

# CAREERS

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## HOW DID I GET HERE?

### Simon Randall



#### How did you get into health and safety?

I have always been passionate about EH&S in the workplace. I started as a work study engineer and then migrated to operations management. During my time at Toyota, I was chosen as the management representative for H&S in my department. My duties included accident investigation, risk assessment, process improvements and the collation of reports.

I then moved companies and it was recognised that they needed to develop their safety culture and workplaces. I used my knowledge and experience to support this initiative and led the EHS improvement strategy. My career then migrated fully towards health and safety.

#### What is it about health and safety that appeals to you?

The most important thing in life is to stay well. At work, this can be put to the test. I therefore feel very strongly about ensuring that workplaces are safe places to be part of. My mission is to protect people through harm reduction strategies and I enjoy making a difference.

#### What has been the biggest health and safety challenge you've experienced?

The biggest challenge I experienced was going into a business that was just about to embark on a culture change journey. They genuinely wanted to put safety first and had no robust strategy. The management team had some traditional beliefs about how H&S could fit into their daily business so it's always difficult to challenge these attitudes and get a positive outcome.

Managers have to deliver many high level objectives, so it's important to blend the safety systems into what they do on a daily basis. Managers must 'feel the need' to ensure their operations are safe for themselves and their colleagues. The challenge lies in motivating leaders to accept their responsibilities and lead safety effectively.

#### What aspect of your current role do you most enjoy?

I like being able to blend the human factor elements into the management systems. I enjoy seeing people doing things differently as a result of better policies, procedures and systems. I like to see outcomes of my work.

#### One of your achievements has been a significant reduction in accidents. What have you found to be the main factors in achieving this?

An essential part has been the introduction of the 'stop call wait' principle. This aims to give empowerment to the people to stop a process if they feel in danger. Here, if a person feels unsafe, the employees are permitted to stop their process, call their supervisor and wait for an assessment. This prevents exposure from potentially dangerous situations at grass roots level. It sounds like common sense but when

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you are balancing the tension between production and safety it's easy for employees to just get on with it and have accidents.

#### If you could change one thing about the health and safety industry, what would it be?

Sometimes, the health and safety industry fails to be exciting and nurture the right kind of personalities. It's important to keep the industry fresh, lively and interesting.

I would introduce greater emphasis on the development of softer skills for practitioners in addition to the legal and technical skills. Improvements in coaching, communication, presenting and training skills would help promote more dynamic, sustainable and interesting guidance and support for managers.

#### How would you advise a young person beginning a career in health and safety?

I would recommend that they get a good knowledge of how businesses work and gain extensive knowledge of the usual technical and legal aspects. But more importantly I would encourage them to be passionate, pragmatic and driven to motivate and inspire their stakeholders.

CV	Simon Randall
2011-now	Head of EHS (Stadco Ltd)
2009-2011	EHS business partner (Molson Coors Brewing Company)
2003-2009	Operations manager/QEHS manager – JCB excavators (Cab Systems Ltd)
2001-2003	Senior group leader – body manufacturing (Toyota Manufacturing)
1999-2001	Shift operations manager (Textron Automotive)
1996-1999	Shift coordinator/cell manager (Johnson Controls)
1990-1996	Work study engineer/area supervisor (GKN Sankey)