



### What's New with vPSI Group



Carl Veley receives 10 Year Service Award from The Petroleum Extension Service (PETEX).

Carl Veley, founder of vPSI Group, has provided technical training at the University of Texas at Austin Petroleum Extension Service (PETEX) for over 10 years. Carl was recently presented a Service Award by PETEX to recognize his contribution to the petroleum industry. PETEX develops, produces, and delivers technical and nontechnical training courses,

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publications, and audiovisual aids for the oil and gas industry.

Ron Clark recently joined vPSI Group as Director. Ron's many years experience in operating and growing companies brings a new dynamic to vPSI. He co-founded Precision Tube Technology, a coil tubing manufacturer, which was named to Inc. Magazine's top 500 fastest growing private companies. Ron is a past Chairman of the International Coiled Tubing Association (ICOTA).

The ASSE Construction Specialty Practice Group publishes a tri-annual newsletter, *Blueprints*, that includes timely articles on issues affecting construction SH&E professionals. In the latest edition, Norman Ritchie, Director vPSI Group, has an article entitled "Accidents = Problems = Improvement Opportunities".

#### Inside this issue:

THE V HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS	1
GETTING WORK DONE INCIDENT FREE	2
ELEMENTS OF A PLAN	3
HAPPENINGS IN HOUSTON	3
THE VPSI SYSTEM™	4

### The V Habits of Highly Effective Problem Solvers

**I** Avoid managing only consequences; identify the unplanned event and develop one or two corrective actions that will prevent it from happening again. The consequences won't repeat if the unplanned event can't reoccur.

**II** Look for the reasons people behave the way they do; there is usually a KUBO (Know, Understand, Believe, Observe) reason why they are behaving this way.

**III** Work out the behavior you want in the future and look for an existing management system or business process that you can tweak to capture your TEPA-based corrective action (Tell, Educate, Persuade, Assign) so that it happens automatically, long term and broadly across the organization.

**IV** Loop back in a few months to verify that the corrective actions you came up with were actually implemented, are being used in reality, and are having the effect that you sought. Your existing audit processes provide an ideal framework for doing this

**V** Take time to stop and smell the roses. Don't immediately jump on the "obvious". To come up with an effective corrective action, you must step back and invest the resources required to understand the causal relationships that led up to the unplanned event.



Gary Reznicek, vPSI Senior Consultant, stops to smell the roses at the Huntington Arboretum, West Virginia.

## Getting Work Done Incident Free

vPSI Group Consultants review many incident and accident investigation reports: over 3500 in the last year alone. Even though these reports come from many companies in a variety of industries, trends emerge such as the commonly cited “failure of the pre-task planning process.” Pre-task planning (Risk Assessment, JSA, JHA, etc) plays a vital role in problem avoidance, but clearly there are challenges in making it effective. Recognizing this, vPSI Group developed an open-source Online Pre-Task Planning Tool & Library System<sup>SM</sup>, originally sponsored in part by Marathon Oil Company. In its 18 months in operation, the system has grown to become the world’s largest public repository of pre-task planning documents.

### Consistency

The incidents we see frequently involve tasks that have been carried out successfully many times before in an organization. Changing the circumstances in which a task is carried out can significantly alter the dangers presented to the work crew, with weather, location, adjacent activities and other variables coming into play. As Steve McCloud of URS Corporation points out: “At times, the duties of our personnel overlap, with individuals from two or more offices serving the same site. In other instances, one office may be solely responsible for a given work-site. Either way, the requirement for consistency is paramount. This can be difficult to achieve. The on-line tool is imperative to our attaining consistent hazard analysis, as well as documentation of the hazard analysis process.”

### Relevance

Robust pre-task planning (PTP) is all about problem avoidance and will generate preventive actions against dangers that may be encountered as the task is carried out. To increase the probability of success in PTP, the vPSI approach is to separate the exposures into two categories: those generated by the task and those generated by the circumstances in which the task is to be conducted today. For example, many of the dangers presented by the act of removing a valve for maintenance are the same, whether the task is conducted on the arctic tundra or deep within a tropical forest. However, there are clearly different dangers generated by the context in which the work is to be done.

