

Paul Valder, Vice President of National Accounts for the Food Safety Division with The Steritech Group, a provider of food safety and environmental hygiene services in North America, notes there has been a huge spike in demand for their services in the last couple of

safety standards. For this reason, many business owners are heightening their diligence by carefully examining and auditing their suppliers' practices to confirm that their suppliers share a similar approach and diligence towards food safety.

There has also been greater attention focused on HACCP-based (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) food management systems for food service and hospitality. HACCP is a systematic and preventive approach towards achieving food safety standards. Originally developed by the Pillsbury Company in the United States to guarantee the safety of astronauts'

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Protecting Your Business Against Food Safety and Hygiene Issues

years. "Customers want to frequent those restaurants where they have the most confidence and trust in the food," he notes. "That is one reason why it is so important for foodservice establishments to protect their brand and validate that they are delivering a safe product to the consumer."

Steritech provides training-based audits to over 30,000 establishments each year in 21 countries. They work with clients to design, develop and implement systems for managing food safety, quality assurance and brand protection. Their team of food safety specialists provide an educational and consultative third party audit process supported with a range of both certified and non-certified training services.

According to Valder, Strict Liability is a serious threat to restaurant and foodservice establishments in the U.S. Increasingly, it is becoming a reality for business owners in Canada. Food service operators have a moral and legal obligation to deliver safe food. If a court can demonstrate that a restaurant caused a food-borne illness, the owner may be held responsible. The challenge for owners is not only to manage food safety when the product comes in their back door, but to ensure that their suppliers are also following strict food

food in space, HACCP is increasingly being adopted by food retailers and food establishments as a scientific, straightforward and effective approach to enhance food safety.

The HACCP approach is based on seven principles aimed at identifying hazards in food production, controlling hazards at critical control points in the process, and verifying that the system is working properly. The key element of the HACCP system is its preventive nature, meaning that potential food safety hazards are controlled throughout the process.

Like all business systems, HACCP is only effective if it is supported by management commitment to food safety. This is certainly the case at Sodexho Canada, a division of the Sodexho Alliance, an organization that provides food and management services in 76 countries worldwide.

With over 10,000 employees serving over 60 million meals each year in Canada, Sodexho takes the issue of food safety very seriously. They consider the HACCP/Food Safety system the cornerstone of their food safety program, citing its systematic and proactive approach that enables Sodexho to manage food safety from the time food is shipped to them until it is served to their customers.

Continued on page 6 →

A prospective new partnership between The Steritech Group and OSSA will provide Food Safety products for the restaurant and foodservices sector.



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TSC
Stores
Ltd.

Stocking Up on Health and

Left to right

Roy Carter
President

Shelley Pickering
Human Resources Manager

Gord Illes
Vice President, Store Operations

safety from our members. Groundbreakers are member firms who have come to realize the value of this approach through working with OSSA. Between healthy, safe employees and customer service excellence, and they're willing to do what it takes to create a genuinely caring environment.

TSC Stores Ltd. is a Canadian company with 23 retail stores in Ontario and a distribution center located in London, Ontario. Billed as "The Incredible Country Hardware Store," TSC Stores have been in the hardware and farm supply retail sector for over 35 years in Canada.

Four years ago, when Roy Carter, Gord Illes, and John Kropp, all senior managers in the company, bought TSC Stores from the original owner, they could have easily pushed health and safety aside in favour of the many other priorities that arise when taking over an established business. Instead, they promptly called OSSA to request assistance in helping TSC Stores build its health and safety system.

Prior to purchasing TSC, Roy Carter, now President, had talked about health and safety with OSSA Consultant, Sheila Goodwin. At that time, the previous owners didn't share his commitment to health and safety so it was difficult to initiate the scope of change that needed to be made.

