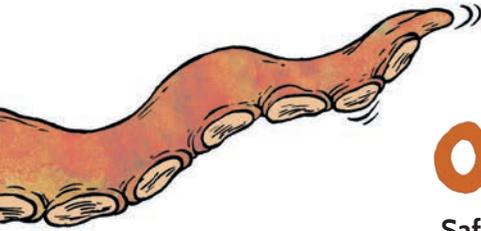
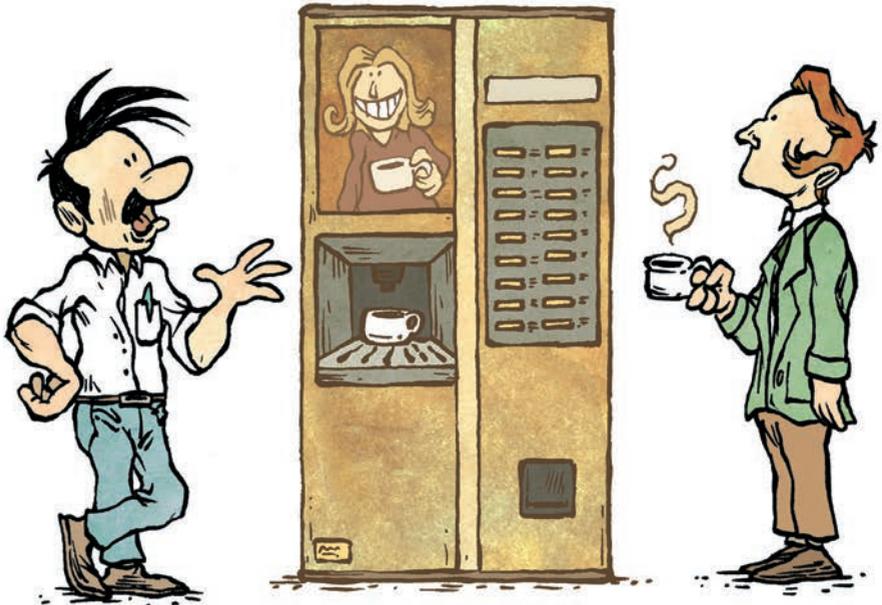


THE OPERATOR, THE MANAGER AND THE MONSTER



FROM OUTER SPACE

Safety and professionalism: who wants what?

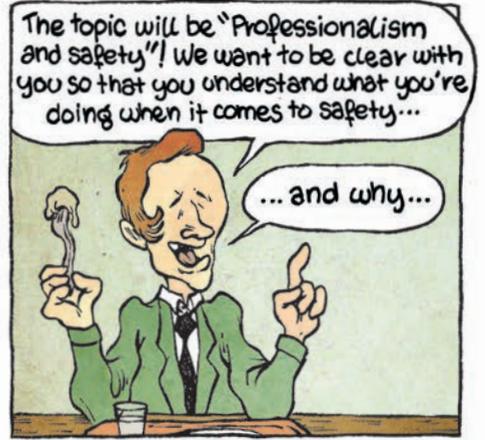
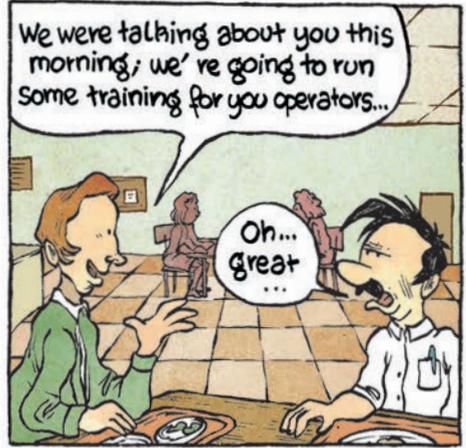


THE OPERATOR, THE MANAGER... AND THE MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE

**Safety and professionalism:
who wants what?**

Based on an original idea by Hervé Laroche, researcher and Professor at ESCP Business School, with the complicity of Caroline Kamaté & Clotilde Gagey, Foncsi.

The comic strip was created by peb & Augel.



TOP
MANAGEMENT

HSE
MANAGER

CUSTOMERS

INSPECTORS



But...

you do know this doesn't come directly from me?

