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What Being A Musician Taught Me About Safety **Article by Alan D Quilley CRSP**

I've been a musician for over 50 years! Wow, just typing that has made me flashback to a zillion hours of practice and performance. My memories are flooded with all the friends I've made along the way. I often meld two of the important parts of my life together by playing my guitar during Keynote Safety sessions that I present. During those presentations, as I play, I ask the audience to think of how they developed their skills at what they are good at. The conclusion I am asking people to consider is that if it takes certain activities and knowledge to get good at what we do, then why do we think getting good at safety will be as easy as making rules and watching orientation DVDs? Humans just don't get good at things because you offer to fire them if they break rules (often rules they don't even understand). Seems kind of silly to me. We know, with confidence, that gaining knowledge/skills is hard work. It's surprising to me that some companies then reduce "knowing safety" to an arbitrary rule book and threats of termination for errors.

So let me describe what being a musician has helped me realize about Safety Excellence. While you're reading through the article perhaps you can think of something you are accomplished at (perhaps it's a hobby, an art or a sport). Please think of all the hard work it took to become excellent at what you do. Then take that approach with helping people in your organization to get excellent at creating safety for themselves and others!

(1) Knowledge

To be a musician you need to know music. How it works and the 12 available notes (in western music). You need to know your instrument and how it works. You also need to know how to adjust it and make minor repairs. Knowing what you are doing is essential if you are to do it well.

(2) Muscle Memory

This is where hours and hours of practice cannot be replaced with watching a YouTube video or a purchased DVD. A musician simply has to practice, practice, practice until their muscle movements are automatic and predictably accurate. Once you have a habit, you don't have to think about it much to be predictably excellent.

(3) Pattern Recognition

This is particularly important when communicating with other musicians through written music or just playing along with another while watching them play. When the other musician moves their hand to a different chord you can instantly follow because you know what you're looking at. Probably as importantly you can see when things are wrong.

(4) Practiced Reaction

I'm a guitarist first (although I do play other instruments); it is what I am most competent at of all the instruments I can play. When playing with others and I'm queued to play a solo, it doesn't take much to signal to me that you want that to happen. I'm quick to react with confidence because I've done it more times than I can count. Practice makes permanence. What you have to do is make sure what you are habitually about, is right!

(5) Common Language

Musicians communicate with musicians using a common language. When you know that language, life becomes much better when playing with other musicians. "At the chorus play the relative minor for two bars" has meaning to those who have the common language.

(6) Communication Short Cuts

Part of being a musician is playing with other musicians that you may have just met. At "open stages" and "jam sessions", musicians meet seconds before performing and they have a bit of a "pre-song" meeting. "12 bar blues in A... no 5 on the turn around." It can happen in seconds and to knowledgeable musicians, the song will go usually very well. It looks amazing to the uninformed but it's really not that difficult to a group of skilled musicians. It also soon becomes apparent who doesn't know what you're talking about since they will soon be lost in the song.

(7) Sincere Appreciation of Others

I've played with a lot of musicians in my 50 years and one thing that stands out for me in that community is the easy way most musicians show appreciation of others. Musicians are highly likely to comment on a performance that is well done! Next time you're at a concert, the people who are most likely to applaud a performance are fellow musicians! If you don't believe me, next time you see it ask "Are you a musician?"

(8) Adjusting for Improvement

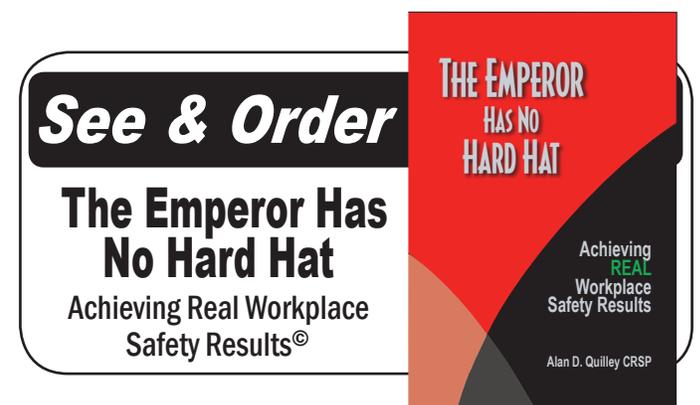
Back to practice. Musicians who want to be good at what they do try things and adjust from the feedback they can hear and see themselves and from the feedback from others. Once you figure out what you want to do then it becomes a matter of practice, practice, practice! It's important to recognize that perfection isn't the goal since that's impossible. Excellence is always the achievable journey. Strive for it!

(9) Knowledge of the Equipment

If you are making music or drilling a hole in a piece of wood, both will take an expert knowledge of that equipment if you want the process to end in positive outcomes. The better you know the equipment, the better able you are to react and adjust as the job requires. Absolute respect for what the equipment can and cannot do is essential for predictable positive outcomes.

