

Strengthening Wyoming Small Systems Through Collaboration and Workforce Planning

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

Casper, WY | 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM Mountain Time

S Syracuse University
College of Engineering
& Computer Science
Environmental Finance Center



efc.syr.edu

Continuing Education Credits

This training is approved for:

**4.0 hours in any area (W, D, WW, C) by Wyoming DEQ
(2026.1586)**



To receive credit and/or a certificate:

- You must **sign in** and attend for the **entire session**
- You must register and attend using your real name and unique email address
- Certificates will be sent via email within 30 days



*If you have questions
or need assistance,
please contact
smallsystems@syr.edu*



Averi Davis

Program Manager

E: adavis02@syr.edu

📍 Syracuse, NY

Who We Are

Founded in 1993, the Syracuse University Environmental Finance Center (SU-EFC) provides expert guidance and support to communities across the Northeast and Caribbean by helping them secure water infrastructure funding, develop shovel-ready projects, and navigate state and federal financing.



About EFCN

The **Environmental Finance Center Network (EFCN)** is a university- and non-profit-based organization creating innovative solutions to the difficult how-to-pay issues of environmental protection and water infrastructure.



EFCN Offerings



State Trainings
(CEUs offered)



National
Webinars



Technical
Assistance



Tools &
Resources



Blogs



Educational
Videos



Podcasts

efcnetwork.org

Overview of Today's Training

Mentimeter Activity: What's Keeping You Up at Night?

1. What Makes People Stay? Key Retention Drivers
2. Preparing for Workforce Transitions
3. **15-min Break**
4. Creating Interest in Water Careers: Recruitment Strategies
5. Collaborative Solutions for Small Systems
6. **Peer Roundtable** (Q&A + *facilitated discussion*)
7. Reflections, Resources, & Wrap-up



An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant, featuring several large circular aeration tanks with radial internal structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "The Why" is centered in white.