Ah yeah... I forgot your superiors don't have the guts to come and face us themselves...



Well, I guess we'll have to wait and see...



Sorry, but when you string words like "Professionalism" and "Safety" together

It just makes me want to laugh!

I've lost count of the number of documents I've seen with this kind of mumbo jumbo... I could fill a whole bookcase...



I bet it's just gonna be something else that gets in the way of me doing my job properly...

Why doesn't anyone just ask us for our opinion every once in a while?!



We'd do a better job, and safety to boot!

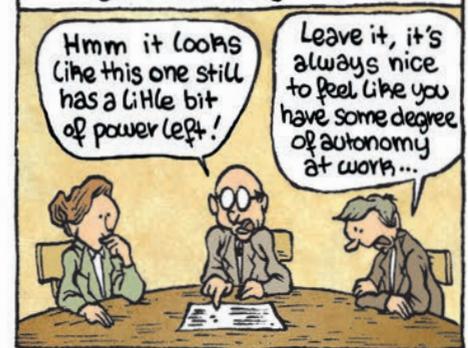
Ah! well great because that's precisely the goal of this training!

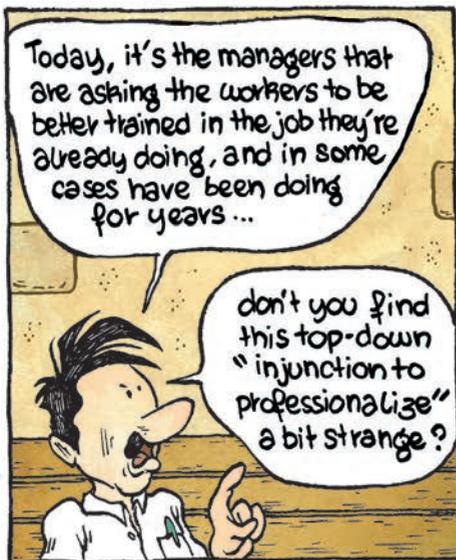
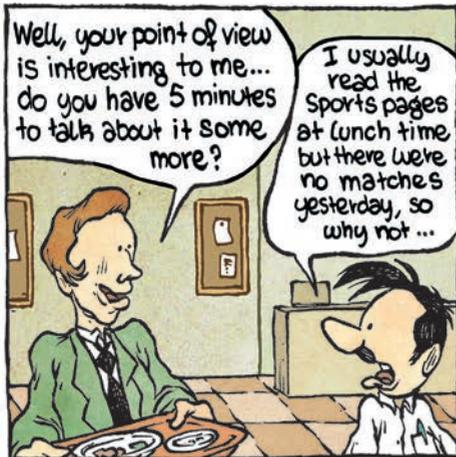


...to design and market standardised products and services...



... and to control just how much free rein these expensive graduates are given!





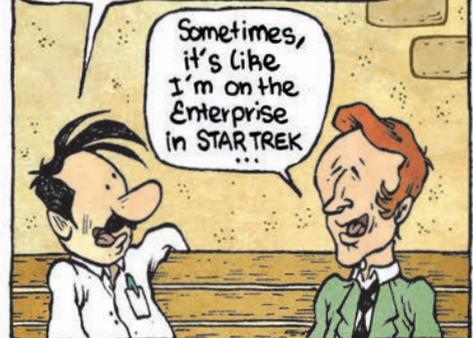


Of course no one's going to object to a guy who handles dangerous stuff taking a course called "Professionalism and safety."

