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EDUCATION FOR PEACE: NEW PATHWAYS FOR SECURING CHEMICAL DISARMAMENT

Reaching Students and Scientists with the Multi-disciplinary Approach

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Ethics as a tool to approach science security

- Most science practitioners, funders, policy-makers and so on will accept an ethics approach if it is introduced as “social responsibility”
- Necessary to demonstrate an ethics framework to show how this can “work” in practice
- Ethics is still viewed as a blockage by many, so requires patience and some good examples to use in teaching and sharing
- Within institutions it is vital to get top-down “buy-in” so that everyone **has to** engage with the topic of security
- BY TAKING A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH WE CAN AVOID DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC PROBLEMS:
  - A narrow, subject-specific perspective
  - A fear that only one discipline is being “targeted”
  - We can take advantage of a diverse set of skills, perspectives and knowledge and pool these into a central “pot” from where they can be shared as best practice

Benefits of an ethics approach to security

- Multi-disciplinary development is best tackled through professional sharing opportunities, rather than describing these as “classes” or “training”

- If colleagues are to have such events imposed on them, they should be shown the clear advantages of engagement, e.g. :
  - increased clarity of risk assessments,
  - better ethical assessment of their work,
  - enhanced bids for grants,
  - provision of answers to hostile questions about their research

- Emphasise reduction of risks and enhancement of benefits:
  - Better safety for staff , the local area and beyond
  - Reduced insurance risks for the institution
  - Institutional reputation enhanced
  - Avoidance or minimisation of litigation arising from scientific research/work
  - And so on…..

Ethics, norms and professional levels

- We are interested in promoting a norm of security in every day science
- Our audience believes they are already doing this
- Once people have an ethics "how to" toolkit that shows them how to ask the right questions in order to satisfy themselves and others that they *are doing security effectively,* they will usually use it
- The Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) approach is useful but we are talking about day to day scientific activity that may not constitute *research* – but which may still be potentially dangerous
- This is a career-long activity from student to Continuing Professional Development
- Compose classes/groups where possible *according to their level of seniority or experience* – people will only engage effectively with ethical issues at their level of responsibility

Cultural and professional identities

- Science security is best promoted as a development activity, not a security one (avoid the post-war 'diversion' approach)
- Must show people how adopting a security norm will benefit them
  - avoid a "them and us" approach
  - this is a global issue, not a "protect the West" issue
- Vital to look at the cultural identities of the "taught" group/individuals – they are our *partners* in security (consider their religious, economic, social and technological drivers), not children being taught by parents
- Not teaching something new – people already want to practice responsible science – we can simply provide tools to enhance what's *already in place* (even if that is not much)
- Science security can be promoted as a norm, just as biosafety is an accepted norm and hazardous substances SOPs are a norm (for example)

In practice – the tutor

- Use the audience/group/individual as a helper in the sharing of best practice
- A regular seminar or lunch session is a good location to do this sort of activity (informal way to carry out a formal requirement)

- Have a list of points to get across but do this in different ways to suit each "audience"
  - Chalk and talk may work in some settings (e.g. non-western teaching)
  - Group discussions
  - Small group tasks and presentations
  - Problem-based learning/active group learning is excellent (groups solve the problem and then tutor aligns their findings with the desired outcomes of the session)
  - Online classes and groups can work really well but the tutor needs to be up to speed on technology to do it (may need an off-screen assistant)
  - Be prepared to do at least *some* lecturing element if the group expect this

- CAVEATS
- Grow a thicker skin
- Invest in a large crash helmet
- Be prepared for antagonism
- Be prepared for constant misunderstandings
- Be prepared to repeat everything over and over again
- Heavy administrative load if done formally
- Heavy communication load before, during and after sessions

In practice – the individual and the group

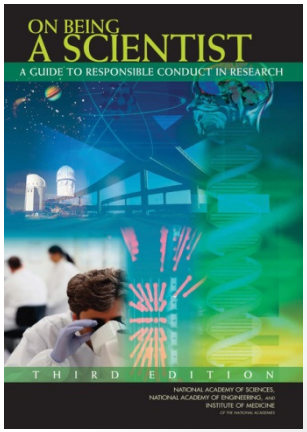
- Nobody believes that their work can be dangerous to the public
- Most are so absorbed in the *benefits* of their own work that they cannot identify possible *costs*
- Every individual or group only wants to hear what is "relevant" to them and their area
- All want examples provided from their own speciality
- Use social tools to break down suspicion between groups (lunch, drinks, intro sessions, facebook page)
- Once groups recognise they all have something to offer, they will work together – a useful way is to promote cross-group friendship or at least a buddy system – and natural pairs/groups will emerge too
- Start by getting the "audience" to provide info and answers to basic questions, *then* move onto the passing on of info *to them*
- *LISTEN TO THEM and use any experiences they disclose as a learning and teaching tool*

Ethics Toolkit and other guides

Available for free download at:

http://www.brad.ac.uk/bioethics/monographs/

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192



Thank you!

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Please contact me of you would like to discuss any of this in more detail