



SELLS



Society for Effective Lessons Learned Sharing

August 2002
The SELLS Quarterly
Newsletter

Co-Chair Corner

It has been a busy time for SELLS. The Executive Committee has revised the SELLS Charter and Strategic Plan. Both revised documents have been posted on the SELLS website. We are planning the agenda for the October meeting and are currently looking for speakers who can share their lessons learned program challenges and successes. If you would like to be a conference presenter, contact one of the SELLS Co-Chairs, Dawn Starrett or Rich Schassburger.

If you have any ideas to add to this newsletter, contact Rich via e-mail at Richard.Schassburger@rf.doe.gov or Dawn via e-mail at starred@nv.doe.gov

Feature Story

Wearing Steel-Toed Shoes



The weather is warmer and many of us spending more time working in our yards. Thoughts of safety

may be far away especially for those who wonder, "what kind of idiot runs over their own foot with a lawnmower?" Our feature story contributor did and found out the value of wearing steel-toed safety shoes while mowing. He was mowing the backyard grass after a full day of working in the yard. As he was pulling the mower back towards him, he tripped over a piece of wood lying next to the grass. Before he realized what was happening, he was lying on the ground and had pulled the mower onto his foot. The mower hit his foot with such force that it killed the engine. As he pulled his foot from under the mower he expected to see a bloody mess. Luckily, he had been wearing steel-toed boots because he had been trimming some large branches on his trees earlier that day. When he assessed the damage, it was limited to a destroyed boot and a broken toe. When he retrieved the steel cap from the boot, he found it under the mower. The steel cap was split up the front. Imagine the damage that his foot could have incurred. This incident serves as a powerful reminder that something as simple as mowing the lawn may have additional hazards lying in wait. Wearing the proper the proper safety equipment and attending to your surroundings can go a long way towards maintaining your safety.

Do you have photos of a lessons learned to share? Submit to starred@nv.doe.gov

Recurring Themes

- Pressurized drum lids
- Following manufacturer's use recommendations

Upcoming Events

August 27 and 28, 2002
EFCOG ISM Workshop
INEEL, ID

October 22-24, 2002
SELLS Conference in
Germantown, MD

SELLS Member Profile



John Bickford is the moving force behind the lessons learned program at Fluor Hanford. John was recently the contractor co-chair for SELLS. John continues to support SELLS

as a gatekeeper for the alert list server and as a volunteer mentor. John is also helps us update the web page with the latest SELLS news. For all your efforts – thanks John.

Book Review

Common Knowledge - How Companies Thrive by Sharing What They Know presents author Nancy Dixon's five methods for sharing knowledge. Dixon, an organizational learning expert, identified the methods after conducting in-depth studies of numerous companies that are successfully transferring internal knowledge. Common Knowledge is a unique compilation of successful knowledge transfer examples from the author's extensive research. Although the book is highly recommend, in the end it can be boiled down to the fundamental idea that there are many ways for companies to transfer internal knowledge, and that not all successful methods require expensive technology investments or rely completely on technology. No successful method can completely do away with the human component or replicate employees' ability to gain knowledge through experience and apply knowledge in varying contexts. For a more complete synopsis of the book, contact Meredith Brown at: racer@lanl.gov.

Quote

"It is the road now and forever, finite man probing infinity, finding his way, endlessly. All that matters are the lessons learned along the way." - Leonard E. Read

New Resources

Check out success stories at the following web site:
<http://www.navosh.net/>

Let us know about anything new happening with lessons learned at your site!

Article Review

Tom Taormina's article, "From Quality to Business Success – Three catastrophes offer lessons in how to make the transition" in the American Society for Quality April 2002 issue of Quality Progress discusses lessons from the Enron bankruptcy, 9-11 attacks, and Apollo 13.

Request for Assistance

Linda Collier of Los Alamos National Laboratory requests that SELLS members send her information about programs, processes, procedures that involve the worker in developing lessons learned at: lcollier@lanl.gov.

Tips for Improving

Improving Alerts

Focus on the situation/event in which the lesson was learned. Background details and process explanation are not necessary for recipients who are performing similar tasks and thus have the technical expertise/skills and common language to understand the lesson. The information presented in the alert will be translated by recipients to create meaningful links between the information and its application in specific settings.

Increasing Awareness

Ask each worker to share a lesson they learned the last week at home or work during a weekly lessons learned meeting.

Recognition!!



Tom Rotella was recently awarded the GIDEP 2001 Program Manager's Excellence Award. Tom has provided the guidance and leadership to initiate the input and review of GIDEP information into SELLS. DOE now consistently address the impact of GIDEP lessons learned information on DOE program and activities. He coordinates periodic presentations at the SELLS Conferences. Tom Rotella was a strong supporter of the 2001 GIDEP Workshop where he was the main driver in assembling an excellent program for the Lessons Learned Theme Day. He coordinated the Keynote Speaker and assembled a notable group on industry subject matter experts to discuss lessons learned in today's environment. Yeah Tom!

Want to share a lessons learned? Contact your organization's Lessons Learned Point of Contact.