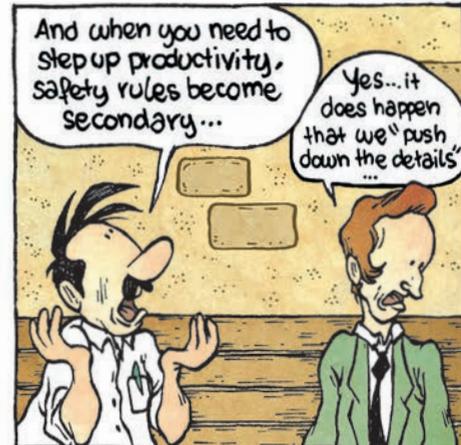
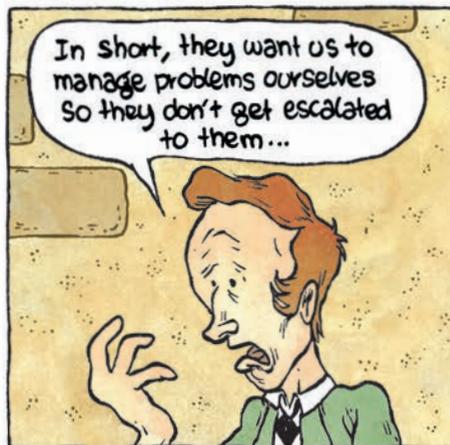
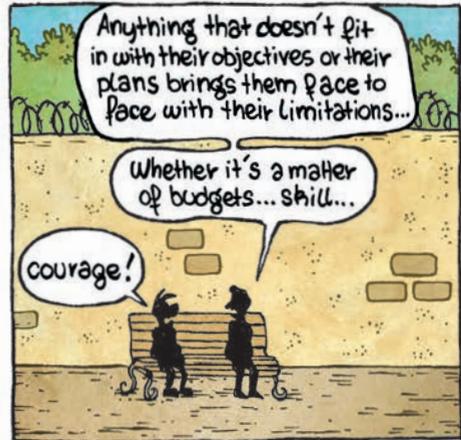


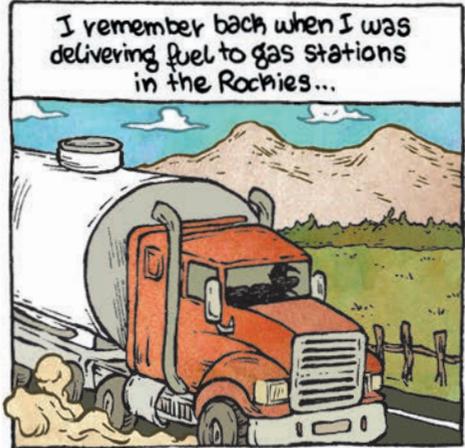
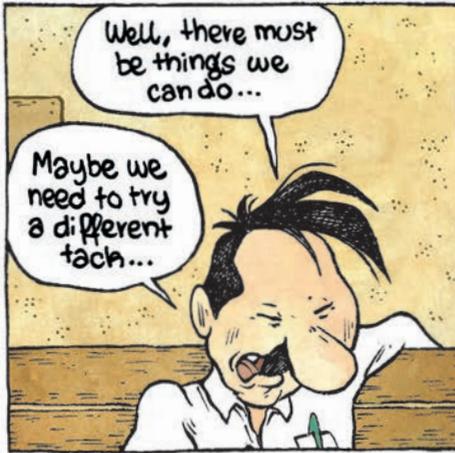
You know, I'm asked to be a great leader...

The big bosses just want to take care of their business among themselves. They don't want us getting in the way...



But in reality, I'm just an underling...





We got bonuses or penalties depending on how well we respected the delivery lead times. What a great idea...



Frankly, we didn't feel that concerned about safety. We were pros, guys who knew what they were doing.



We weren't all that fazed by the rule books and inspectors sent by management.



As for the endless training sessions that felt like Sunday school, some trainers won't have forgotten them...



Then one day, an old-timer showed-up. At first we thought it was for an umpteenth training session...



But he told us in no uncertain terms that he had nothing to teach us about safety. He had a different message...



Of course, we didn't take it so well...

SCHEDULES ARE TOO TIGHT!

STUPID RULES!

BADLY EQUIPPED RIGS!

DANGEROUS ROADS!

WE'VE GOTTA EARN A LIVING!

But deep down, we were a bit ashamed...

He came back to run some working groups with us, but also with some guys from the roads department, one of the company's technical experts, some gas station managers, and even some representatives of the general public.