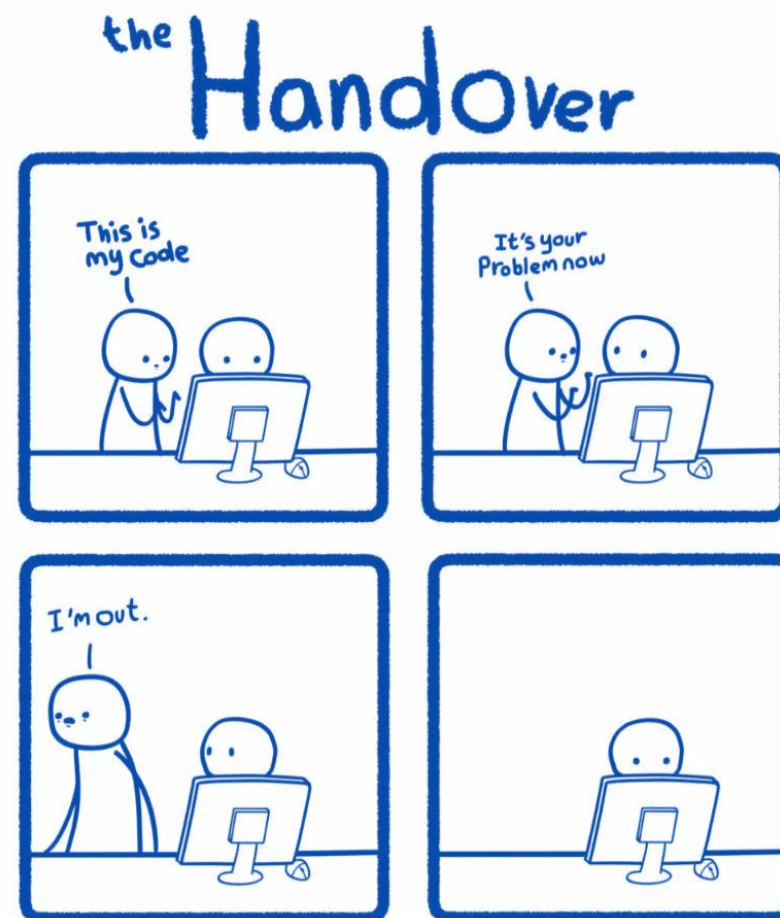
The Why





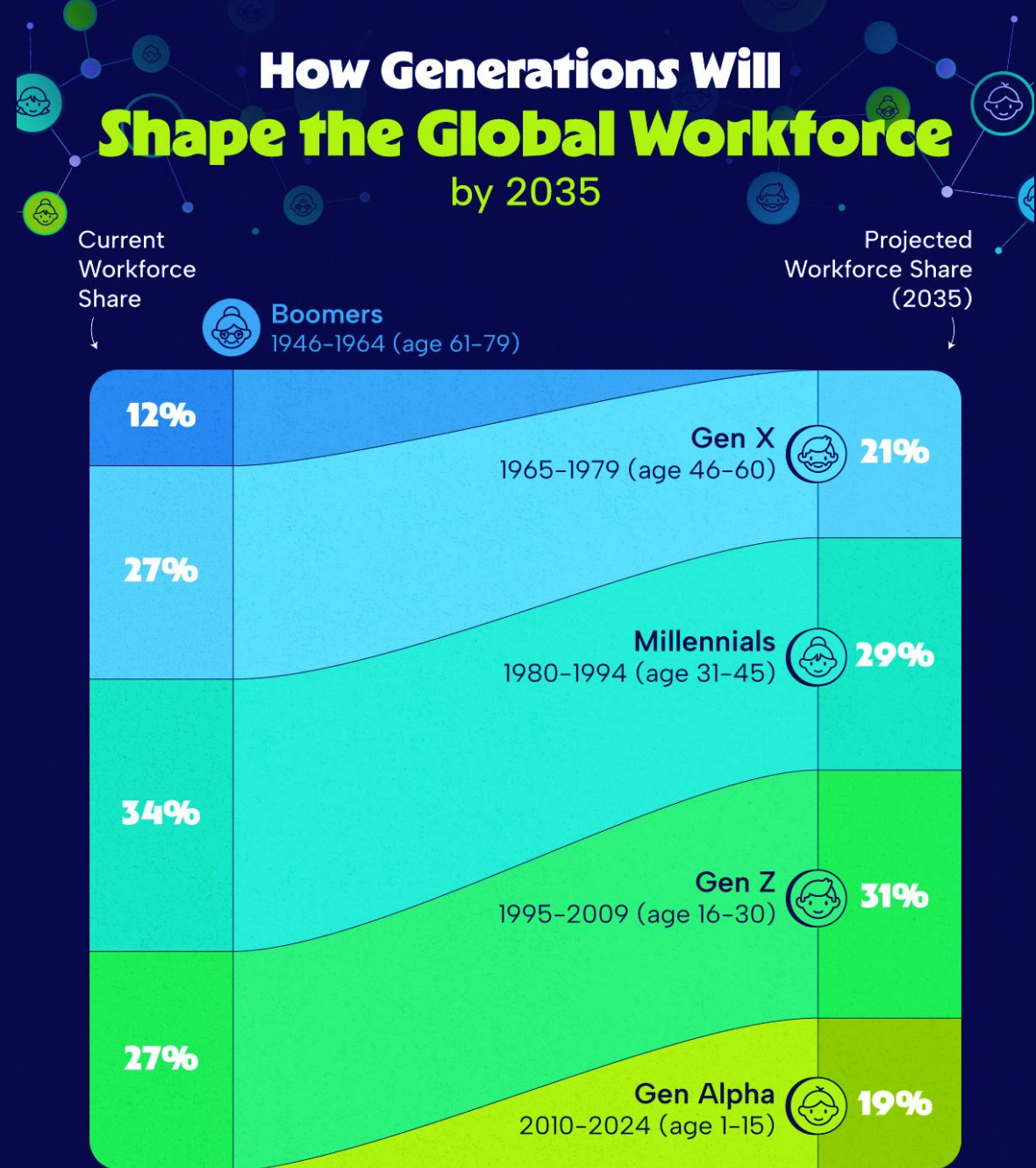
Higher consequences, fewer safety nets

- ~85% of U.S. water utilities have three or fewer staff
- **Public health at stake.** Turnover-related gaps can lead to **system failures** or **water quality issues**

