



The EHS Playbook:
**Turn Safety Needs
into Budget Wins**



Today's Presenters



Jill James

MIS
Chief Safety Officer, HSI

Jill James is Chief Safety Officer at HSI where she focuses on product, thought leadership, and regulatory trends. Her over 30-year EHS career includes 12 years as an OSHA Senior Safety Investigator, and several years in healthcare, education, biotech, life sciences and the poultry industry.

Jill hosts the Accidental Safety Pro podcast and created the Supervisor Safety Tip video series.

She received her Master's in Industrial Safety from University of Minnesota Duluth and her undergraduate degree is in Community Health Education.



Jon Liesmaki

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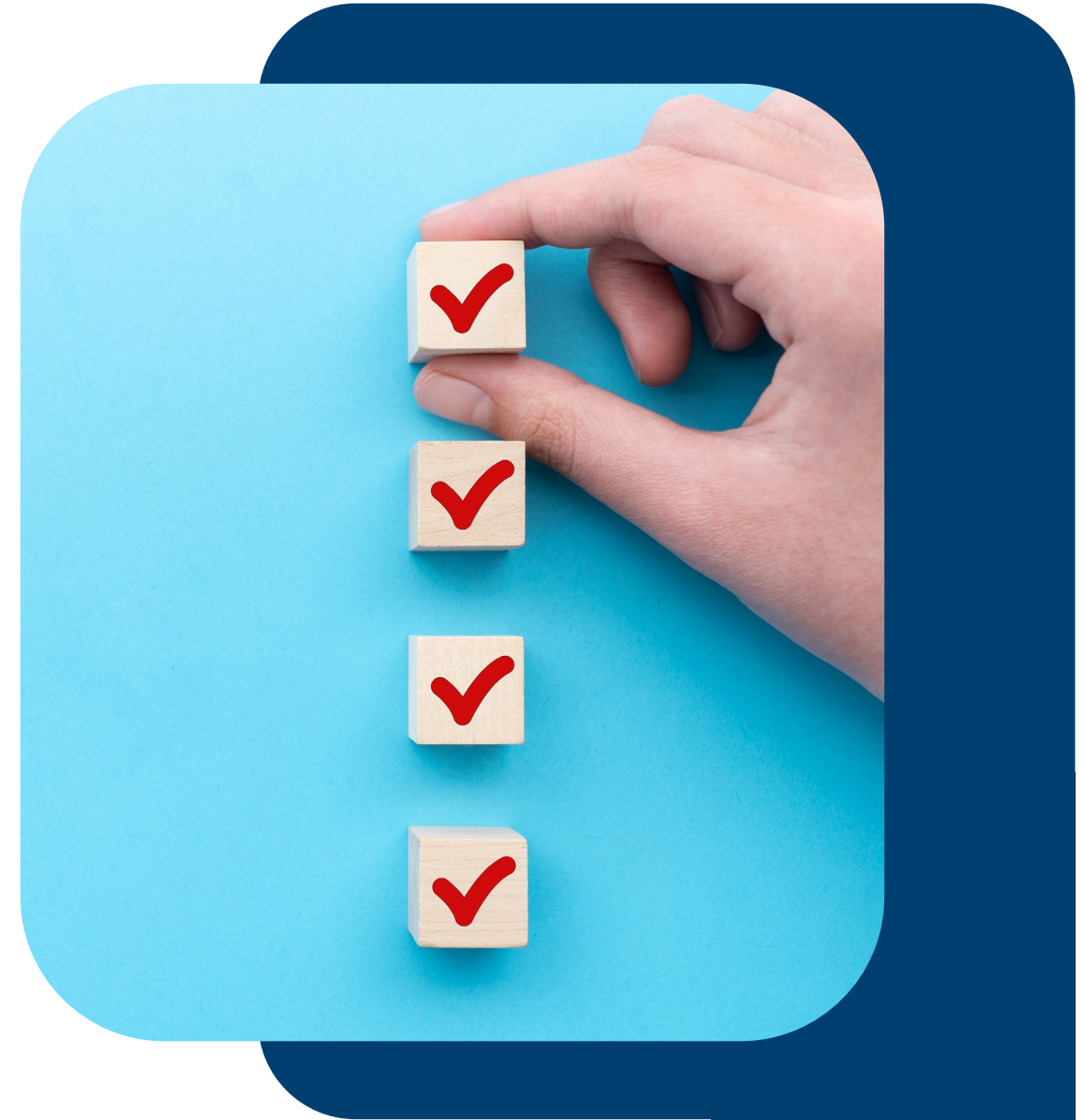
Jon Liesmaki is Senior Director of Environmental, Health and Safety at Apogee Enterprises, leading enterprise EHS strategy and safety culture across North American operations.

