

The Road to



Wellbeing

SHP
SAFETY & HEALTH
PRACTITIONER

**SAFETY &
HEALTH EXPO**


UBM



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Introduction

It has been two months since my baptism of fire into the world of safety and health at this year's Expo. I already feel like I have learnt so much. The industry is a diverse and passionate arena, full of individuals and organisations eager to make a difference to people's lives. Nowhere can this be seen more concretely than on the conference platforms of the Safety and Health Expo.

One of the lines that kept coming up during my many discussions on the show floor was the industry has "shouted about safety and whispered about health". This was the thinking behind the wellbeing focus at this year's event. It is a central battleground of the profession, and I was delighted to discover it is being tackled in the most profound way by all tiers of management. In this eBook, you will find content on overcoming macho culture, self-reliance, dealing with life-changing obstacles, and battles with mental health. It reveals how several inspirational speakers overcame personal demons following accidents at work to preach their message. In short, there are

many examples of courageous individuals. But their singular lessons can be applied to a whole organisational culture.

The one thing that struck me the most was the overwhelming emotional response to these stories. We often talk about doctors being on the 'frontline' of life and death decisions. The health and safety industry makes the same calls.

And it is not just a fall which may injure or kill someone in the workplace. It can be a terrible working environment or a stressful workload, a bullying culture, or a sexist boss.

Essentially, the wellbeing of the workforce should be at the top of every manager's in-tray.

I am always eager to hear about the experience of visitors at the Safety and Health Expo – and about any issues which may have been discussed which were missed. Please do drop me a line at any time, you will always receive a warm welcome.

James Evison
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Opinions: How to address mental health in the workplace

A mental health panel debate, featuring a broad range of experts, took place in Safety & Health Expo's 2017 keynote theatre. Below is a summary of the speakers' key points.

"Working in construction, I personally stumbled into mental health. And, in March this year I fully understood the problem, after an ONS report was published which looked at suicides by profession. 454 construction workers took their lives in one year – four times the national average. It's a great industry but it's a tough one, with long hours. There are an enormous amount of people in the industry who need help and it just takes a bit of courage to stand up and ask for help. Women are equally as likely to get depression but twice

as likely to seek help. Men need to stop asking other men "Are you ok?" and they need to start saying "How are you?" and then we need to listen, not provide a solution – just listen. We don't need to over complicate this. Everyone has been touched by mental health in some way. It's there for each and every one of us. We need to give people direction."

"In sports teams and construction teams – if our mental health is in a good place – the team is in a good place. Good mental health is the big goal in health and safety."



Martin Coyd

Head of Health and Safety –
Construction, Mace



“Our perspective is to eliminate sources of stress. There is lots of help available once people are made ill, but we don’t want it to get to that point. We are pushing for the proactive management of work related stress. Helping people to pick up on symptoms of someone who may be struggling and helping organisations to equip their leaders with the tools to spot these signs and the ability to know what to do is key. “If you use the same process for mental health as you do for safety and use multidisciplinary teams – working together to achieve this – it can be achieved relatively easily. It’s not reinventing the wheel.”



Dr. Carolyn Yeoman
Principal Organisational
Psychologist, HSL

“In terms of leadership, from a legal perspective – we need to work out the risk. Look at the risk that might apply – then look at your specific business. Leaders should start at that point and then look at all the layers of management. Many people ask if mental health is an HR or OSH function. I advocate using skills that already exist so HR may be good from an occupational health point of view, and OSH may be better at risk assessment. This isn’t an argument or point scoring. It’s a multidiscipline approach. In some terms, like the others have said, it is simple – but for practitioners – what mental ill health means and how it exhibits is more complicated. I think this is about education.”



Mary Lawrence
Partner, Osborne Clarke
LLP

“We are all human. In my opinion, we need to be more blatantly open about the help available for people with mental ill health. If you have a physical health problem you will know what help is there, but it’s not always clear with mental ill health – there’s a lot of lip service going on. There needs to be more human contact and obvious ideas about the help people can get. The best organisations invest in this leadership. Not just someone having it as part of their role. It has to be top down and bottom up. Whether it’s sleep pods, taking time off during the day, or just having a company that believes in you.”



Dame Kelly Holmes
Olympian

“Working in construction, I drank heavily to deal with the stresses of the job. Once I put down the booze, I went on a personal development journey, gained an understanding of mental ill health, and aimed to improve the quality of my workers’ mental health – talking about a way to make real lasting change. Once you get an understanding at a deeper level it can change your life. It was when I realised how thoughts create feelings, that I stopped diagnosing myself as depressed and stopped taking anti-depressants.”



Dave Lee
Co-founder, A Deeper
Understanding Limited (ADUL)



Spotting the difference between a bully & fear-motivated behaviour

A common human reaction to sudden and unexpected aggression is to back off. This reaction is a survival trait. This is why most of us, in the face of highly aggressive workplace bullying, will react with stunned silence and retreat. Unfortunately, many workplace bullies are aware of this reaction. And this is why many bullies use this tactic, which I describe as **The Switch Technique**, to gain the upper hand.

Spotting and dealing with a workplace bully

Normally, on first meeting the workplace bully you'll probably think that they're charming. You may even open up and share some of your life stories or past work history. You may even share some of your failures. Imagine your surprise when, the next time

you see your new best friend, they have a full-on tantrum or dummy spit, and accuse you of a major mistake or error in front of your boss, colleagues, staff or client(s). You're unsure what you did wrong, but you feel embarrassed and instinctively retreat in confusion. This instinctive reaction allows the bully to gain the upper hand, and create the impression that you either don't know what you're doing or are incompetent.

Prove to the bully that you're a tough target

Instead of retreating from the bully, calmly and professionally rebuff the bully's claims. Read over the phrases that I've listed below and choose one or two you think best suits your work culture and environment – something that you know won't escalate the situation.

Practice saying these phrases on a daily basis when you're alone walking the dog, or out and about, so that you can use them calmly and professionally when you need them most.

Interrupting the bully's behaviour early boosts your chances of stopping them for good and help you expertly rebuff the bully

Research consistently proves that the faster you can halt the bully, the greater your chances of stopping the bully in their tracks. Your ability to immediately respond and repudiate the bully, and bat away their claims, is a clear demonstration of your ability to think on your feet, and to confidently protect your personal boundaries.



