

**2008 Innovations Awards Program
APPLICATION**

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 08-M-06MI

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: **Michigan**

Assign Program Category (applicant): **Government Operations** (Use list at end of application)

1. Program Name **“Connecting MIOSHA to Industry”**
2. Administering Agency: **Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA)**
3. Contact Person (Name and Title): **Louis Peasley, CET Grant Administrator**
4. Address: **MIOSHA, 7150 Harris Drive, PO Box 30643, Lansing MI 48909-8143**
5. Telephone Number: **517 322 1865**
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7. E-mail Address **peasleyl@michigan.gov**
8. Web site Address **http://www.michigan.gov/MIOSHA**
9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program. **“Connecting MIOSHA to Industry” is a Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (MIOSHA) initiative to shift the agency from a traditional regulatory model to a collaborative, participatory approach. It creates collective ownership for the well-being of Michigan workers through increased communication, cooperation, education and outreach.**
10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 1, 2008 to be considered. **August 2005**
11. Why was the program created? **The “Connecting MIOSHA to Industry” program was created to advance MIOSHA’s mission and vision.**

The mission of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) is to help assure the safety and health of Michigan workers.

The vision of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) is to enhance the quality of life and contribute to the economic vitality in Michigan by serving as an effective leader in occupational safety and health. Through staff commitment and stakeholder creativity, we will provide:

- Credible, customized and responsive consultation, education and training,**
- Firm, fair and targeted enforcement,**
- Cooperative agreements with individual employers and employee and employer organizations, and**
- Relevant, fact-based standards promulgation.**

MIOSHA’s statutory obligation to create and enforce standards has been combined with practical education and useful information on how to comply, interpersonal skills training for MIOSHA staff to increase empathy, and a concerted effort to obtain stakeholder involvement. The focus is on satisfying MIOSHA Strategic Plan goals: to reduce injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in specific industries; to promote safer workplaces; and to strengthen public

confidence. What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address? MIOSHA's enforcement of safety and health standards to protect workers, combined with the statutory obligation to identify violations through issuing citations and penalties, created a perception that MIOSHA was to be feared. A common belief was "MIOSHA will cost us money and interfere with our business." This perception limited the ability of MIOSHA to fulfill its legislative mandates, and also discouraged employers from seeking free consultative and educational services designed to improve the safety of Michigan workers. MIOSHA launched "Connecting MIOSHA to Industry" to merge traditional program responsibilities with progressive outreach measures.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

In August 2005, the first MIOSHA Take a Stand Day for Workplace Safety and Health was held as a special event commemorating the 30th anniversary of the MIOSHA program. On this day, MIOSHA made all consultation and enforcement field staff, supervisors, and managers available for voluntary worksite visits. These visits were consultative, with no citations and no penalties issued.

The response to this invitation was overwhelming and comments from participating employers encouraged MIOSHA to continue to offer this type of opportunity. Based on this feedback, Take a Stand Day has been held once a year in August.

This feedback also helped highlight the opportunity to ensure that all interventions are proactive by providing information and examples for employers to help them understand how to correct and eliminate hazards.

Feedback from staff indicated a desire to strengthen interpersonal communication skills, particularly persuasiveness.

In the Spring of 2006, MIOSHA Administration identified a vendor to work with MIOSHA in developing a customized training program. The program was developed during the summer and fall of 2006.

In January through March of 2007, all MIOSHA field staff, supervisors, and managers attended two facilitated sessions. The training was designed to help MIOSHA staff acquire an understanding of cultures and organizational structures in business and industry, enhance persuasiveness, and to leverage staff skills by sharing successful strategies used by staff.

Following training, staff engaged in peer-to-peer mentoring and supervisor-peer coaching during the spring and summer of 2007.

In April 2007, an expanded MIOSHA Customer Comment card was implemented to obtain more detailed feedback on the value and usefulness of MIOSHA interventions and suggestions to improve program effectiveness.

