Considering Radiation Safety Program Image



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Introduction

- The CSHEMA Research & Survey Community of Practice (CoP), with the help of several energetic graduate students, engaged in a series of polling projects aimed at characterizing the initial image of college and university EH&S programs. These projects included specific consideration of radiation safety elements.
- The term "image" was specifically used because it means: "the general impression that a person, organization, or product presents to the public".
 - The image sets the tone for future engagement and program support.
- Our efforts focused on three ways individuals gain a first impression of a university safety program:
 - (1) the departmental web page,
 - (2) staff identification and recognition on-campus, and
 - (3) the departmental organizational chart



Why is Image Important?

- To paraphrase Stancill JM. Financial Analysis: Upgrade Your Company's Image - and Valuation. Harvard Business Review, January 1984.
 - "Some [organizations] only pay passing attention to the image they project to the world at large. This image can affect the attention [organizations] get from those people who assign [organizational] valuations."
 - "Image can be [broadly] defined as management, organization name or trademark, annual report and financial public relations"
 - "Avoid expensive, ostentatious annual reports that will subject the [organization] to ridicule."



1. Departmental Website Assessment

- The goal was to develop a mechanism that could be used to objectively assess if a program's website affords ready access to commonly needed information and services (in a measurable manner). The tool would be used for both internet and intranet assessments.
- Examples of assessment considerations:
 - Is the appropriate website easy to find?
 - Is the website structure confusing for the viewer?
 - Is the website easy to navigate and neatly organized?
 - How quickly can information be found?
 - Is contact information easily visible and easily accessible?
 - Important information such as hours of operation, location, and contact details should be extremely easy to find on any section of the webpage. People expect a quick solution to their problem or a quick answer to their questions.

Examples of Search Terms/Phrases

- Safety
- Occupational Safety
- Environmental Health and Safety
- EHS
- SHE
- Industrial Safety
- Research Safety
- Laboratory safety
- Lab Safety
- Biosafety

Biological safety

Radiation safety

Fire safety

Fire and Life safety

How do I contact the safety department? (not security or police)

Who is responsible for what in safety?

Where is the safety department located?

Who oversees safety? Where are they located?

Example Search Phrases

- I need documentation that my PI has the authorization to use radioactive material in his/her research project.
- I need documentation that my PI has authorization to use potentially infectious agents in his/her research project.
- I need documentation that my PI has authorization to use hazardous chemicals in his/her research project.

- What safety training am I and other staff required to have?
- What is the required dress in a teaching lab?
- We just had a chemical spill
- I have an indoor air quality complaint
- Reporting an injury or exposure to whom?
- Reporting a safety concern
- I need our hazardous waste picked up

Typical Faculty EH&S Search Phrases

- I need authorization to use radioactive material in my proposed research project
- I need authorization to use potentially infectious material in my proposed
- I need authorization to use hazardous chemicals in my proposed research project
- I just had a chemical spill
- I have an indoor air quality complaint
- How and where do I get **FIT tested*** for a respirator?
- How do I ship a specimen?
- What safety training am I required to have?
- Reporting an injury or exposure
- Reporting a safety concern
- I need my hazardous waste picked up
- I want a **dosimeter***
- I have questions about the results of my recent lab inspection

 How do I get my biosafety cabinet* certified? How do I get my fume hood* checked?

How do I get my **emergency shower*** and **eyewash*** checked?

- What adjustments do I need to make with my research project as it pertains to COVID?
- Where do I access safety information on EH&S?
- Where do I access safety information on Occupational Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Industrial Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Research Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Lab Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Chemical Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Biosafety?
- Where do I access safety information on Biological Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Radiation Safety?
- Where do I access safety information on Fire Safety?

Example Clinical Search Terms

- I need my biohazard waste picked up
- Am I required to take safety training and if so, where do I find it?
- I had a needlestick exposure
- What signage do I need to post in my clinic and where do I find it?
- What logs do I need to maintain (AED, Emergency Cart, CLIA)?
- How do I store sample medication?
- I need to dispose of my expired medications

- I have controlled substances in my clinic. How do I store them and dispose of them?
- I want to add an X-ray unit
- How do I get a CLIA certificate?
- What Point of Care Test machines are best for my needs?



Scoring System

- A scoring system was developed based on the number of clicks to find desired information – This provided a measure of the <u>accessibility</u> of the website.
- 1 click = Effortlessly found desired information
- 2 clicks = Easily found desired information
- 3 clicks = Difficult to find desired information
- 4 clicks = Unable to locate desired information

Any of the 68 search terms that were <u>not found within 4 clicks or accessing a</u> <u>means of finding assistance (e.g., phone number)</u> while browsing was classified as 'unable to locate desired information.' This measurement was determined based on information gathered through webpage building sites and recommendations.

More clicks = time-consuming and discouraging (frustration, alienation).

Is the number of clicks really that important?: Debunking the 3-click rule. Qualaroo Blog - User Research and Customer Feedback Trends. (2022, July 8).