That situation changed when Carter and his partners took control of TSC Stores. With a shared commitment to health and safety, there was little delay in getting started. He explains, "OSSA's approach to health and safety was a new concept to us. We were impressed and immediately started to initiate action. We were all supportive and interested in health and safety and in working with a human resource professional to upgrade our health and safety system."

and there are two more on the way. This expansion had led to the hiring of 125 new employees in the same period.

Working in a healthy and safe manner is openly discussed and heavily promoted throughout the organization. From orientation through to performance evaluation, employees learn the importance of health and safety to TSC Stores and are provided with the information and tools they need to meet those expectations.

As one of the safety group elements they worked on this year, TSC developed an orientation checklist that is used with every new hire – whether contract, temporary, full time, part time, return from a leave of absence or job transfer. This ensures that all new employees know about health and safety procedures and receive the necessary training for their job.

Employees know that health and safety is a priority because it is discussed at corporate meetings and bi-weekly meetings, and it is included in business planning, and in the company newsletter. They know they are accountable and that health and safety is monitored and measured regularly and consistently.

A major boost to TSC's safety program occurred when the organization made the decision to participate in a WSIB employer incentive program called the Safety Group Program. Designed to bring together a network of firms who share the common goal of reducing injuries and illnesses, Safety Group members pool resources, and share

All TSC store managers and worker representatives have completed OSSA's Basic Certification Program. While not all are certified, each manager and worker rep has the basic training to support their health and safety development and success.

While corporate head office adopted a commitment to health and safety fairly quickly, it took a while for many of the store managers to see the relevance of health and safety to their business. Once it clicked, however, the organization has never looked back. "It is very gratifying to see the tremendous effort and support that every manager and employee has put forth in health and safety," notes Pickering. "Without our managers pushing health and safety, TSC Stores would not be as successful as it is."

A lot of the work that Pickering and the senior managers have done in the last few years has centred on building commitment at the store level. Pickering feels that her work with OSSA has helped significantly in that regard. "Sheila has been an important resource and coach for TSC Stores," she says. "She has helped everyone understand what integrating health and safety really means."

Some store managers have also started working with other OSSA consultants to enhance health and safety in their stores. Pickering also feels TSC's involvement in a Safety Group has contributed greatly to building commitment among its store managers.

At last year's corporate conference there was positive feedback from the managers who admitted that they originally dreaded TSC's involvement in the Safety Group but now feel that it was one of the best moves the company made.

In addition to the financial rewards that come from their involvement, Pickering feels that the commitment has driven accountability and diligence in terms of adhering to processes and standards that are critical to their health and safety success. "Everyone recognizes that if they slip up it does not simply affect TSC," she says. "All of the other members of the Safety Group will be affected."

Carter notes that employee awareness has improved since they began integrating health and safety into their operation. "In general

what I have seen is far more awareness of the importance of safe work practices and maintaining a healthy work environment," he says. "Our accident rate continues to drop each year. This is a tremendously gratifying trend."

When asked why he feels that an integrated approach is so important to their health and safety success, Carter explains, "There is a financial return. Employees working safely and being healthy has a positive effect on the bottom line. And, employees appreciate knowing that we care and that we are taking a proactive approach to health and safety."

Pickering adds that each department now considers the impact that its decisions and plans will have on the health and safety of all TSC employees. It has caused everyone to become proactive rather than reactive. "It becomes second nature", notes Pickering. "Just as employees know how to deal with customers, they know how to deal with health and safety."

So how does TSC know that it is succeeding in integrating health and safety into the organization? They gauge their success using a number of measures. They have already completed two needs assessments with OSSA and have updated their action plan to reflect their findings. They are developing five health and safety standards per year in accordance with the Safety Group. They conduct regular inspections using checklists and sign-off sheets and an annual questionnaire is sent to all staff. They set health and safety objectives for managers and have tied health and safety into individual performance evaluations as well. If teams do not meet their health and safety objectives, their merit increase is directly affected. And, they have broken out WSIB costs on all financial statements so that they can analyze NEER costs (rebates and surcharges) for each location.