Phrases to help you expertly rebuff the bully:

- “While you may have a point, your attitude isn’t helping.”
- “How is your attitude helping?”
- “How does that help?”
- “What’s your point?”
- “Really..?”
- “Seriously..?”
- “Why...?”
- “And the basis of your argument is...?”
- “Is that it?”
- “Good to know. Let’s move on.”
- “Maybe you’re right. Let’s move on.”
- “Hold that thought, I’ll get back to you.”
- “I’m learning a lot about you.”
- “You’ve given me a lot to think about.”
- “Do you get away with that a lot?”
- “How’s that working for you?”
- “Does that normally work for you..?”

Spotting & dealing with fear-motivated behaviour

If you’re a supervisor or boss, and are suddenly and inexplicably dealing with aggressive or rude behaviour from staff and/or close clients, then you might want to entertain the possibility that your staff are not reacting to you at all. Instead, they may be reacting to an issue, situation or work change that you represent.

For example, your boss may have asked you to implement a re-engineering program and the process has caused your staff to be fearful of losing their jobs. Their fear is driving this new behaviour.

Ok, I’m sure I’ve said this before! Humans are highly emotional, and our communication is messy. That means there is likely to be a significant difference between what I think I just said to you, and how you interpreted my words. And that’s on a good day, in perfect conditions! Unsurprisingly, under stress or pressure, our communication gets even messier and more fraught with confusion.

Stressful situations are also capable of uncovering those delightful little behavioural idiosyncrasies that we all have (and that our parents and long-term partners are probably fully aware of), which can sometimes cause us to behave in a fear-motivated, aggressive manner. So, if you suddenly and inexplicably find yourself being ‘cold-shouldered’ and ignored by your staff, inexplicably and rudely attacked, try to avoid taking it personally in the first instance. Instead, ask yourself, “What recent work changes could be making people feel fearful or unusually stressed and causing this odd behaviour?”

To help you identify and unpack the underlying causes creating this negative or toxic behaviour, I’ve created a non-threatening, anonymous ‘5 Minute Workplace Wish List’. For safe tactics to quickly and expertly deal with a workplace bully, you can enrol for a 1 hour eCourse ‘How to quickly recognise and control a workplace bullying without getting victimised!’



Felicity Lawrence



Dr Lawrence has a PhD in organisational social psychology from the Faculty of Education, QUT (+BA SSc & Dip PM), and 25 years’ experience in private, military and government workplaces.



Macho culture negatively impacts health and safety – Jeremy Lewis

Unconscious bias is having a crippling impact on health and safety, according to cultural change expert, **Jeremy Lewis**.

Speaking at the keynote theatre at the Safety & Health Expo 2017, Lewis of PDT Global said examples such as the Deepwater Horizon oil rig incident highlighted “a classic situation of how unconscious bias seriously affected the outcomes”, where professionals ignored – and even actively talked away – the counter-evidence. He said we are constantly “looking for information that supports our belief.” Lewis explained the various processes of the unconscious mind, and Freud’s

infamous iceberg analysis of not seeing what is going on under the water. He said: “The unconscious brain is incredibly fast. But the conscious brain is much slower, and requires much more effort. If we are having to think about a lot of other information than just our job, we struggle.”

Difference

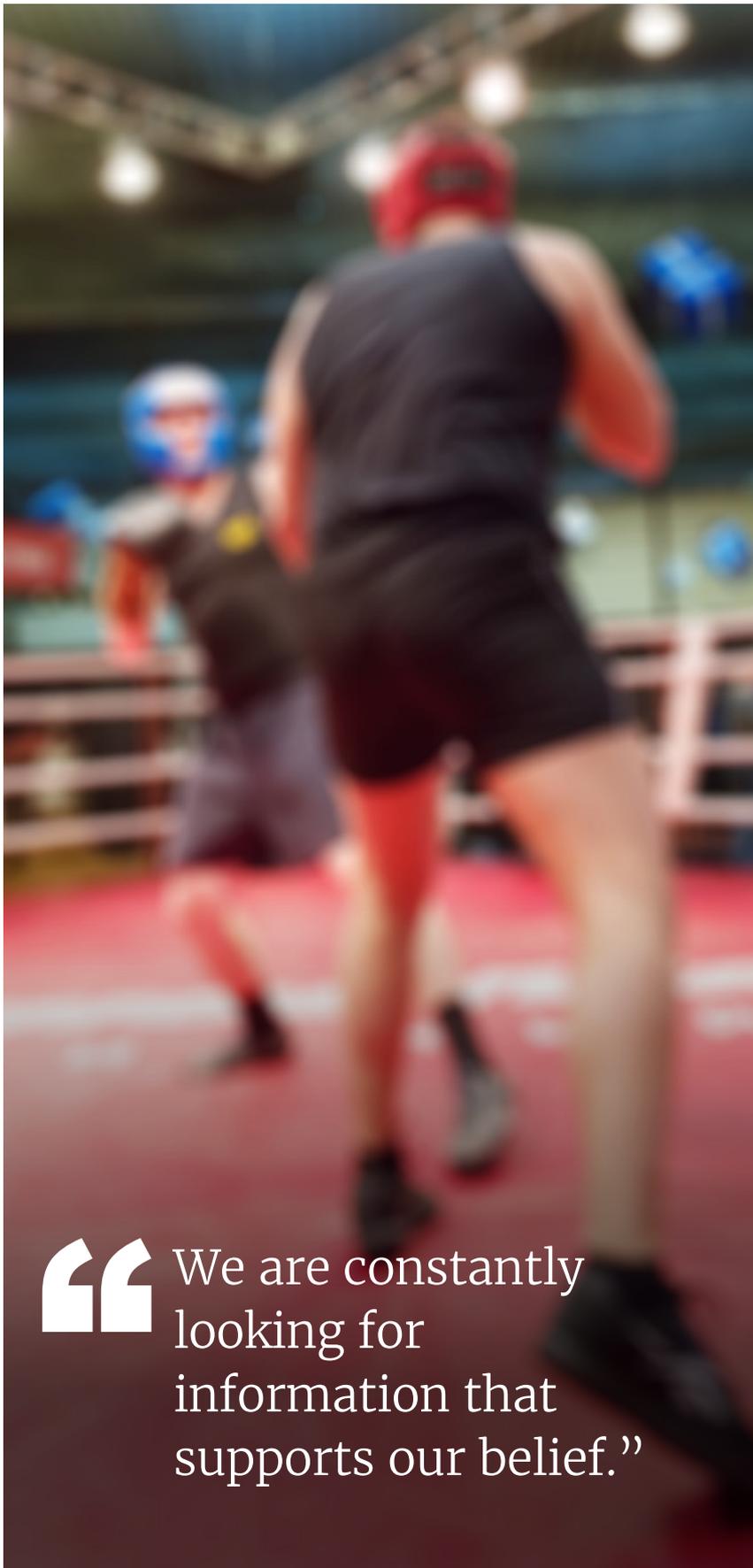
The unconscious can impact decision making, especially when a professional has different views from the organisational culture of a firm. He said: “If you are slightly

different, you have to work 8 to 10 times harder, and are seen as less capable because of your difference. We look at difference in a very negative way.”

