

Communicating the Safety and Health Message to a Multilingual and Multicultural Workforce

Session Moderator: Marie Haring Sweeney, Ph.D.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the United States was termed the “Melting Pot” as immigrants, predominantly from Europe, moved across the Atlantic Ocean. In the early history of the United States, workplace safety and health, held a back seat to economic development. Now, 100 years later, new immigrants arrive from Asia and the Americas. According to the 2000 Census nearly 15 million people currently residing in the US were born in Latin America, 7 million were born in Asia, and more than 2 million were born in other areas of the world. In addition, approximately twenty percent of the U.S. population speaks a language other than English at home. Many of these individuals may be US - born citizens. Such changes offer opportunities and challenges to the occupational safety and health community to effectively communicate the safety and health message using linguistically and culturally appropriate media.

This session will address the foremost issues facing employees, employers and others who must communicate the safety and health message to workforces whose first language may not be English and whose primary culture did not include strong workplace safety and health principles and regulations. Three speakers will discuss how the safety and health message is most effectively communicated for culturally and linguistically different populations. Discussion topics will include how effective safety and health communication materials are developed for this emerging workforce, appropriate dissemination strategies, training methods, use of appropriate electronic media and printed material, and evaluation of materials for effectiveness.

October 28-30, 2002 • Baltimore, Maryland, USA

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Safety and Health,
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Ideas That
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6th International Conference
Scientific Committee on Education and Training in
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