With more than 20 years of experience spanning construction, manufacturing, medical devices, and semiconductor industries, Jon has led transformational EHS initiatives for organizations including Apogee, Medtronic, Covidien, and Honeywell.

He holds a Master's degree in Environmental, Health & Safety from the University of Minnesota Duluth and is a frequent industry speaker.

Agenda

- Accounting/Budgeting Basics and Terminology
- Budget Mindset
- Building a Budget
- Collaborators: who to involve
- Leadership Approval



Safety Budgeting Basics:

Speaking the Business Language

- How Businesses View Budgets
- Budgets are strategic planning tools, not just spending limits
- Leaders balance short-term execution with long-term risk and value
- Every dollar competes for priority against growth, operations, and risk reduction



Key Budgeting & Accounting Concepts

Budget vs. Forecast

- **Budget:** approved financial plan for the year
- **Forecast:** updated estimate based on actuals and new information
- **Actual Costs (Actuals):** What has truly been spent to date
- **Variance:** Difference between budget/forecast and actuals (favorable or unfavorable)



Key Budgeting & Accounting Concepts

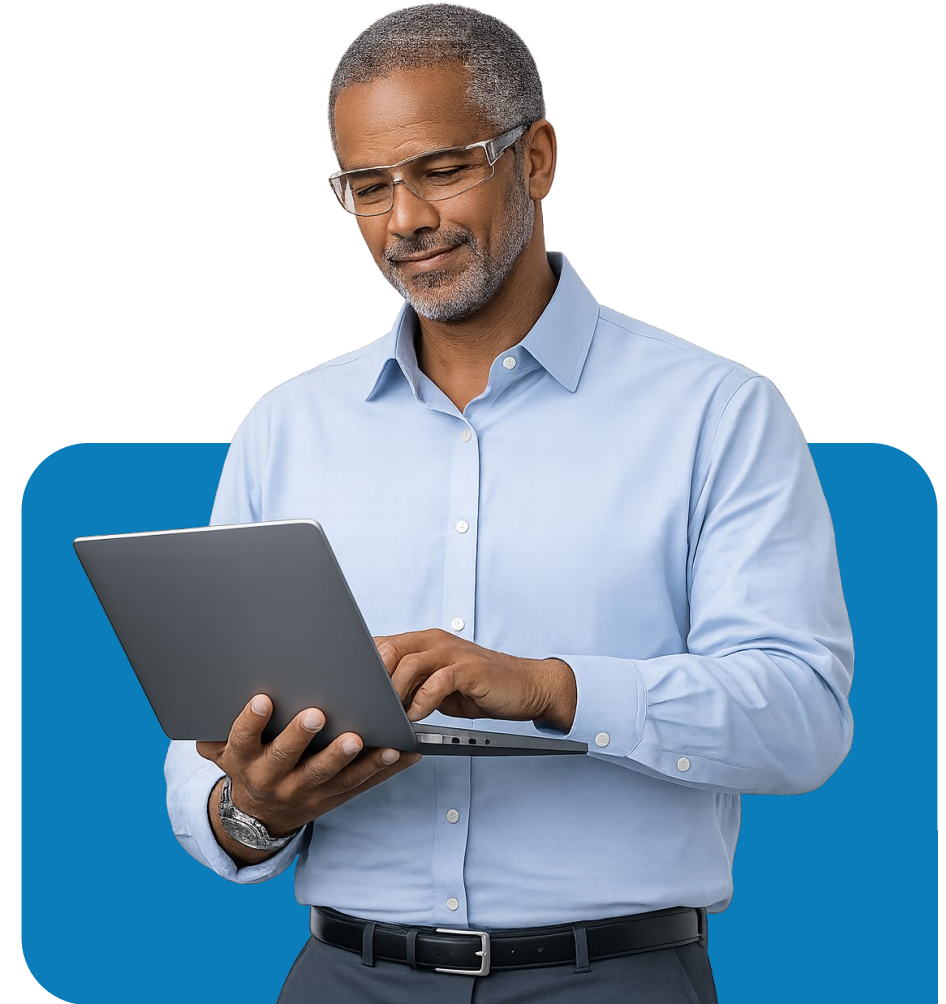
Operating (OpEx) vs. Capital (CapEx)