Diversity

Lewis also said that we “need to define what good looks like” – and that diversity wasn’t just about gender, sex or race in terms of how the unconscious bias works. He said: “If I say different roles to you – CEO, a janitor – we will associate with those roles people and perceptions of what those





“ We are constantly looking for information that supports our belief.”

look like in those roles. HR may be female, for example. Skin colour just tells me their skin colour, but I will then make assumptions based on my brain and my background. So when I see things outside of my mental model, I will view them very differently to how they are.”

Macho culture

Referencing Robin Ely of Harvard Business School, Lewis explained how macho culture was also endangering the workplace by creating a culture where people felt they “had to prove themselves” rather than assess risk. One example of cultural change was on an oil rig, he said, where without any new procedures, accidents were reduced by 84%.

He said that it was by changing the ethos on the oil rig to making an outcome together in a safe way, and having a safe environment where it is okay to have a safe psychological space, where you can say: “I’m not sure I know how to do that.”

Jeremy Lewis

*The People
Development Team*



Jeremy is a highly skilled and engaging trainer with a thorough understanding of his subjects and an extensive, cross-sector portfolio of clients. A senior consultant with The People Development Team, he delivers engaging and interactive inclusion workshops globally and is recognised for the design and delivery of award-winning, innovative and impactful training interventions through a range of media.





Are lunch breaks important for staff health?

It has previously been reported that only 30% of UK employees take lunch away from their desk, with a quarter of desk-diners working and half browsing the internet – but is this a healthy practice?

By dining at their desks, employers will believe they are clawing back a precious hour of the working day – but is this really the case or is it doing more harm than good? Research from retailer of dinner sets Oldrids & Downton claims it is having a negative effect.

The impact of desk-dining

Health is a priority for both employees and employers alike – naturally, staff members will like to stay in good health, while it's in an employer's best interest to minimise sick days by promoting the welfare of employees. Lunch gives employees the chance to get away from their desk, stretch their legs and escape the

office environment. Sitting for long periods has been linked to obesity, type 2 diabetes and even some types of cancer. It can also cause back problems. Likewise, the inability to get away from desks prevents staff members from escaping the pressures of work, if only for an hour. Behind musculoskeletal problems, work-related stress is the second most common cause of ill health in employees, accounting for 37% of all health issues at work and 45% of all lost working days. Taking a lunchbreak, regardless of its length, can help to boost employee productivity – ending the myth that working through lunch helps employees do more. This is strengthened further when

accompanied by a nutritious lunch, which will give workers the right nutrients and fuel for the rest of the day. Clearly, employers should be leading by example and encouraging their staff to take the lunch breaks they are entitled to.

Expectations for employers

Employers are legally required to provide workers over the age of 18 with:

- **Rest breaks** (such as lunch breaks)
- **Daily rest** (11 hours between working days)
- **Weekly breaks** of either 24 hours uninterrupted per week, or 48 hours each fortnight.

A 20-minute rest break must be given to employees working for

six hours or longer. Employers should take breaks in the middle of the day, and be allowed to spend their break away from their workstation.

The importance of lunch breaks for workers

Respondents to the survey found that on the whole, taking a proper lunch break made them feel happier and more positive. Taking a lunch break gives workers time to:

Get things done.

Taking a proper lunch will allow you to catch up on life administration or run some errands, giving you more time in the evening to relax.

Eat a nutritious lunch.

Your lunch break gives you a brilliant opportunity to take in essential nutrients to keep you going for the rest of the day. People

with an hour-long lunch have time on their side to sneak in a lunch time workout during their lunch, but even with the minimum 20 mins you can take a stroll, up your step count and enjoy some fresh air.

Encouraging employees to take their lunch breaks

So how do you encourage staff members to take their lunch break, minimising stress and boosting morale? Try the following:

- Lead by example. If your employees see you working through lunch, they may feel like this is expected of them too.
- Create a workplace environment that encourages employees to take breaks.
- Designate a space in your workplace – such as a kitchen or dining room – that

employees can go to to get away from their desks.

- Supply healthy snacks to encourage a culture of healthy eating to accompany a healthier attitude to taking breaks.
- Provide distractions from phones and screens. If you have room in your designated break space, include light reading materials (magazines and newspapers) and other forms of entertainment, so workers can relax free from screens in a dedicated environment.

Encourage additional breaks.

There are stressful moments in everyone's jobs, so make it clear to employees that if they need to take an extra break for some fresh air, they can – and that their lunch break will be unaffected.





How to reduce stress and strengthen the resilience of lone workers

Derek Mowbray is a Chartered Psychologist and Chartered Scientist, with a doctorate in the psychology of leadership.

At Safety & Health Expo 2017 he spoke about preventing stress and strengthening resilience. We asked him to explain more about the term 'Resilience' and how this can help prevent stress for lone workers: "Active resilience is being able to cope with exceptionally stressful and demanding situations without experiencing any stress problems. It requires flexible strength of mind to be able to do this, along with a positive attitude and strong motivation, and a positive answer to 'what's in it for me?' question."

"Passive resilience is sitting out the experience hoping it will eventually go away and you can emerge afterwards unscathed. We are dealing with active resilience. Stress occurs when we experience what we perceive as uncontrollable events and

behaviours – we are effectively out of mental control and cannot see a way of regaining the control. Stress is at the wrong end of a continuum that starts with pressure, a stimulant, declines to tension, another stimulant, and further declines to strain, an impairment, to stress, which is a disaster, as it is dangerous to a person's whole health. Most people who say they are stressed are probably experiencing tension and strain. By strengthening personal resilience you are strengthening your flexible strength of mind."

"In other words, by being in mental control you know you can overcome the adverse events and difficult behaviours because you are sharp enough mentally to think of all the alternative strategies for dealing with the situation."

Resilience is a choice

"Mental control is about having mental clarity, sharpness, a sense of being on top of everything (of being in control). The more you feel in control the better your prospect of being resilient (if motivated to be so). Resilience is a choice; it's a choice that depends on you having the capacity to be resilient whether you want to be or not."