To ensure that the dangers generated by the task itself are not neglected on the day, they can be addressed in a pre-prepared document developed with all relevant technical, operational and experiential input, This can be thought of as the “parent” PTP. Steve Coffman, Halliburton’s West Coast HSE Manager comments: “The training our employees received in vPSI JSA writing skills helps tremendously because it got them involved in writing their own specific JSAs which gave them ownership in the process.” McCloud adds: “The step-by-step on-line construction of the JHA ensures that no one is ‘under-qualified’ to participate in the process, while the library

provides access to existing JHAs by anyone within the company, regardless of location.”

### Flexibility

With the parent PTP in place as a template, the risk assessment burden on the work team is reduced to considering only what contextual dangers might be present as they perform the task right here, right now. According to McCloud: “The flexibility of the on-line tool allows individuals to make minor modifications to the parent JHA to account for varying site or day-specific hazards without permanently affecting the parent JHA.” Halliburton’s work crews utilize a Hazard Observation & Communication process (HOC) to ensure that current local exposures are addressed before work begins.

### Accountability

A common issue with the classic style of PTP is that they do not assign specific tasks to specific people, and as a result, unallocated precautions may not be implemented, leaving the work team exposed. Fortunately, this gap is relatively easy to fill, simply by implementing a requirement to assign a named team member to each preventive action. Coffman describes the result of this adjustment: “We embraced the idea of listing employees who are responsible for specific actions written into the JSA. We believe this gives each employee ownership in making their specific work task safer and also makes them accountable for their actions or non-actions.”

### No Silver Bullet

URS Corporation’s McCloud concludes: “The on-line system provides us with an extremely effective tool for providing not only a safe work environment for our personnel, but consistent reporting to our client.” Whether you use one of vPSI Group’s tools or not, concentrating your pre-task planning process on influencing job site behaviors is an excellent way to avoid unplanned events. Halliburton’s Coffman makes a final comment: “There is no ‘Silver Bullet’ in the safety profession, but I can say without a doubt the vPSI JSAs have gotten our employees more involved in the implementation of their JSAs and is helping us achieve our ultimate goal of ZERO injuries.”

**“WHETHER YOU USE ONE OF vPSI GROUP’S TOOLS OR NOT, CONCENTRATING YOUR PRE-TASK PLANNING PROCESS ON INFLUENCING JOB SITE BEHAVIORS IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO AVOID UNPLANNED EVENTS”.**

## P-S-E: Elements of a PLAN

When something bad happens, we try to prevent it from happening again. An effective corrective action will enable a transition from our current, unsatisfactory state to a future state where the unplanned event's probability of occurrence is significantly reduced. This future state is a vitally important objective, especially in cases where a repeat event could give rise to significant adverse consequences. In recognition of the risk management value of this objective, the vPSI approach is to insist that we have a PLAN detailing how we are going to get there. In this respect, "corrective action" and "plan" are synonymous.

The vPSI Test™ is used to assess activities presented as corrective actions, by comparing them to an ideal plan, defined as a "pre-arranged schedule of events leading to attaining some objective". In the case of accidents, the objective will always be to prevent a re-occurrence of the unplanned event.

### Pre-arranged (P) & Scheduled (S)

A corrective action must change reality, otherwise it is just a good idea. The purpose of the "P" and "S" elements of the vPSI Test™ are to make sure that something actually gets implemented in real life. In basic terms, the "P" verifies that there

## Happenings in Houston

If you want to get involved in the safety debate you are never far from a safety and health forum in the Houston area. Gary Reznicek, vPSI Senior Consultant, is an active member of several local area professional organizations and provides support by serving on various committees.

Houston is not just about the Energy industry, and safety is a priority for groups such as the Houston Association of General Contractors (AGC) which Gary has been involved with for many years. US Department of Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis recently noted that more workers die on construction jobs in Texas than in any other state. These deaths involve all types of construction work, including oil and gas projects and expansions. Statistics show 67 fatalities in Texas construction in 2008 and 33 so far this year. Many of these deaths could have been prevented with proper safety effective training.