(10) Know the Procedures

Last but certainly not least is knowing the steps to take to achieve the goal. Without a roadmap, it will be hard to get where you're going. Procedural rigidity is NOT what we need; we need procedures that can be adjusted by knowledgeable people who can react to reality otherwise the first unexpected fork in the road could end in disaster. Know what you are doing



well enough to drive around the detour with confidence.

(Bonus) Not the Top Ten - It's Actually Required For All of the Top Ten

Above all, you have to WANT TO! Safety and being a musician are both based on a desire to actually want to be good at it. I've often heard it chanted that "Nobody goes to work to get hurt." Well that in most cases is true. Let's turn that around and suggest that if we go to work today and we are focused on creating efficient, effective and safe ways to do what we need to do, that would be filled with intention!

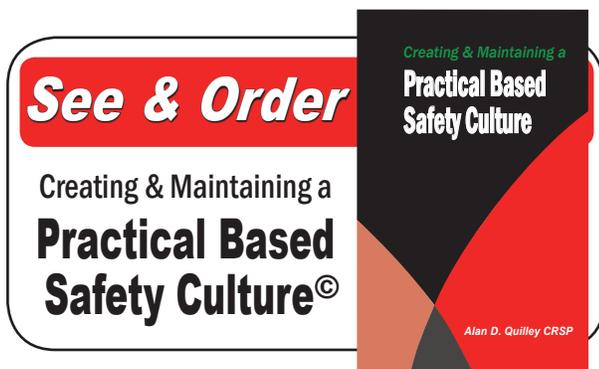
So there you have it. Being good at any human endeavour is going to take at least these things to consider. Did it work for you when considering what it takes for YOU to be good at what you do? If it did, perhaps the first thing to do is review your safety orientation process and revamp it to reflect what we know about humans. By the way, you may want to stop threatening people with dismissal unless they absolutely comply blindly to the rules they are given... but that's for another article.

On the Net

Webinar - Becoming a Canadian Registered Safety Professional

April 11, 2017 at 3:00 PM

In order to assist prospective applicants the BCRSP offers webinars throughout the year. The webinar will outline the application process, the documentation requirements and a Q&A session.



Another Way That We Help CRSP Candidates!

FREE Questions - Downloads

In case you missed it, a couple of years ago, Alan created a website to further assist you in your studies. He also posted, for your FREE download, 90 questions (in two series of 45 questions). This could cost over \$80.00 on a competitor's site! The practice Q & A are based on the 2015 CRSP Blueprint.

Stay tuned for even more questions and study tips at:

Safety Results CRSP Examination Preparation Site

You'll find the practice questions and answers at the following links:

Safety Results CRSP Practice Questions - Series 1

Safety Results CRSP Practice Questions - Series 2

LinkedIn CRSP Exam Preparation Study Group

Alan created this group for those that are planning on writing the exam to discuss study strategies and tips. Join us at:

Alan's CRSP Exam Preparation Study Group

Safety Results Blog and Twitter

Read what Alan has to say!

Blog

Twitter

CRSP EXAMINATION PREPARATION WORKSHOPS 2017

Sherwood Park	April 7 - 9, 2017	2 seats left
Sherwood Park	July 21 - 23, 2017	
Sherwood Park	September 22 - 24, 2017	
Sherwood Park	November 24 - 26, 2017	

Stay tuned for Calgary workshop dates!

Our 2.5 day CRSP Examination Preparation Workshop fee is \$949.00 + GST. Safety Results Ltd. wants you to be successful in becoming a CRSP. Here's why we think we can help and why it's important to research fully when you are comparing CRSP Examination Preparation Workshop providers!

We are an Alberta based business (since 1999) - support your local economy!

Our Workshop includes the following:

- Material updated to the current BCRSP Blueprint
- Our Manual and Workbook (\$600.00 value)
- Our CRSP Exam Prep Flash Cards (\$105.00 value)
- Our Handbook which contains additional practice questions and answers (Handbook is available *only* to participants at the workshop)
- Material is contained in a coveted Safety Results canvas attaché bag which includes pen, highlighter, calculator, notebook for notes and Post-its.
- Lunches on the two full days and refreshment breaks
- Special offer – We are the *only* workshop provider that has a special offer for participants of our Workshop: If you write the CRSPEX and are unsuccessful, you may attend another sponsored Safety Results Ltd. CRSP Examination Preparation Workshop for a nominal fee. The workshop must be taken within one year of your first workshop with us and further conditions apply - please check with us for more details. If you see other providers with this same offer, it will be because we did it first.

When broken down, the value added features of our Workshops cannot be beat. For more details and to register, please visit our [CRSP Workshops](#) page.

Please note that if you have registered for a workshop, but not paid for your spot, we are not holding a seat for you.

And remember that if you are unable to attend one of our Workshops, you can purchase the very same Manual, Workbook and FlashCards that our students receive in our Workshops. Visit our [CRSP Exam Prep Materials](#) page for more details!