"If the working environment is toxic, this will influence your attitude to adverse events and behaviours, and you may decide to sit things out rather than be actively resilient. This has a profound impact on performance, as you disengage with your surroundings, and concentrate on those things that get you through the day."



“Most people who experience stress are probably experiencing tension or strain.”



Why is resilience especially important for lone workers?

“Lone workers have to be resilient because they are, effectively, cut adrift from the organisation for which they work, and don’t necessarily gain the support they may require to overcome a particularly difficult situation.”

“There are so many variations to the idea of lone working that it’s hard to generalise – those who enter other people’s premises on their own have particular needs in relation to security and backup, compared with those who work alone at home. All have to be self-starters.”

“All have to be on top of their game all the time. All need to feel the organisation that employs them can be contacted easily and provide the support they require. If the organisation doesn’t do this, the individual is further adrift than others and, de facto, requires greater resilience against whatever stressful event occurs.”

“Working alone doesn’t suit everyone, and for those for which this is a challenge to begin with, they need additional help to organise themselves and to self-start, which is all part of having flexible strength of mind.”

What steps can organisations take?

“Lone workers need to avoid feeling alone. Regular and effective links back to the mothership is important for all. Organisations need to ensure their lone workers have strengthened their resilience by providing programmes to strengthen mental control and within this, individual self-belief. In addition, help to organise individual working patterns, taking account of circumstances, together with help on such items as controlling anxiety and forming relationships from the lone worker base. Organisations should not adopt the role of spy as this, simply, becomes an adverse event for which resilience is required.”

What are your top tips for increasing personal resilience?

1. Always think and believe you are a fabulous person
2. Always think and believe you can achieve the big things in life
3. Always try to keep an open mind about everything
4. Always try to stay tranquil, peaceful and calm
5. Always be attentive to other people

Derek Mowbray



Derek specialises in the primary prevention of fear and stress at work. He uses organisational cultural and behavioural triggers as the means of substituting adverse events and behaviours that risk causing stress, with those that provoke psychological wellbeing and performance.



Safety and Health Expo: Key lessons from the lone worker theatre

This was my third year chairing the lone worker theatre at the Safety & Health Expo, and it had a different feel than previous years, writes **Nicole Vazquez**

We still had full seats on pretty much all of the sessions, but the visitors that attended asked different questions and had different priorities! I've racked my brains to think about why this was the case, and I'm not sure I have the answer, but I'll share with you my thoughts. For many years, the main issue for lone workers was often seen as the potential for violence or aggression, and although this may still be a real concern in some sectors, it is by no means the only one.

There is now a much greater recognition in the safety world that lone working happens in a vast array of sectors, brings a wide range of risks and that these risks are as varied as the tasks lone workers carry out. In addition, there has been an increase in mobile lone workers across the UK and abroad, and due to recent tragic deaths and legal

cases, an increase in the need to provide assurance that robust communication and support mechanisms are in place.

New audience

Mental control is about having mental clarity, sharpness, a sense of being on top of everything (of being in control). The more you feel in control the better your prospect of being resilient (if motivated to be so). Resilience is a choice; it's a choice that depends on you having the capacity to be resilient and whether you want to be or not. If the working environment is toxic, for example, this will influence your attitude to adverse events and behaviours, and you may decide to sit things out rather than be actively resilient. This has a profound impact on performance, as you, basically, disengage with your surroundings, and concentrate on those things that get you through the day.

Carrot or stick

Questions from the audience flew in when we hit the tricky dilemma of 'carrot or stick' – how do you ensure compliance when you have little contact with your lone workers? The panel discussed the increasing challenge of more employees working remotely and agreed that a holistic approach was necessary to engage and embed change.

Professor Derek Mowbray specialist in organisation health psychology, stated that conviction (belief that it is the right thing to do) was better than enforcement (being directed to do).

The key take away from the panel sessions were:

- Engage with lone workers early
- Work with them to design effective and acceptable solutions

- Embed changes through training and management support
- Find a way of keeping the enthusiasm alive!

The theatre included presentations from organisations who shared lessons learnt when putting in risk controls.

They were honest enough to share the pitfalls and mistakes they had made along the way and it was great to have a reality check – sometimes what looks great on paper doesn't always translate well in practice.

Risk perception

Jayne King, Head of Security and Site Services at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS foundation trust, shared her experience of providing security solutions to both main hospital sites and to community workers. One interesting question from the audience, "Do we manage the perceived risk or the actual risk?" sparked a great conversation. It was fascinating to hear about how the risk perception of staff had an impact on the measures taken. Looking at a completely different challenge, John Ireland, Health & Safety Advisor for the Forestry Commission Scotland, demonstrated how difficult it could be to find an injured lone worker in the open (think Highlands of Scotland and dense fog).

He talked about how accurate GPS and the advances in technology could really help in these situations. John shared the challenges of engaging staff and the importance of influencing their behaviour by changing the safety culture within the organisation, until it became simply 'how we do things around here'. Several of our speakers explored the advantages

and advances in available technology. Craig Swallow, chair of the BSIA lone worker section, reminded delegates of the legal requirements to manage lone working risks and the potential impact on businesses (from criminal prosecution to brand damage) if organisations get it wrong. He also brought home the importance of approaching this as more than a 'tick box' exercise and talked about how poor implementation would fail to give you the return on investment or the safety improvements needed. A well implemented solution, Craig said, could do more than meet the duty of care and would lead to a "safer, happier and more productive workforce".

Wellbeing issue

The increasingly important topic of wellbeing was addressed by two speakers;

Dr Joanne Crawford, Head of Ergonomics and Human Factors at the Institute of Occupational Medicine shared some of the findings from research which looked at remote and lone workers. She reminded us of the importance of addressing the causes of psychological distress and the psycho-social risks.

Dr Derek Mowbray joined us again to discuss Personal Resilience and its importance for Lone Workers. He explored some of the challenges lone workers may face including: feeling isolated, ambiguous expectations and having to fix everything yourself. He challenged the audience to think about their own personal resilience by looking at the ingredients of psychological wellbeing (self-esteem, hope, gratitude, empowerment, etc) and shared some very practical exercises that everyone and

anyone could use.

Training

Throughout the three days we spoke about how vital it is to train lone workers, providing them with practical tools and techniques to manage their own safety. I shared with the audience some ideas on how to engage lone workers in training and looked specifically at what strategies enable people to take control of their own reactions when faced with a threat to their safety. As light relief, and to prove a point, I asked the audience to join in (with a particularly silly exercise) and they did, a great way to demonstrate that interactive training is the way to go! There were many more speakers that added value throughout the three days and the positive and encouraging feedback we received was amazing. So many visitors stayed between sessions to chat about their concerns and experiences and ask for specific advice that maybe next year we'll add a lone worker surgery to the list of activities. Watch this space!