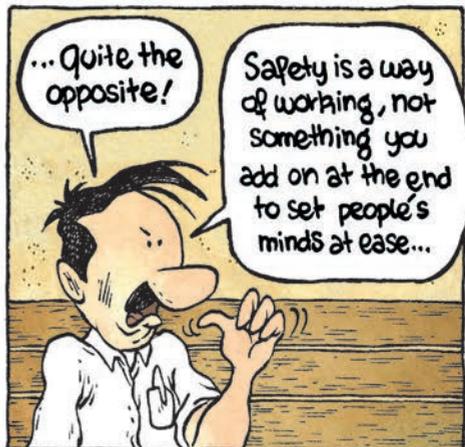


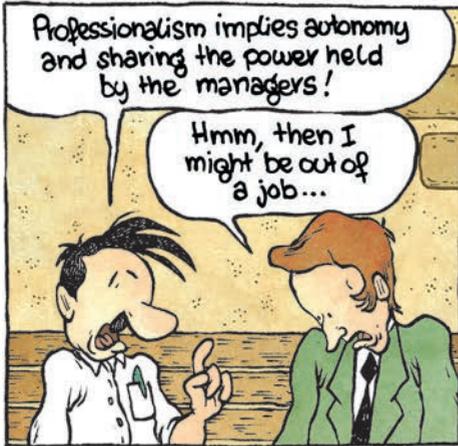
We made a lot of suggestions in the end, and, this didn't in anyway diminish the pride we felt at being extreme truck drivers...



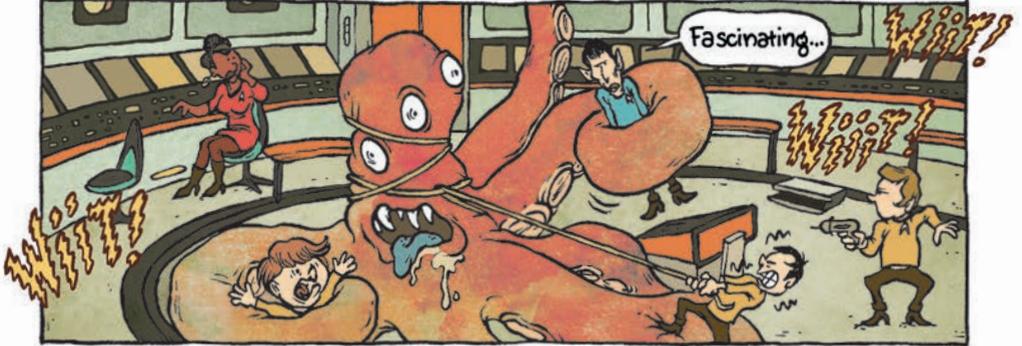
... Quite the opposite!

Safety is a way of working, not something you add on at the end to set people's minds at ease...





And as for us, on our side we'll find the best possible trade-offs to adapt our work to external requirements. Keep incidents and errors to a minimum, or at least make sure they don't leave the confidentiality zone...



Hey, but! If it all goes wrong, it's me they'll blame!

Thanks a lot!

Well yeah, it needs a bit of fine-tuning, sure...



The basic principle here is an unofficial trade-off between operator autonomy and manager accountability with the aim of improving things.



If the managers understand that it improves safety, they will focus on communication with the outside and will leave us to get on with the actual work.

Basically, what Brunsson calls "the organization of hypocrisy".



I'm going to have to take a closer look at your reading material...

oh? You're going to read the sports pages too?

Hehe!



A SHORT GLOSSARY...

... for managers of monsters from outer space

Taylor and Taylorism (p.7)

Taylorism is a work organisation doctrine based primarily on the detailed standardisation of work methods (also called “rationalisation”). Historically, standardisation was first applied to the tasks performed by industrial workers. But any procedure that imposes a precise way of executing a task may be seen as a standardisation based on a Taylorist approach, whether that task is part of a manufacturing or production process, the provision of a service, or some kind of intellectual work.

Jurisdiction (p.8)

A profession is defined as an area of work (i.e. jurisdiction) in which professionals have recognised authority. Within its boundaries, the professionals establish the right ways of carrying out the work. Examples: doctors, lawyers. This view of professions, introduced by the sociologist Andrew Abbott, insists on the autonomy of professionals. Professionalism comes “from the inside” (from the community of professionals).