On August 1, 2009, Lone Star College System hosted a 10-hour OSHA training marathon designed specifically for construction workers to help address the need for safety training throughout the Southwest Texas area. Turnout for this one day event was over 400 students and was sponsored by the Houston OSHA office, Hispanic Contractors Association de Tejas, Greater Houston Contractors Education Council (of which Gary is a member), and Lone Star College.

Gary also volunteers for the Gulf Coast Section of the AIHA (American Industrial Hygiene Association). On September 17, 2009 Carolyn Phillips, a recognized expert in safety and industrial hygiene, spoke at the last AIHA meeting on the subject of "Ethical & Legal Issues for Safety and IH Professionals." about the code of ethics for Certified Industrial Hygienists and Certified Safety Professionals (CIHs and CSPs). The seminar

is a clear assignment to a competent and responsible person from a person with adequate authority to cause the action to occur. The "S" element relates to schedule, which can exist in several forms, such as an effective date, a deadline, a trigger event or circumstance.

### Events

The "E" element of the vPSI Test™ assesses whether the activities presented as corrective actions are actually relevant to preventing a repeat of the unplanned event, and are technically likely to be successful in doing so.

By focusing on each plan element individually, we can then rate our solutions to problems and see if they will be effective and relevant in reducing the probability of repetition.

We will have more about generating effective corrective actions in the next issue of H-E-A-R Say.



presentation was followed by a Vendors Night where 30 companies exhibited products and services.

Gary is involved with two other organizations in the oil and gas industry. These are the newly formed American Society of Safety Engineers, Oil & Gas Practice Specialty and the NIOSH/NORA Oil & Gas Extraction Sub Council.

### Greater Houston STEPS Network

<http://greaterhoustonsteps.com>

### ASSE Oil and Gas Specialty

<http://www.asse.org/practicespecialties/oilgas/>

### Gulf Coast Section of the AIHA

<http://www.aiha.org/localsections>

### The NORA Oil and Gas Extraction Sub Council

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/councils/mining/oilgas/>

### Houston Assoc. of General Contractors

<http://www.agchouston.org>



# The vPSI System™

The vPSI System™ is a professional development program in addition to being a route to improved safety performance. Using vPSI measurements to manage an organization produces sharply improved problem-solving skills. Everyone performs more effectively when they understand a few simple vPSI concepts and methods and apply them to their jobs. Skills learned through the safety program can be applied to all areas of the organization, which will improve overall efficiency and boost the bottom line by reducing costs and business impact.

## vPSI Training Menu

### *Applying vPSI Methods of Accident Prevention*

This 8-hour class provides the fundamentals of vPSI methodology with an emphasis on rating and developing effective corrective actions to prevent recurrences of unplanned events.

### *JSA: Planning Jobs for Safety and Success; Hands On vPSI Online Tool Workshop*

This 4-hour class followed by a 4-hour workshop provides users with skills to build effective JSAs specific to their work-sites.

### *Applying KUBO-TEPA™ Methods in Problem Solving*

This 8-hour class provides users with KUBO-TEPA behavioral components of problems which aid in developing long term corrective actions applied broadly across organizations.

### *Executive Overview Presentation*

This 2-hour presentation provides a high level overview of vPSI Implementation for busy executives.

### *Customized Training*

Training can be designed and delivered to very particular customer specifications such as: vPSI Corrective Action Assessment integrated with TapRoot®, vPSI Corrective Action Assessment integrated with Cause Mapping, and integrating customer incidents into the Fundamental, Assessor, and the Pre-Task Planning classes. vPSI thinking has also been applied in developing custom training to address difficult issues such as DOT driver compliance and journey management.

## vPSI Online Tool Portal

<http://vpsionline.com>



### *vPSI Online Tool Demo*

This 1-hour demonstration gives users insight into the vPSI Methodology behind the online tools and guides them through the key functions to help them as they input incidents and corrective actions then review and rate their effectiveness or build Pre-Task Planning documents.

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