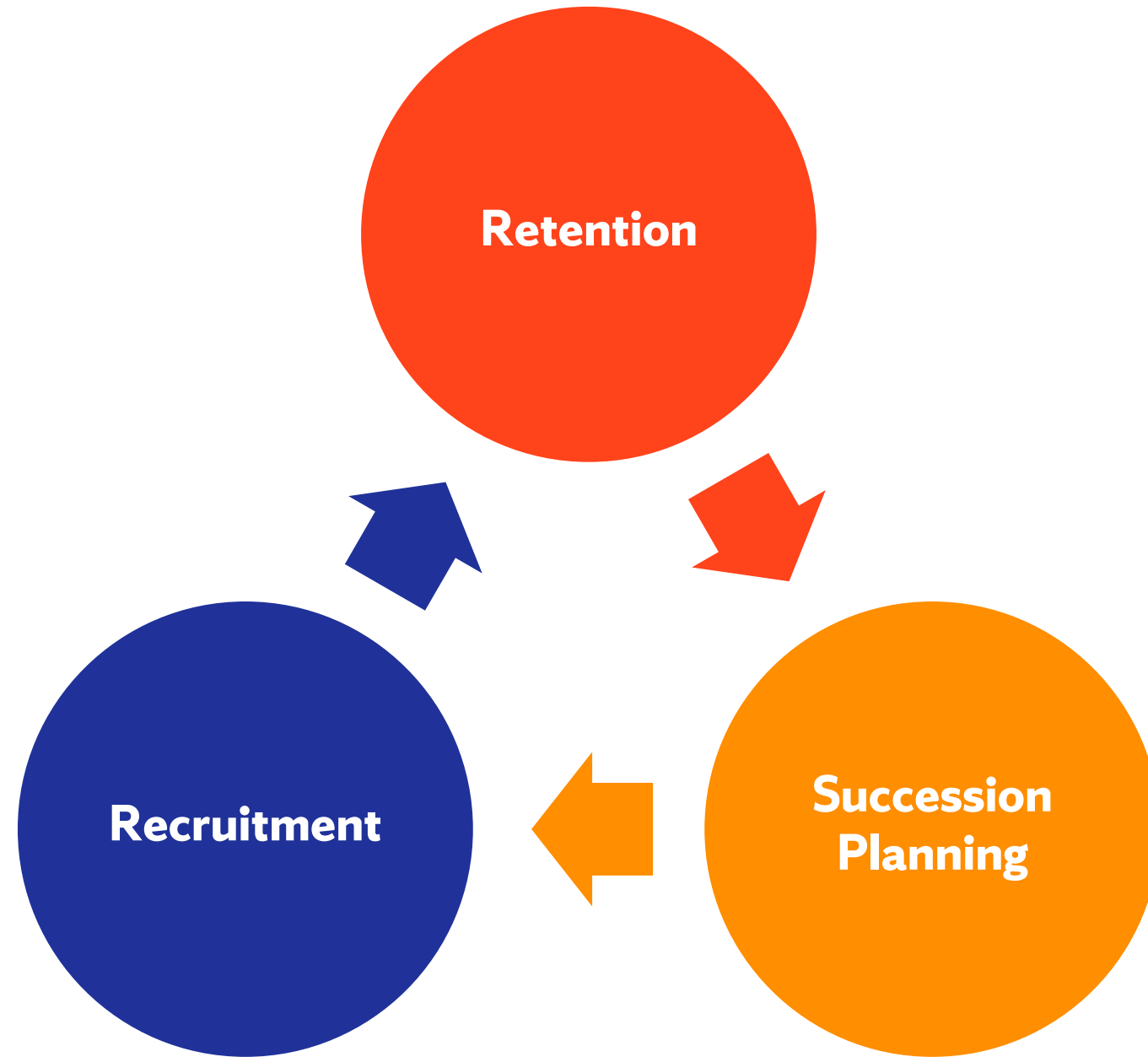


The workforce is changing

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/charted-how-generations-will-shape-the-workforce-by-2035/>



Workforce Planning



What's Keeping You Up at Night?



Mentimeter

**WHEN IT'S
YOUR TURN**



**TO INTRODUCE
YOURSELF TO THE GROUP**

Two Ways to Participate:



*Scan the QR code using
your phone camera*



**Go to www.menti.com and
enter the code **8571 8072****



What Makes People Stay? Key Drivers of Retention and Workplace Satisfaction

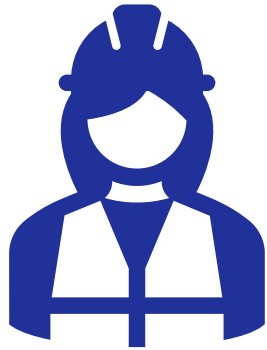
Workforce Retention

“An organization’s ability to prevent **employee turnover**, or the number of people who leave their job in a certain period, either voluntarily or involuntarily.”

Source: netsuite.com

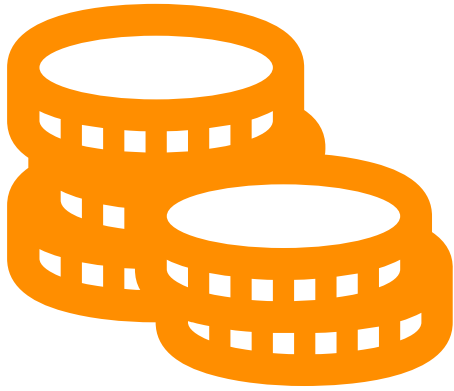


Why focus on retention?



**42% of workplace
turnover is preventable**

Why focus on retention?



**Retaining your current staff
will always be less costly
than hiring new ones**

The Exit Journey: What Did the Organization Do to Intervene?

In the three months before leaving, did your manager or another leader talk to you about **any** of the following topics?

■ % Selected



WF Q4 2023, U.S. Employees MOE: ± 6 points. Results are among U.S. employees who had voluntarily changed their job in the past year.



How do you know if you're doing well?

Try this easy formula:

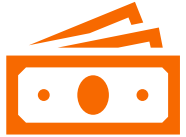
(# of employees at the **end** of a set time period / # of employees at the **start** of a set time period)

x 100 = retention rate %

? Why do you stay at your current job?