Nicole Vazquez

Worthwhile Training



Nicole runs Worthwhile Training and has over 20 years experience assisting organisations with practical advice to manage the risks associated with employee's safety, security and wellbeing. She has written several training resources and manuals and Nicole's innovative and interactive training style always receives excellent feedback and her advice to companies is valued for its pragmatic, straightforward approach and measurable results.



Director offers harrowing insight into workplace death

A harrowing story of a former construction director has offered an example of the need for health and safety vigilance on site at the Safety and Health Expo 2017.

Matthew Hazelton, speaking on behalf of training specialist Proud2bSafe, spoke about his personal journey following a workplace incident where two of his brothers and two other colleagues died.

Legal

Hazelton said: "While I was trying to deal with the personal side of things, I then realised I had to deal with the legal side of things. Director to me was a ridiculously posh term – I had no idea what I

was about to get myself into." He explained how he had meetings with the insurance company, which led to the HSE and the police involvement. "Getting arrested and taken to a police station under cameras is not a nice feeling," he said. The legal process also meant that he couldn't speak to his work colleagues and friends as they weren't allowed the same barrister or solicitor and "when you really want to be close to your mates, you are being dragged apart."

Timeline

He warned about timelines following such an event – in his case it took six and a half years before the verdict of accidental death. "You are being hidden away from everyone when you feel you haven't got anything to hide. We were doing this and all the while as a business we were doing okay – and we went to losing money, getting new business was a no-no, but old clients did look after us."



“ My wife had stood by me, but when she left, then the wheels really came off and I started drinking and doing drugs.”



Mental health

Hazelton also talked about the personal toll on his own mental health. Despite continuing in the construction industry, he could never get over the incident. “I could never recreate the old construction firm vibe and I kept getting angrier. My wife had stood by me, but when she left, then the wheels really came off and I started drinking and doing drugs.”

Things came to a head when he had a collision with a transit van at 60mph. “I didn’t want to get out of bed, I didn’t want to do anything. When I have to go to see my mother on Mother’s Day – I will always feel guilt.”

Consequences

“It’s something I have to live with every day as the client has to, and the main contractor does.” He summed up that the effect it has is on a personal level and a legal level, and on his children and family. “The effects will be felt for the rest of their lives.”

“Was there enough pre-planning by us? No. That is something I will have to live with. I really hope that none of you have to make those phone calls, because if you do, your lives will never, ever be the same again.”

Matthew Hazelton
Proud2bSafe



Previously a company director, Proud2bSafe has encouraged and motivated **Matthew** to share his family’s experiences in order to encourage directors and senior managers to be more responsible for their actions, the people they employ, and also show the effect of how things can quickly escalate and affect not only their lives, families, friends and work colleagues but the same of the employee too.





Risk assessment – what are you doing wrong?

Day two of Safety & Health Expo began with a seminar looking at the bread and butter of OSH, risk assessment.

Mary Ogungbeje delved into the topic, exploring the best and worst practice regularly seen during her research of the risk assessment process. “Risk assessment is the second most common task undertaken by OSH professionals, yet there is a lack of research on how people are doing it, and what they are doing wrong”, said Mary.

Mary listed some of the most common errors as:

- Not involving a team
- Not designating a competent person
- Involving experts unfamiliar with the company
- Overlooking possible risk categories
- Not thinking about long-term hazards to health (only looking at the short-term)
- Strictly following a checklist – which may lead to missing the dynamics of the working environment
- Trivialising significant hazards
- Overlooking second jobs

- Not considering 3rd parties
- Lack of coordination between employers and sub-contractors
- Not including people who may be particularly at risk
- Not recording equipment used only on special occasions
- Not utilising accident and ill health data records
- Not fully assessing the risk
- Creating a false sense of safety
- Moving from one scenario to another without completing the process
- Not taking account of preventative hierarchy
- Not prioritising the implementation of preventative measures
- Transferring the risk (making a new risk)
- Not consulting with workers about decisions of preventative action
- Seeing process as a one off
- Not supervising efficiency of measures
- Not recording the assessment

And some of the best practice as:

- Defining the scope
- Defining the approach
- Deciding who should be involved
- Identifying hazards
- Identifying possible consequences
- Estimating likelihood of possible consequences
- Estimating the risk
- Recording findings
- Ensuring transparency
- Ensuring consideration of human factors
- Handling uncertainty
- Acting on findings
- Reviewing the assessment

Mary looked in detail at some of the more complex risk assessments OSH practitioners are now undertaking, including a worker returning to work after cancer, road traffic accidents and work related upper limb disorders (WRULD) in healthcare professionals.



“Of 833 road traffic fatalities, 23% involved a worker.”

When risk assessing someone returning to work after cancer treatment, Mary listed many considerations, including workload barriers – such as medication, information and training, potential long-term impact, limitations to physical ability, psychological demands, travelling to and from work, emergency planning, and fatigue.

Remember: be flexible, it's all about the individual

Mary also explored the risk assessment process for driving at work after showing some startling fatal road traffic accident statistics, such as the fact that of 833 road traffic fatalities, 23% involved a worker. Road risk assessment

considerations included the recognition of cars and vans as mobile workplaces, training and information, work vehicle design factors (such as blind spot mirrors and cameras) and developing safe driving policies.

The final area of research looked at work related upper limb disorders (WRULD) in healthcare workers. It showed:

- 76% did not have completed risk assessment
- Therapists without risk assessment were significantly more likely to report UL symptoms in the past 12 months than those without risk assessment

Mary
Ogungbeje
IOSH



Mary is a Research and Development Co-ordinator at the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). She studied a BSc in Pharmaceutical Sciences and MSc in Occupational Safety & Health in London. Most of her activities at IOSH have involved programme and project management, monitoring and evaluation, training, public speaking, policy development and publishing material for both scientific and non-scientific audiences.



Professionals must have ‘soft’ skills set, panel claims

Ensuring candidates have ‘softer’ non-technical skills is crucial for recruiting health and safety professionals, a panel has claimed at the SHE Expo keynote theatre.

Anna Keen, director of Acre, which has been building a competency framework with 50 leading professionals, said the firm was really starting to see a change around what clients are looking for. The firm built a psychometric profiling tool that shows not just who you are, but the impact of your character against core competencies – and the results showed a number of interesting findings about health and safety professionals.