For Carter the measure of success in health and safety extends beyond the financial return. "It is my philosophy in business and in life that you should put more in than you are trying to get out – at work and in the community," he says. "We win all around. We are a responsible employer and that puts us in good standing with our employees, our peers and our competitors." 🐾

Safety

In addition to re-engaging with OSSA, Roy and his partners hired Shelly Pickering as TSC's Human Resources Manager in 2001. Since that time, she has played a key role in the development of the chain's health and safety system. At the same time, TSC Stores has expanded considerably. Seventeen stores have grown to 23

best practices in safety. In addition to improving workplace safety, group members can reduce their WSIB premiums and earn financial rebates. While TSC could have registered only its corporate location in the program, the executive team mandated that all 23 locations should register despite the \$15,000 cost to the company.

Master Kit – Common Hazard Modules

This kit contains a complete set of 10 self-directed learning modules. Each module focuses on one of the 10 most common significant hazards found in service industries.

It provides practical information and training on:

- Laws, standards and guidelines
- How to recognize, assess and control 10 significant hazards commonly found in service industries
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- Planners to document your actions.

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Price: **\$199.90** each

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Product Number: 660-001-003-K-TH

Price: **\$79.00** each

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\$2,000 + materials

WHMIS Training at Client Site

\$340 for 4 hour session + materials

For more information, or to order one of these products, call us at 1 888 478 6772 or visit www.ossa.com

Food for Thought

Continued from page 3

Key components of Sodexho’s HACCP program include:

- Monitoring and controlling the temperatures of foods during receiving, thawing, cooking, holding, serving, cooling, and re-heating.
- Training all food handlers in proper hand-washing techniques and the use of disposable gloves.
- Training employees in the prevention of cross-contamination by providing them with the appropriate tools that can assist in eliminating cross-contamination. For example, coloured cutting boards are used to prepare specific types of foods.
- Conducting monthly food safety self-inspections at all food service units serving food.

Yvon Langlois, Director of Training at Sodexho, and long-standing member of OSSA’s Restaurant and Foodservice Advisory Committee, explains. “Food safety is as important to Sodexho as is airline safety to an organization like Air Canada.”

It is also integral to their hiring process. Sodexho foodservice managers and supervisors must be food safety certified within 90 days of hire and they are required to re-certify every three

years. The industry standard is five years.

Their food safety system is also supported by extensive training within the organization. “Sodexho has 30 certified food safety trainers on staff across Canada who provide training to employees in both French and English,” says Langlois.

Everyone in the organization who handles food is required to complete Food Safety Certification training, including hourly staff. Managers can provide our frontline employees with just-in-time training utilizing the TOPS Box (Training Our People = Success). “These tools will ensure that all food handlers are trained to protect both our customers and clients as well as employees to ensure that SODEXHO has the highest quality and safest food in our industry,” says Langlois.

Being able to identify the various types of potential food hazards that exist in the foodservice work environment and what can be done to prevent them from becoming a danger is the first step in food safety awareness. Owner commitment to keeping the workplace safe will ensure that customers and co-workers alike always have a safe and healthy environment in which to visit and work. ☺

OSSA

Out and About

Watch OSSA Out and About to find out about upcoming OSSA events and presentations. If you have any questions about these listings, please call our client service line at 1-888-478-6772.

On October 17th – 19th, Safe Communities will host its 7th National Health and Safety Conference, *Keys to Safety 2004*. Two of the featured speakers at this event are Elizabeth Mills, President and CEO of OSSA, and Rhonda Bridger, OSSA consultant. Elizabeth will present information about OSSA’s three-year applied research project with Laurentian University focusing on the acquisition of new knowledge for “Improving the Health and Safety of Young Workers in Small Business.” In this presentation she will discuss the research alliance, some of the key findings and learnings, and the process being used to apply the findings through Integrated Knowledge Transfer. Rhonda Bridger will present *Opening the Doors to Long-Term Success*, a presentation that highlights the benefits of integrating health and safety into existing business systems.