Feedback from Customer Comment cards is summarized and reviewed to identify trends or needs. It is also summarized and shared with MIOSHA staff on a weekly basis in an electronic newsletter sent to all staff. Connecting MIOSHA to Industry updates are a part of division and agency meetings. After information from the cards is summarized, the card is returned to the specific MIOSHA staff person for their personal review.

The vendor working with MIOSHA suggested the agency could benefit from establishing an internal cross-cultural team. The purpose of the team is to help ensure that staff in a diverse organization understands the roles and responsibilities of each group and how their performance and decisions impact other program areas. Volunteers for this work group were recruited from throughout the agency via "Help Wanted" ads in the weekly electronic newsletter. This group convened in September 2007. In November and December 2007, the cross-cultural team developed and administered a survey to all MIOSHA staff to assess their level of understanding about a variety of MIOSHA program areas. The results of that survey are currently being evaluated and will be used to plan future training and recommend organizational changes.

During the summer and fall of 2007, new print materials were developed to support MIOSHA staff in the field. These documents include materials on MIOSHA services and resources, testimonials from employers using MIOSHA voluntary compliance services, and a presentation folder.

The new print materials were distributed to staff during December 2007 and January 2008. Additional materials highlighting success stories and best practices are currently being developed.

Additional interpersonal skill training for MIOSHA field staff, supervisors, and managers is being pursued for 2008. In February 2008, agency administrators previewed a course on Tough Conversations for suitability. The agency is also pursuing storytelling training for staff.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? **The goal of linking MIOSHA's legislative mandates with proactive outreach with employers and workers creates collective ownership for the safety and health of Michigan's workforce. It results in innovative approaches to maintaining MIOSHA's enforcement obligations through effective collaborative relationships.**

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.) **Approximately \$23,000 to an outside contractor.**

15. What are the program's annual operational costs? **The costs for the program are included within MIOSHA's operating budget.**

16. How is the program funded? **Combination of state and federal funding.**

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. **No.**

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? **None.**

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. **Yes**

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20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? **No**

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

Additional skill building for staff, i.e., "Storytelling Techniques," "Tough Conversations," and creating promotional pieces. A comments page will be added to the MIOSHA website that includes customers' feedback and comments.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

The ultimate goal of the "Connecting MIOSHA to Industry" initiative is the reduction in the workplace of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. A key statistic revealing the success of MIOSHA's initiatives is the reduction in the injury and illness rate for Michigan (private sector). From 1996 to 2006, the rate dropped from 10.6 to 5.0, a 53% reduction. Additionally, the number of worker's compensation cases filed in Michigan decreased from 54,201 in 2000 to 31,864 in 2006, a 41% reduction.

In 2006, MIOSHA initiated a Customer Comment/Suggestion Card as a postage-paid mailer for employers and other clientele to comment on whether or not their overall experience with MIOSHA had been “Useful” or “Not Useful.” MIOSHA has received in excess of 1000 responses with over 98% rated as “Useful.” In 2007 the card was modified to ask three questions:

- How would you rate your overall experience with MIOSHA? (Useful or Not Useful)**
- Did you find the staff to be knowledgeable about employee safety and health issues? (Yes or No)**
- Did the staff explain how to correct the safety and health hazards they identified? (Yes or No)**

Affirmative responses to the above three questions have exceeded 98%. Additionally respondents were asked about specific changes they had implemented in the workplace and about what MIOSHA could do better. All recommendations for improvement are assigned for follow-up by MIOSHA staff.

MIOSHA’s “360-degree” approach to improvement benefits all parties and increases the impact of the MIOSHA “Connecting MIOSHA to Industry” initiative.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The implementation of the “Connecting MIOSHA to Industry” program has resulted in a major culture shift within the agency, with the staff embracing the culture change from the traditional model of a regulatory agency with enforcement powers.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

Significant budget constraints may limit opportunities to develop and expand similar programs in other states.