She said: “We wanted to give people an understanding in how they could progress their career and understand what their teams looked like. There were a number of things that challenge the stereotypes, we were seeing a lot about high-caring individuals, and natural intrigue.”

Confidence

Keen said one of the key discoveries was about confidence. “It’s a real issue – having the confidence to

challenge at executive level and with those people who you work with on an everyday level. Self-awareness is also something we are challenging too – and how they understand themselves. For example, if someone says they aren’t good with data, we looked at how that impacts their business.” Richard White, quality, health, safety and environment (QSHE) director at CBRE said the themes from Keen were now ‘commonplace’.

He said: “My view has changed. I used to think a relevant degree was the most important aspect, but now it’s also about softer skills, the ability to present and speak the right commercial language of the business, and you can train the other technical aspects required. Softer skills are crucial to the success.”

Never enough

Ruth Denyer, head of operational risk at ITV, agreed: “You can never have enough technical knowledge

to do every production – it’s all about engagement with those that can help. The technical piece gives you a comfort factor, and the engagement piece is much softer. You have to change your thinking.” White said: “You can’t be good at everything – if you get the right mix of people around you, that works for the whole team.” Keen also said that Acre found ‘people recruiting a reflection of themselves’, which needed to change.

Broad church

Denyer added: “The entire way conversations were held with associated elements of other industries and professions was also needed across risk assessment. Health and safety is just one of the risks being managed – there is a lot which can be learned from the broader risk framework. Much broader conversations about risk are required.”



Keynote Theatre



Tackling work-related health, and not just safety hazards

Matthew Cleve of Juice Learning asked: "How do safety professionals take the same uncompromising approach to eradicating the impact of work-related health issues, as we do to tackling safety hazards?"

Something needs to change... action needs to be taken... accountability needs to be embraced. But why? We're doing ok, aren't we? Over the last 40 years the UK has seen a long-term downward trend in workplace fatalities and non-fatal injuries.

That is a credit to the HSE, to business, to safety professionals and to the millions of workers who have contributed to a huge improvement in safety standards. So, what needs to change?

Well, despite the improvements there is still much to be done when it comes to safety, but there is even more to do when it comes to health. Safety professionals, managers and supervisors across the UK (and the world) need to take the same uncompromising approach to eradicating instances of work-related ill health as many of them already do to tackling workplace injuries and fatalities.

Occupational health

HSE statistics for 2016 suggest that for every worker killed in an accident there were around 90 deaths as the result of past exposure to hazardous substances at work. Whilst it may be argued that the 'lag-factor' will mean that this figure will diminish over time, there are still an estimated 14,000 new cases of breathing or lung problems annually. Work-related ill health affects 1.3m of the UK workforce with an annual economic cost to the UK of £9.3bn, most of which is borne by the individual suffering the ill-health.

We are doing a lot to improve, but we are not doing enough. There are promising signs that many organisations are increasingly keen to redress what is all too often a significant imbalance in the phrase 'health and safety'. There is a growing desire to encourage managers and

employees to give work-related ill health the focus it so desperately deserves, by increasing awareness of the significant long-term consequences of this issue in its various forms, and by raising standards when it comes to prevention and protection.

At the recent Safety & Health Expo at London's ExCel Centre, we explored some of these issues through an interactive session in the Keynote Theatre. Given that we directly followed Professor Brian Cox's presentation on the origins of the universe, we were faced with an astronomical challenge (sorry!), but by using a mixture of live theatre and activities, we helped delegates to consider the difficulties their organisations face in creating a culture of excellence when it comes to work-related ill health. During facilitated discussions, participants talked about the challenges of getting their





“ Work-related ill health costs the UK economy £9.3bn annually.”

managers and supervisors to pay as much attention to something that may kill their employees in twenty years' time as they quite rightly do to the things that could kill them now, here, today, in the blink of an eye. To many, one seems a far more pressing issue than the other.

Health surveillance

Others expressed the difficulties they had in getting all employees to take health surveillance seriously and to convince them of the need for the recording of accurate, meaningful data with regard to Workplace Exposure Limits. They talked of the change of mindset that was still required to get to this point. Others still talked about the need to rid their organisations of the stigma that often surrounds stress or mental ill health so that open and honest conversations could take place in a supportive, non-judgmental environment. One brave soul ventured that this may be particularly relevant in the

more 'traditional', male-dominated industries. A recurring theme was the need for effective leadership at all levels of a business: a managing director and board who genuinely care about the long-term health and wellbeing of the people they employ; managers who actively promote the health agenda and provide a healthy environment for people to work in; supervisors who enforce the rules and encourage excellence when it comes to avoiding instances of work-related ill health.

Challenged emotionally

As well as discussing the issues, participants were also challenged emotionally. The theatrical scenarios allowed delegates to explore the possible long-term consequences that can arise when an employee contracts a serious illness as a result of their historical work activities. The kinds of consequences that have a debilitating affect on a person's ability to carry out normal, day-to-day activities.

The kinds of consequences that have a devastating impact on the individual and those that they love; partners, children and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, friends. The kinds of consequences that managers, supervisors and safety people are rarely around to see, often long-since moved on to new companies, new challenges, new beginnings. Out of sight, out of mind?

With half a million workers in 2016 in pain from work-related musculoskeletal disorders, half a million suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety and a total of 25.9 million working days lost due to work-related ill health, all companies need to ensure that they are doing all they can to keep their people not just safe, but also healthy. So, if you haven't already, now is the time to act. If you're still only really focussing on safety, now is the time for change.



Keynote Theatre



Keynote sessions

Re-live the best ever inspirational speaker line-up, which consisted of rock star physicist *Professor Brian Cox OBE*; double Olympic gold medallist, *Dame Kelly Holmes*; and Falklands War veteran, *Simon Weston OBE*.

Dame Kelly Holmes captivates the crowds at Safety & Health Expo 2017

In 2004 **Dame Kelly Holmes** won two Olympic gold medals and became only the second woman in history to claim the 800m and 1500m titles for British athletics.

She opened the inspirational series of talks at Safety & Health Expo 2017, by describing her rollercoaster journey in getting to this point – from suffering mental ill health, to physical illness and injury, to her time in the Army. Dame Kelly opened Safety and Health Expo's inspirational speaker series by talking about the time we find ourselves in, with recent events making a safety and health conference ever more poignant. She explained that trying to motivate and inspire at times like this could be extra hard and an audience of protection and management professionals was "quite intimidating".