Data Table for UTHealth Houston SHERM Internet Assessment

(based on a total of 68 search terms and phases)

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University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHealth) Internet – External Website Evaluation Typical audience: Prospective students, faculty, and staff Scoring system 1-4: Based on number of clicks to find desired information - a measure of the accessibility of website 1 click = Effortlessly found desired information, 2 clicks = Easily found desired information, 3 clicks = Somewhat easy to find desired information, 4 clicks = Unable to locate desired information										
							Typical Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) Search Terms & Phrases	Could the desired information be found within at least 4 clicks Yes or No	Number of clicks (1-4) to find desired information	Was there at least a phone number or email provided where I can find additional assistance? (Access to phone number or information? Checked daily? Hours of operation? (M-F, 8-5?)
							Safety	Yes , Directly prompted to EH&S website	1 = Effortlessly found desired information	Yes, EH&S main office, hotline, & emergency phone numbers were easily located on website. Location of main office, hours of operation and contact information were present.
Occupational Safety	Yes , Directly prompted to EH&S Occupational Safety website	1 = Effortlessly found desired information	Yes , Phone number for EH&S main office, hotline, and emergency were easily located on website. Location of main office, hours of operation and contact information were present. Photos and list of occupational safety dept. staff was located along with their contact information (email, office number, and phone numbers).							
Environmental Health and Safety	Yes, Directed to EH&S main page	1 = Effortlessly found desired information	Yes, EH&S main office, hotline, & emergency phone numbers were easily located on website. Location of main office, hours of operation and contact information were present.							
EHS	Yes, Directed to EH&S main page	1 = Effortlessly found desired information	Yes, EH&S main office, hotline, & emergency phone numbers were easily located on website. Location of main office, hours of operation and contact information were present.							

Internet Webpage Information Search Assessment Comparison (search terms n = 68)

Institution	Total number of "Yes" (Found desired information with 4 clicks)	Total number of "No" (Unable to find desired information within 4 clicks)
UTHealth Houston	58 (85%)	10 (15%)
X University	33 (49%)	35 (51%)

2. Program Recognition on Campus

- Colleges and universities are dynamic environments with students, faculty, and staff constantly changing
- These populations carry with them general impressions of "how things were recognized on my previous campus"
- From our experience, certain service units seem to be consistently recognizable on campus – for example: police, security, facilities, culinary services, housekeeping
 - Note: appearance consistently ranks high in customer surveys regarding service industries
- But what about EH&S how are they recognized or identified on campus?
- A prevalence poll was conducted with 86 respondents: "how is EH&S recognized on your campus? Check all that apply"

2. EH&S Program Recognition on Campus

(n = 86, multiple choices permitted, 3 week sampling period, Sept 2022)

•	Shirts or jackets with dept name	56%
•	Reputation	51%
•	Provision of services to clients	49%
•	ID badges	47%
•	Provision of training (live or video)	45%
•	Staff photos in dept webpage	43%
•	Hi viz vests during drills/emergency	36%
•	Lab coats with dept name	26%
•	Name badges	19%
•	Hats or other headwear (hard hats)	13%
•	Social media presence	7%
•	Uniforms	5%
•	None	5%
•	COVID masks with dept name	0%

Also noted: Typically voluntary and no specific EH&S logo



3. Program Org Charts

- One of the first things we ask for prior to a requested EH&S program peer review is a departmental org chart
- Amazingly, in a significant proportion of cases, one does not currently exist!
 - And when one does exist, their quality greatly varies.
 - This is likely due to an absence of guidance on what characteristics an org chart should exhibit
- Hence, a CSHEMA poll survey of org charts was conducted, assembled, and de-identified (n = 30)
- So let's review some examples....













Environmental Health & Safety



Risk Management









University Logo



Possible Org Chart "Best Practices": Questions We Can All Ask Ourselves

- ✓ Does the chart "stand by itself"? e.g. , does it contain the name of the institution, organization and the name of the department?
- ✓ Does the chart reflect who the safety program reports to?
- ✓ Does the chart have an effective date?
- ✓ What major operational elements are reflected in the chart for example radiation safety, lab safety, fire etc.
 - ✓ Does it have boxes that label units that do not reflect actual positions?
- ✓ Do the connecting lines correctly and clearly reflect who reports to whom?
- ✓ Are equivalent titles given equal weight, size, and alignment on the chart?
- Are full names written out in each box? Or maybe just last names or no names at all, just titles?
 - ✓ If names are included, are academic titles and/or professional certifications written in each box?

✓ Is the chart color-coded to add clarity (for those who can see color)?

✓ Is it/should it be posted on the departmental inter or intranet webpage?





Departmental Orientation Display Boards



Shows departmental org chart, program activity reports, customer service survey results, and ultimate program outcomes

Also shows a portion of the peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters generated by the department (n > 100)

Very powerful visual for individuals visiting the department

Working on adding the hat collection (which is currently displayed elsewhere in the office)











Summary/Discussion

- The image of a radiation safety program (and others) is important, particularly in the dynamic environment in which we operate – change is constant, but the notion of latent expectations and inevitable comparisons should be acknowledged.
- Three sources of program image considered here include: departmental webpages, on-campus recognition, and organizational charts
- All three of these image factors can be easily self-assessed and comparisons to benchmarked data can assist with resource justifications for any desired corrective actions
- Your feedback on this topic is welcome



Acknowledgements

- Special thanks goes public health graduate students Estefania Gonzales and Kara Mirza (UT SPH) and Pricilla Phuong (Texas A&M Univ. SPH)
- And all of the members of CSHEMA who participated in these survey efforts.



Questions/Comments?



