

## John Luke: A True Leader in the World of Safety

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Last month I had the distinct privilege to attend a presentation given by John Luke for the National Safety Council, where he covered many of the changes that the 2009 edition of the NFPA 70E has brought to the world of electrical safety training.

I rode with John to Iowa City, where the conference was taking place. The conversation in the truck was all about safety on the job, and how important he felt it was to train our employees. He talked passionately about wanting to keep our employees safe, and how important he felt it was to constantly inform them, so

that each and every person in our ESCO family could go home at night, unharmed from the inherent hazards that can be found so easily in our industry.

We arrived at the new Marriott Hotel just outside of Coralville, and John quickly unloaded all of his presentation gear onto a compact cart and wheeled it inside. It was strange to see him in his suit and necktie, and not his usual fire-resistant, beige shirt and blue jeans. As we entered into the building, I could see an astute professionalism and an informed confidence appear, yet still enveloped by his usual jovial personality.

That's when it happened... John Luke turned into a celebrity. People wandering the corridors between sessions would glance up and see him, and head directly for him to shake his hand or ask him a question. Safety Directors from all over made a beeline to talk to him, to quiz him, or just to say hello. One of the OSHA inspectors made his way over to address John and proceeded to tell all of us standing within hearing distance of how John has been ahead of the game for over 20 years, and that John was definitely an expert in the field of electrical safety training. The respect and admiration for John was evident in each person who approached him, and in John's manner, it was returned with a big smile and rigorous handshake.

No joke... at this point, I was prepared to see people whip out hard hats and shock-resistant gloves for him to sign his autograph to, while young safety directors would throw their fire-resistant shirts at him, with lighters burning high in the air and tears flowing down their faces. Well, maybe it wasn't quite to that level, but John definitely was in the limelight and handled it in his genuine, humble way.

John set up for his presentation and then stood before a room of 50, or more, and presented his material. He knew what he needed to say within that hour-timeslot, and covered as much as he could with lucid and direct information. The room was silent and the eyes were focused, pens were put to paper, writing notes, preparing questions, and hanging on every word. John could have stayed for hours and still would have had an attentive audience, but the conference schedule had other plans, and alas, the room emptied.

We all know, and have known for years, that John knows the rules. We all know that John can recite the NFPA 70E book, telling you the page number on which each sentence appears. We all know that John can tell you how to stay safe on the jobsite, and can be a stickler about what's right and what not right. But, what I think we may not all know is the impact that John Luke has made on safety training throughout this region, and to some extent, the country. His passion to try to keep employees safe has touched many other companies and people, than just our ESCO family and our local clients. His presence and knowledge matches his concern for people, and has made him a true leader in the world of Safety.

Lynn Hamrick and John Luke have put together amazing safety training material that is relevant and important to give to people working in the electrical industry. For me, witnessing John's influence on that large group of professionals was an awakening experience. It made me realize that not only is this an abundant field for The ESCO Group to promote, but there is another side to this business unit – a concern for employees everywhere. Marketing ESCO Safety is something in which we can all take enormous pride. Please feel free to contact me, John Luke, or Tom Miller if you have further questions on promoting our safety services.

For more information on our local chapter of the National Safety Council, please visit: [www.iisc.org](http://www.iisc.org).