Injunction to professionalize (p.8)

Public or private organisations place demands on their employees so that they comply with ways of carrying out the work which are defined by said organisations in the name of work quality and service. In this context, the autonomy of professionals is considerably controlled and shaped from “the top”.

See: Boussard, V., Demazière, D., Milburn, P. (2009). *L'injonction au professionnalisme. Analyses d'une dynamique plurielle*. Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

Grandiosity (p.9)

According to Alvesson and Gabriel, today's organisations have a tendency to exaggerate everything. They "talk up" their performance, the quality of their products, the heroic deeds of their top executives, just how serious they are about their commitments, and how strong their identity is. The vocabulary they use is proof of this: managers are "leaders", innovations are "disruptive", services are "premium", and safety, of course, is the top priority.

See: Alvesson, M., & Gabriel, Y. (2016). Grandiosity in contemporary management and education. *Management Learning*, 47(4), 464-473.

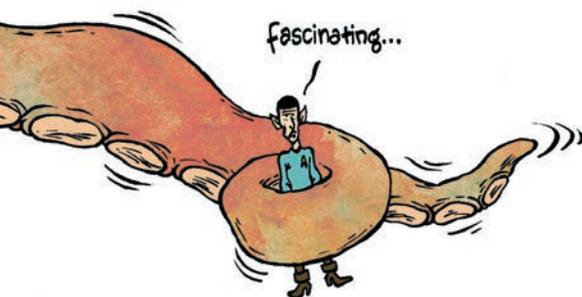
Pushing down the details (p.10)

The tendency that managers in large organisations have of ignoring or minimising any problems encountered by their subordinates while carrying out their work. We have to thank the sociologist Robert Jackall for this concept.

The organization of hypocrisy (p.14)

Organisations are accountable to a great many stakeholders. When they cannot justify themselves easily, they "organise the hypocrisy". In other words, they say one thing but do something else.

See: Brunsson, N. (1993). Ideas and actions : Justification and hypocrisy as alternatives to control. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 18(6), 489-506.



THE RESEARCH

Professionalism and industrial safety

At the request of its industrial sponsors and donors, in 2016 the FonCSI (Foundation for an Industrial Safety Culture) launched a research programme focusing on “Professionalism and industrial safety”.

Industrial companies have noted that, in spite of channelling heavy investments into safety training, the number of accidents has reached a level which they cannot seem to improve upon.

The question then is: what are the new levers for improving safety and achieving fewer accidents?

To find some answers, the FonCSI first performed an 18-month strategic analysis, consulting with international experts on professionalism. The Foundation then issued a call for research proposals and supported six research projects on the subject.

How the comic strip came about

One of the first fruits of this research was the publication of an academic book in 2017, through the Springer publishing house: *Beyond Safety Training. Embedding Safety in Professional Skills*. One of the chapters of the book more specifically caught the attention of the FonCSI team: Captain Kirk, Managers and the Professionalization of Safety. Its author, Hervé Laroche, a professor of Management Science at ESCP Business School, had written a humorous and imaginary dialogue between a manager and an operator. The discussion between these two characters seemed naturally suited to the comic strip medium.

So that is what we have done with *The Operator, the Manager... and the Monster from Outer Space*. The FonCSI team invite you to share this comic strip widely as a contribution to improving safety.

THE FONCSI

The Foundation for an Industrial Safety Culture

The FonCSI is a public-interest research foundation. It funds research projects pertaining to industrial risks and safety, and its work places a particular focus on human and organisational factors, as well as safety culture.

The fruit of the Foundation's research work is made public via publications that may be downloaded free of charge from its website, www.foncsi.org, and during free conferences that everyone is welcome to attend.



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These days, everyone is expected to be a “good professional” and the field of safety is no exception. But how does one achieve this? And more importantly, how can managers achieve this when they are torn between different duties and responsibilities?

That is the delicate topic covered humorously in *The Operator, the Manager... and the Monster from Outer Space*.

Through a discussion between a manager and an operator, this comic strip explores practices that may complement classic safety-related training or provide alternatives.

And if the critical ideas of the characters come across as “impertinent”, that is because this comic strip is deliberately exaggerated to encourage debate and (above all) for fun...



Foundation for an
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A public-interest research foundation

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