Dame Kelly told of how she was brought up in whiter than white Kent in a time when Brown Girl in The Ring was a hugely popular song. "It didn't take long for the children to make me the brown girl

in the ring – but I wasn't about to be intimidated – this was my way to stand out. I wasn't academic at all. I was taken out of French lessons for talking, my grades were dropping, and eventually my P.E teacher told me to get a grip. She said I had an ability to run, and run fast. It wasn't long before I was beating girls two years older than me. Sometimes as a child going through issues, you just need to be told that you can do it."

Military

"My dream was to be in the military and when I saw a video at school I knew the army was for me. I became an army HGV driver and had a goal to become a physical training instructor. The army was incredible for meeting so many people with so many different backgrounds and different ambitions. You have to prove you can be as good as

anyone else – but also stand out." During her time in the army Dame Kelly suffered many knock backs as she was rejected to become a Physical Training Instructor. "I was put down, rejected, belittled, while I was trying to achieve my dream. So, I thought – I'll show you lot – and I took on a refereeing course, boxing, netball, football, and swimming and finally I passed at 21 and was determined to be best PTI I could be. It was a difficult time for the military with transitions and forces amalgamating," explained Dame Kelly, "however it gave me discipline, respect, and honour and taught me team work and individual merit."

Athletics

A 14-years-old Dame Kelly watched Sebastian Coe win both 800m and 1500m – and it was then that she knew that



“ I was put down, rejected, belittled, while I was trying to achieve my dream.”

one day she would do the same. She competed for Great Britain and won a gold medal at the mini youth Olympics. Balancing the military and competing meant that one day she could be out on the track winning medals and another day she would be a soldier.

In the army she became a champion runner over many distances and on the track she won twelve medals at international athletics. During her international athletics career she suffered for seven years out of twelve with injury or ill health. From a ruptured calf, to glandular fever, to a snake bite – Dame Kelly felt like she never really got a break.

“It took grit, fight and determination. Inside my heart I believed I would be an Olympic Champion. If that’s your true focus and you get knocked back and knocked back it’s hard to take. Injury after injury and picking yourself back up. Hanging onto the moments of glory. The key thing was how to get over it. They key thing was never letting go of your focus.”

Mental health

The constant rollercoaster of emotions eventually took its toll on Dame Kelly’s mental health, and she found herself suffering depression, and at times suicidal thoughts. “Behind glory is a human being. Behind success is a

human being. Every single one of us is a human being. One minute I was at the top and then back to my bag room. People started to know my name and I was breaking records. At the point when I was number one in the world – I had a niggle on the first race of the first day and towards the end of the race my calf went pop. It was a complete rupture of the calf and I was told my career was over. I had to fight so hard to get back. I knew I had to get physically fit and mentally strong.”

Speaking of her battle with mental ill health, she spoke of her darkest time in 2003. “It was the hardest time of my life. It felt like I had a dark tunnel in front of me. I was injured and it took its toll. I looked in the mirror and thought about killing myself. I started self-harming, cutting myself through every injury. People through all walks of life have despair and worthlessness.” In some ways she is still that person today.

Dame Kelly said: “So how can we come back from the down times? We bring our teams together, friends, families, work colleagues – you have to open up and talk. To achieve my dream I had to get my best team around me – training partners, physiotherapists, and nutritionists to stop me getting ill. With my support network and asking for help I knew I would do it, knew I could be champion.”

And she did.

In 2004 Dame Kelly Holmes won two gold medals and fulfilled her childhood dream. “Don’t give up on your dreams. At the age of 34, in my last Olympic Games, I went to Athens with no injury and with 100% belief in my ability. I sat in the ice baths, and I ate properly, and gave meticulous attention to detail. 20 years after watching it as a child – I won.”

In conclusion Dame Kelly said: “This is just my journey, my dream. It’s up to you to believe in yours. And, if you can’t achieve yours, help someone else to achieve theirs.”



Brian Cox draws Safety & Health Expo's biggest ever keynote audience

Professor Brian Cox gave a thought-provoking lecture on the origin of the universe, raising questions about human resilience, in front of a record audience at the Safety and Health Expo 2017 keynote theatre.

Addressing a packed audience, Cox said he was excited to give the speech at the event. "I asked the organiser if they needed me to talk about safety and security," he said. "They said no... just talk about the universe." Cox said the scale and challenge of his job as a cosmologist was shown by 'the fact our nearest galaxy is **23 million** light years away'. He said: "What I'm trying to say is the universe is big! The challenge is to see our position. We are physically insignificant." Quoting cosmologist Carl Sagan, Cox said astronomy was a 'humbling experience', and then referred to American author, John Updike, who said 'astronomy is what we now have instead of theology: the terrors are less but the comforts are nil!'

Tour

Cox then took the packed audience on a whistle-stop tour of the theories of the universe, including Einstein's theory of relativity, and how that grew out of his own thinking on gravity and light, which was from James Maxwell's 1860s experiments on light and rainbows. He said: "Really simple benchtop experiments motivated Einstein to his theory."

