Abstract

Competence is a critical component of an organization’s success—one that is also very relevant for process safety. In fact, process safety competence can help ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and can be an important business improvement driver, particularly when it comes to process safety risk.

Competence is often confused with knowledge; therefore, it can be difficult to assess competence levels. However, having a well-defined framework to assess process safety competence across the organization can offer many benefits, including helping the organization to:

- Identify gaps in organizational understanding and competence, and uncover opportunities to close those gaps;
- Ensure that personnel have the appropriate process safety competence levels (i.e., knowledge, experience, education and training);
- Ensure correct decisions and actions are taken to prevent incidents;
- Facilitate training to help effectively manage process safety in the workplace; and
- Create a sustainable model to support ongoing staffing and succession planning.

This paper introduces a structured and scalable approach to process safety competence assurance, which is modeled using recognized industry guidelines, publications, and experience. This approach is fit-for-purpose and provides a framework designed to encourage intentional learning and development to close identified process safety competence gaps. The ultimate outcome of this approach is a competent staff who help recognize and drive process safety improvement.