- **OpEx:** ongoing safety costs (training, PPE, travel)
- **CapEx:** long-term investments (equipment, systems, facility upgrades)
- **Cost Center:** Where EHS costs are tracked and reviewed
- **Quarterly Reviews & Budget Close:** Regular checkpoints to adjust plans and formally close periods



What Finance & Executives Expect

- Clear forecasting based on data, trends, and planned activities
- Fully loaded costs, especially for people (salary + benefits + taxes + overhead)
- Early visibility into risks, overruns, or new needs
- Justification tied to risk, compliance, or ROI
- Consistency between budget, forecast, and actuals
- No surprises late in the year



What EHS Often Misses (and Why it Matters)

EHS Common Miss

1. Budgeting only direct costs
2. Forgetting benefits, taxes, overhead
3. Treating budget as “set and forget”
4. Requesting funds late in the year
5. Framing asks as “nice to have”
6. Not planning for growth, employee turnover, or new hires

Why it Matters

1. Finance plans for total cost, not partial views
2. Understates the real cost of adding staff or programs
3. Finance expects ongoing reforecasting
4. Seen as poor planning, even if the need is valid
5. Leaders prioritize risk reduction and business impact
6. Cost calculations change with increasing headcount, and turnover. Headcount changes require long lead times.



Best-Practice Mindset for EHS Budgeting

- Plan for today's work and tomorrow's risk
- Assume headcount and scope will grow—and capture the full cost
- Use quarterly reviews to adjust, not apologize
- Translate safety needs into business impact language
- A no today isn't a no forever



Bottom Line: Strong safety budgets don't just protect people – they demonstrate disciplined planning and credibility with Finance.

Building your Budget



Building the Budget: EHS Investment Justification Toolkit Instructions



Purpose

Use this document and the applicable example worksheet to build a clear, financially grounded justification that connects safety needs to business priorities, budget reality, and leadership expectations.

What's Included

The toolkit includes this document and three examples:

- **Physical equipment:** Eye Protection Expense Justification Worksheet (PPE standardization, injury cost offset, vendor comparison, cross-functional budgeting).
- **Service:** Audiometric Testing Expense Justification Worksheet (OSHA 1910.95, STS tracking/retesting, mobile vs. clinic cost modeling, labor impact).
- **Software/Technology:** EHS Software Purchase Justification Worksheet (SaaS vs. capital framing, IT governance, implementation costs, efficiency ROI, visibility/controls).



Expense Justification Worksheet: Service Example: Audiometric Testing

Use this worksheet to justify audiometric testing and hearing conservation program testing costs (baseline/annual, retesting, physician review, mobile/clinic options).

1. What is the Request?

Category:

☐ Equipment
☐ Services
☐ Software/Technology

Additional Categorization of the Type of Request:

☐ New program	☐ Expansion of existing program
☐ Replacement/Upgrade	☐ Compliance/Conformance driven
☐ Vendor change	☐ Technology/Recordkeeping upgrade

What are you requesting?

Who is it for?

The Why (check all that apply)

☐ OSHA Compliance _____ (list regulation, ex: 29 CFR 1910.95, below)	☐ Other regulatory compliance (not OSHA), list below
☐ Workers' comp cost control	☐ Risk mitigation
☐ Operational efficiency/Uptime	☐ Culture/Workforce engagement
☐ Client/Contract requirement	☐ Insurance recommendation
☐ Other: _____	☐ Injury reduction/Cost avoidance



Expense Justification Worksheet: Physical Equipment Example: Eye Protection

Use this worksheet to develop an executive-ready justification for eye protection (standard safety glasses, prescription program, goggles/face shields, vending/issuance).

1. What is the Request?

Category:

☐ Equipment
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Additional Categorization of the Type of Request:

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What are you requesting?

Who is it for?