OSSA will participate in Hostex on October 17th – 19th, at the Toronto International Centre. We invite our Restaurant and Foodservice and Tourism and Hospitality members to come and see us at Booth # 5205. Look for information on OSSA’s newest products and services developed specifically for your sector at this event!

Stressed Out!

Avoiding the physical and emotional toll of stress takes awareness and hard work.

At one point in our lives, most of us have felt the effects of stress. That isn't necessarily a bad thing. After all, a certain amount of stress is useful to avoid such things as boredom. However, when it goes on for too long, or becomes too intense, stress

can lead to significant physical and mental health symptoms that can be damaging to our well-being.

Under pressure, some people are more likely to drink or smoke heavily. Others may work too much, sleep poorly or forget to exercise or eat properly. There are also significant physiological and mental health effects of excessive stress including heart disease, stomach ulcers, damage to the immune system which can increase vulnerability to colds and flu, as well as depression and anxiety. An individual who is under stress may find themselves less able to think clearly and rationally about problems.

So what can be done to reduce the impact of stress? The first step is to learn to recognize when you're feeling stressed. Listen to your body and watch for early warning signs of stress including shoulder and neck tension, or clenching of teeth or hands. Next, look at the way you choose to deal with stress. If possible, avoid the cause of the stress. If that is not possible, recognize the things that lead to stress in your life. By recognizing the triggers you can prepare strategies for handling the situation before it leads to stress. If you are a worrier, try to focus on the things you can change, instead of those that you have no control over.

Regular exercise can play a powerful role in reducing stress. Besides strengthening the heart and increasing the blood supply to it,



THE SIGNS OF STRESS

- Headaches
- Anxiety
- Back pain
- Depression
- Weight gain or loss
- Fatigue
- High blood pressure
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Insomnia
- Shortness of breath
- Stiff neck
- Upset stomach

exercise can positively impact your vulnerability to heart disease.

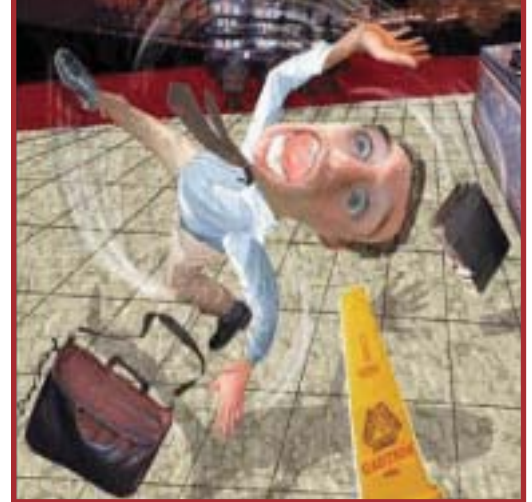
Adequate sleep is crucial to proper brain function. Respect your body's need for sleep aiming for at least eight hours of sleep each night. Also, try to incorporate several "time-out" breaks during the day to close your eyes, meditate or take a quick catnap. Relaxation techniques such as meditation, stretching or deep breathing have also proven useful in reducing stress.

When we're stressed, the natural tendency is to go for "comfort foods" that we perceive as making us feel better. Unfortunately, many of these foods are high in sugar and fat which can lead to weight gain, increased anxiety and sleeplessness. Eating well-balanced meals that include all the food groups can keep the cravings at bay. Planning meals in advance can also help to reduce the tendency to grab whatever happens to be handy. Joining group sports, participating in social events or taking up new hobbies are all powerful ways to step back from the things that are causing you stress, and getting a fresh outlook on life.

Most importantly, if you feel stress is beginning to overwhelm your life, don't forget to ask for help – from your family, friends and health care professionals. Often just talking it over with another individual can help to alleviate stress and lead to better mental and physical health. ☺

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