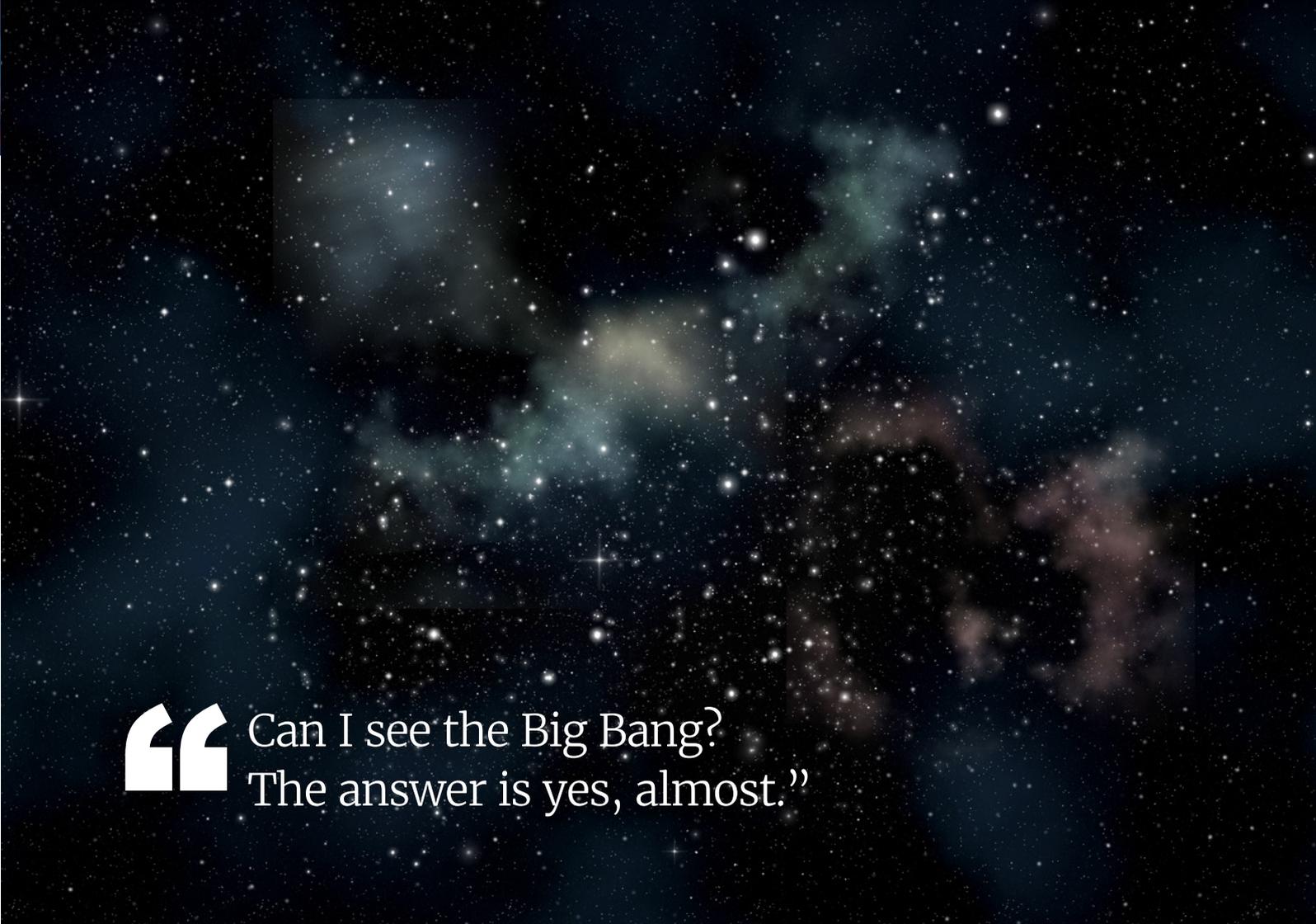
Depending on your feeling about maths, the equations are either 'gibberish or beautiful'. Einstein had 'demolished the notion of absolute time' – one of the key theories of physics – Cox said.

Audacious leap

Cox said it was an 'audacious leap' from 'just some electricity and magnetism experiments' that led to a theory of the creation of the universe.

He then went onto explain how when you look further back in space, you can see everything is so hot that atoms can't form. "Can I see the Big Bang? The answer is yes, almost. Seeing the oldest light in the universe, there are no stars and galaxies, it is just the glowing plasma of the young universe with dense dots of light. The different colours correspond to slightly different densities. This picture shows that the universe was very dense and





“ Can I see the Big Bang? The answer is yes, almost.”

very hot and that the universe is not eternal.” He said that one physicist had described the dense spots ‘like looking at the face of god’ as they collapsed to form the first stars and galaxies. “When you put the image of the oldest light into a computer and simulate the expansion of the universe, the distribution of galaxies creates the cosmic web that we have today”, he said.

Inflation

Speaking about what existed before the Big Bang, Cox claimed that ‘inflation is the best theory’, which only became a mature concept in the 2000s. He said: “There is a little patch of space before the big bang. The universe was still there, but it was empty and cold. This theory starts with something a billionth of the size of the nucleus of an atom. Ten to the minus 37 seconds stretching out.

It doubles 100 times, and possibly many more, until it stops, and when it stops the entire observable universe is the size of the exhibition hall. And all the energy is dumped into the space, and it heats it up and it makes particles and it creates the big bang. That’s the cause of the big bang itself.”

Circles

Cox also spoke of a prediction: if you look into the data map of the universe, you should see circles in the sky that are a direct prediction from the oldest light. Astronomers should be able to draw these circles through the distance between galaxies, by pairing galaxies up through a correlation function. He said: “The graph was only published three years ago – it is true that it is more likely to find these predictions than not. This is cutting edge cosmology – we have been able to probe the origin

of our universe from the billionth the size of an atom to today’s trillions of galaxies through data.”

Questions

Cox took a number of questions from the floor, including why we haven’t found any other intelligent life in the universe. He explained: “Biologists point to the history of life on earth. Complex life doesn’t begin for 3.5 billion years, until then it is only single celled. The evolutionary events are extremely fortuitous. Somehow one cell got inside another one and survived and then reproduced. It is mind-boggling how rare it is but it did happen – and it happened here.” One biologist told him, when looking at his map of the Milky Way ‘you should say out there, there is only slime.’



Keynote Theatre



Simon Weston: “It’s all about self-belief”

Falklands War veteran **Simon Weston CBE** bought the audience close to tears with a powerful motivational speech at SHE Expo 2017.

Weston, who survived the bombing of RFA Sir Galahad in 1982, said: “you either have belief in yourself or you don’t” and described his journey of recovery from his life-threatening injuries. He said: “I discovered more kinds of degrees of pain than I could imagine. But worse than that I lost my identity, I began to lose sight of myself. I was like a helpless child – I was just 20 years of age and I didn’t want to be the person on the street that people looked away from in disbelief.”

Rugby

Weston described a trip organised by his regiment, the Welsh Guards, to watch its rugby team play in

Germany. He said a handshake with one of his army colleagues made him realise that he needed to instil positivity and self-reliance. “They had been killing me with kindness at home.” He said: “Shake my hand properly boy,” but what I realised was that he was actually saying: “You’re becoming disabled even in your handshake.”

Recovery

He then talked through how he ‘rebuilt the new Simon Weston’ over a four-year period. “We have more control than we think we have. We have to accept the challenge of change. Sometimes you forget yourself. It’s all about self-belief.” Weston set up a charity, The Weston

Spirit, which gave him a role in society, and he discovered that there “was nothing like helping young people.” He also said that meeting the Argentinian fighter pilot who bombed the RFA Sir Galahad helped him “invest in my future, by getting rid of my nightmares.”

Comments

He also said that there was “nothing you can do” about negative and nasty people but that “you must always maintain your dignity” in the face of adversity. “You must be positive about everything that you do. Whatever it is you have to face, I hope you face it. It is about what you are prepared to do with your life.”



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