The Why (check all that apply)

☐ OSHA Compliance _____ (list regulation, ex: 29 CFR 1910.133, below)	☐ Injury reduction/Cost avoidance
☐ Workers' comp cost control	☐ Risk mitigation
☐ Operational efficiency/Uptime	☐ Culture/Workforce engagement
☐ Client/Contract requirement	☐ Insurance recommendation
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other regulatory compliance (not OSHA)

If this a compliance gap closure/compliance driven/conformance driven, explain compliance issue throughout this worksheet and list regulations/policies here.



Expense Justification Worksheet: Software/Technology Example: EHS Software

Use this worksheet to justify an EHS software purchase (incident management, audits/inspections, corrective actions, training tracking, dashboards).

1. What is the Request?

Category:

☐ Equipment
☐ Services
☐ Software/Technology

Additional Categorization of the Type of Request:

☐ New program/System	☐ Expansion of existing system
☐ Replacement/Upgrade	☐ Compliance/Conformance driven
☐ Vendor change	☐ Technology/Recordkeeping upgrade
☐ Consolidation (vendors, tools, sheets)	

What are you requesting?

Who is it for?

The Why/What Problem(s) are we Trying to Solve? (check all that apply)

☐ Incident/Near-miss management	☐ Audit and inspection management
☐ Corrective actions tracking	☐ Training tracking
☐ SDS management	☐ Industrial hygiene data
☐ Analytics and dashboard	☐ Mobile reporting
☐ Worker's comp cost control	☐ Risk mitigation
☐ Operational efficiency/Uptime	☐ Culture/Workforce engagement

Typical EHS Categories

Equip./PPE

- Safety glasses
- Hardhats
- PPE



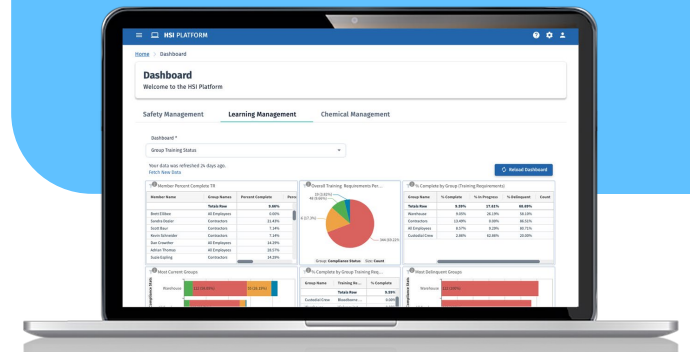
Services

- Audiometric testing
- Industrial Hygiene studies
- Arc flash studies



Software

- EHS Platform
- Worker training
- SDS/Chemical management



Considerations

Steps to Build the Budget

- What is the request?
- Current State
- Financial Planning/Fully Loaded Program Cost
- Budget and Controls
- Vendor and Procurement Checklist
- Cross-Functional Alignment





Worksheet:

EHS Software Purchase Justification

Use this worksheet to justify an EHS software purchase (incident management, audits/inspections, corrective actions, training tracking, dashboards).

1. What is the Request?

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☐ Worker's comp cost control	☐ Risk mitigation
☐ Operational efficiency/Uptime	☐ Culture/Workforce engagement

Example: Software



Collaborators:

Who to involve in this process

- Finance Dept
- Human Resources
- Operations
- Risk Management/Benefits Administrators (related vendors)
- Procurement (can also help with Vendors/Contractors)
- IT Dept
- Legal
- Other EHS Professionals/ Similar Businesses

Obtaining Leadership Approval

- Frame the ask: speak to leadership priorities
 - Risk Management
 - Cost Control
 - Operational protection
- Who owns the process & follow-up
- How to deal with “NO”
- How to present:
 - Start with ask, summary, main points
 - When asked, provide details and data to support



Leadership Presentation Outline

- Executive Summary
- The Ask (Proposed Solution)
- Business Need
- Current Pain Points
- Cost Summary
- Business Value / ROI
- Risk Reduction
- Executive Recommendation



The EHS Budget Playbook



Scan Here

for resources page

<https://goto.hsi.com/safety-budget-webinar>

Helps us with a webinar-focused Podcast episode!

Jon and Jill will deep dive into budgeting challenges and questions from today's webinar.

Email us your suggestions/examples:
marketing@hsi.com

Thank you!



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