

# Pavel Bartko: Work safety cannot be solved by one security guard like a soldier in the field alone. He must have the support of employees

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Are you one of those who underestimate the work of a security technician? Do you claim that you don't have much time for health and safety inspections and constant inspections because you have to "create values"? It's like "quickly sign it and get to work, after all, we know best what we need, and above all, it's been working that way for years, so whatever, we're not going to make a science out of it". Well, throw it back! A passionate security guard-practitioner is a treasure for the company. That is, someone who takes his profession as a mission, looks for new solutions and can get people excited about the cause. We will try to convince you because we know one. His name is Pavel Bartko and he is a security guard body and soul. That is, correctly EHS manager (*the position includes, in addition to occupational safety, also environmental protection – editor's note*) in the well-known pharmaceutical company Cayman Pharma.



*Ing. Pavel Bartko graduated from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Czech Technical University in Prague. He has twenty years of experience in the field of occupational safety and environmental protection. Most of the time he worked in the automotive industry, since the end of last year he has been the EHS manager at the pharmaceutical company Cayman Pharma. He says that he became a security engineer by chance, and at the beginning he did not expect that the job would grab him so much. Today he sees it as a mission. "It's not easy and you have to enjoy it, because you are taking on a huge responsibility for other people's lives. You are not only a firefighter, but above all a strategist."*

So how about underestimating the safe guard? Or in other words: how to change it? You won't dazzle everyone with your knowledge of legislation, am I right?

As they say, trial by fire is the best or you will meet a friend in battle. At the very beginning of my time in Cayman, we had an accident at work. During the work, a rather strong acid was splashed. As we began to investigate why this happened, the question arose as to whether the work procedure in question was really appropriate to carry out with the protective gear and technical equipment we had. We have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to find another solution that eliminates a similar risk. In cooperation with an external company, I then managed to develop a tool for pouring the chemical substance, so that the operator no longer needs to be in extreme proximity for this operation - and thanks to this, he does not even need protective equipment. With a new technical solution, we have enabled it to work more safely - it already works that way. Of course, the employees welcomed this approach and change.

## A good thing will establish itself

**That earned you respect among people, isn't that right?**

Yes, it was a turning point for many and they started taking me. Before me, a security guard worked only part-time at the company. Within the newly established position of EHS manager, much more emphasis is placed on occupational safety, especially from a practical point of view. It should be added that companies with up to 250 employees (*Cayman Pharma has 120 employees – editor's note*) do not have to have an EHS manager by law. So maybe at the beginning, some people asked themselves in the back of their minds whether it was necessary to spend money on me.

**You haven't been in Cayman for a year yet, but you've made a big difference here. For example, people say they look forward to your training. You get to the point and it's not boring.**

You know, I'm more of a practitioner, I wouldn't enjoy just reading the standards myself. So no long retelling of paragraphs, signing of forms and threats of fines. My trainings are informal, in the form of discussion and interactive presentations, picture puzzles and so on. To make them fun and to make people realize that it is they who are responsible for safety and can influence it the most. I'm trying to get people into the security engineer role. That is why I took a course in andragogy to understand how to educate and motivate adults to take ownership of the matter. Without the support of employees, I can try my best with my team, but the result will not be certain.

## Near misses around us

**Well, the employees will be active in your training and then they will try to follow the safety of the work. Or can they help in some other way?**

Significantly! You see, we are an ISO 45 001 certified company in occupational health and safety, and this assumes that we can also identify potential hazards. I try to instill in people that it is good to look around and perceive dangerous behavior or conditions even before an accident occurs. We work with the term "early accident".

**Please explain that to the readers.**

A near miss is an event in which no damage or injury occurred, but is more a matter of coincidence or luck. If it had happened just a little differently, damage or injury would have occurred. For example, you had a water leak at your workplace, but you wiped it up and nothing happened. Fortunately, no one slipped and broke a leg. But it could easily happen. Report a dripping faucet as a near miss and we'll fix it quickly.

**Who are we? Does this mean you have a maintenance person on your team?**

Yes, five experts in total. I am also in charge of the maintenance area, we can solve problems without unnecessary delays. I have been working in the field of occupational safety for twenty years, I have moved around a lot, for example in the automotive industry. I'm up to maintenance here in Cayman, but it's very practical.

**Let's go back to the near miss report. Will the staff fill out some paperwork or call you?**

In connection with the extensive digitization of our company, which has been going on across departments for a long time, we are also moving the records of work safety, maintenance, and therefore also near-accidents into electronic form. Specifically, we use a cloud solution in a smartphone. We are currently testing it on a group of about thirty co-workers and it is incredible how it has caught on. We had fifty change requests in the first week, everyone is excited about it. It is a very simple and excellently working solution. In the future, all employees should be able to use it.

## When it kicks, something is wrong

**What else have you managed to do recently to protect the health of your employees?**

There are many improvements, for all of them I would mention the area of electrostatics. Not all workplaces were previously protected against electrostatic discharges. We solved the enormous load of electrostatics within two weeks, but we live in the age of synthetics. So we perform a preventive measurement of the static charge in order to have an overview of the fact that the situation is still the same, i.e. safe. Because just because some measures are set up, it doesn't mean that they will work without problems all the time. It has to be checked. By the way, regular measurements of various indicators and values are part of our daily routine. Digitization comes into play here too, so I can monitor most of them on my mobile phone.

**And what new project are you working on now?**

There are dozens of them in the company, I alone am in charge of eleven projects, most of them in the amount of millions. For example, we are involved in large-scale relocation of research laboratories from one building to another. On it, I would like to show the support we have from the company's management. In the beginning, there was only the idea of moving laboratories one to one. But then we found out that we need more laboratories and that they need to be better equipped, because some of them do not meet what we expect from them in the future, nor the requirements for occupational safety. For example, more extractor hoods are needed - and for those, more air, so new ventilation technology came into play. The latter demanded better use of electrical energy, which meant recuperation. And we thought about further saving resources, which will become more and more expensive, and so we came to replace the lighting with salt lamps. Not only in laboratories, there were also offices... The management of the company approached all these initially unplanned investments more than favorably, even though the budget grew by an order of magnitude. New ideas and procedures are favored, which is not usual everywhere.



*The new laboratories are just one of the many investments in improving the working environment and innovations that Cayman Pharma has recently increased its efficiency: "Last year we invested 22 million crowns in this area and this year it will be 33 million. In the next eight years, we are planning investments for another 150 million," says financial director David Králík. The company is an international leader among pharmaceutical companies producing prostaglandin-based active substances*

**But it is precisely thanks to such innovations that your company manages to survive even in difficult times.**

For example, we are thinking about buying a 3D printer, because in the past few months we have had a shortage of supplies of simple spare parts that we could make ourselves using the printer. And so we want to prepare for similar outages and be more universal. But the customer is also honored here. Among other things, a considerable investment is planned in new clean spaces for the production of veterinary drugs/prostaglandins. It is not determined by any legislation, but by the customer's wish, which is taken as a coin to accept. Yes, they are fans of innovation here, and I enjoy it.

**Allow me to conclude with a personal question. Do you have the urge to constantly monitor your surroundings for safety? Maybe at home?**

Yes, they blame me at home. For example, when I warn my wife not to leave her shoes outside the door, because it reduces our escape space.

Jana Jenšíková chatted with Pavle Bartek

Photo: Marek Jenšík

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