Common Reasons We Stay



Fair pay & benefits



Growth & advancement



Supportive culture



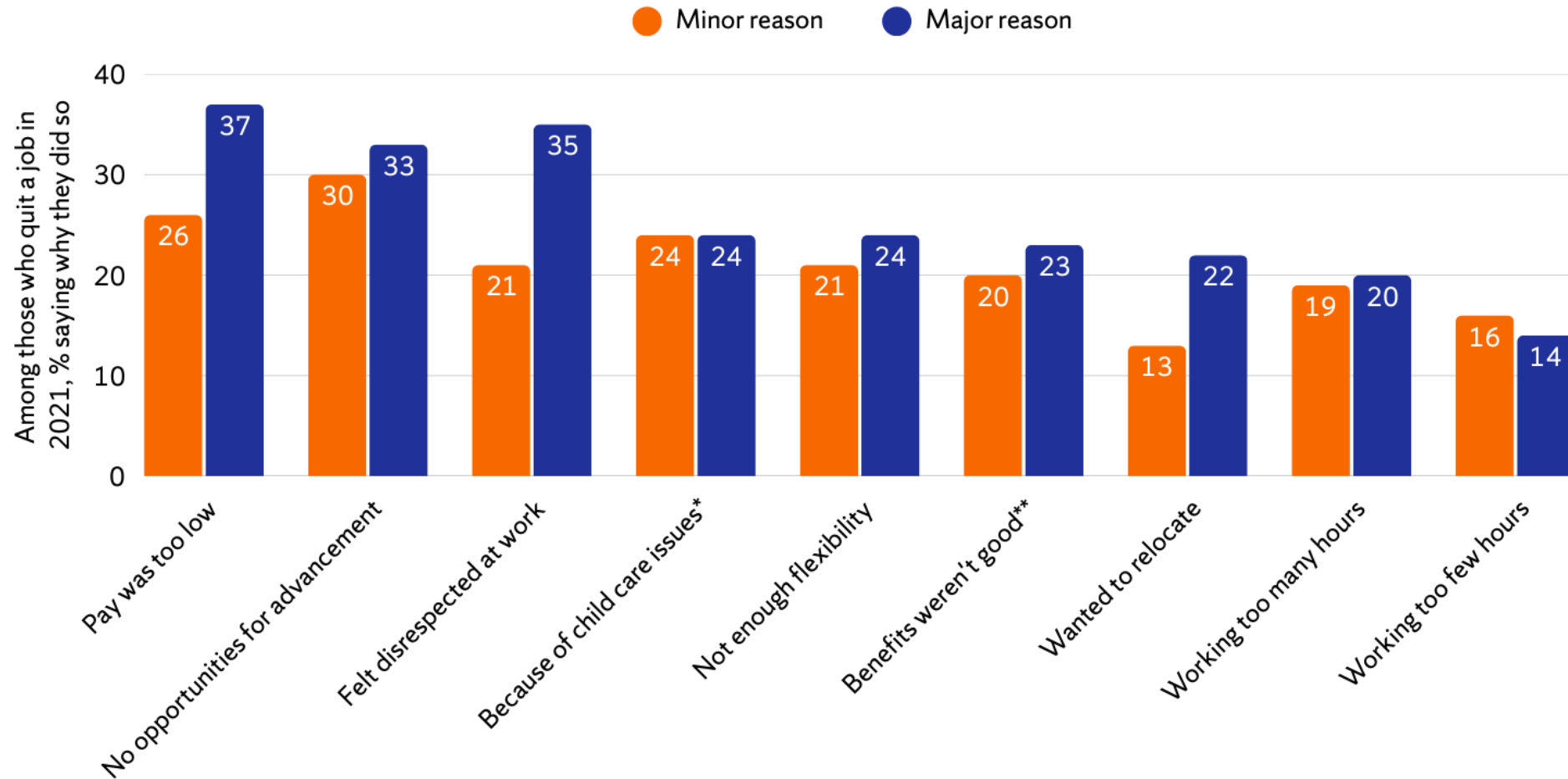
Flexibility



Feeling valued



What Makes People Leave?



Top reasons why U.S. workers left a job in 2021

Source: Pew Research Center

Compensation Isn't Just Pay



Health
Benefits



Retirement



Vacation
Time



Sick Days



Parental
Leave



Flexible
Schedule



Tele-
commuting



Wellness



Training
Stipends



License
Renewal

Total compensation = all the ways you support your employees

People Stay Where They Feel Respected and Valued

- Positive team culture = higher retention
- **Respect**, frequent communication, and trust matter
- Help staff feel heard and supported



Good pay will never solve a toxic work environment



But how do you create a culture of respect?



Open door policies and communication



Leading by example



Celebrating achievements



Practicing active listening



Constructive feedback and goal setting



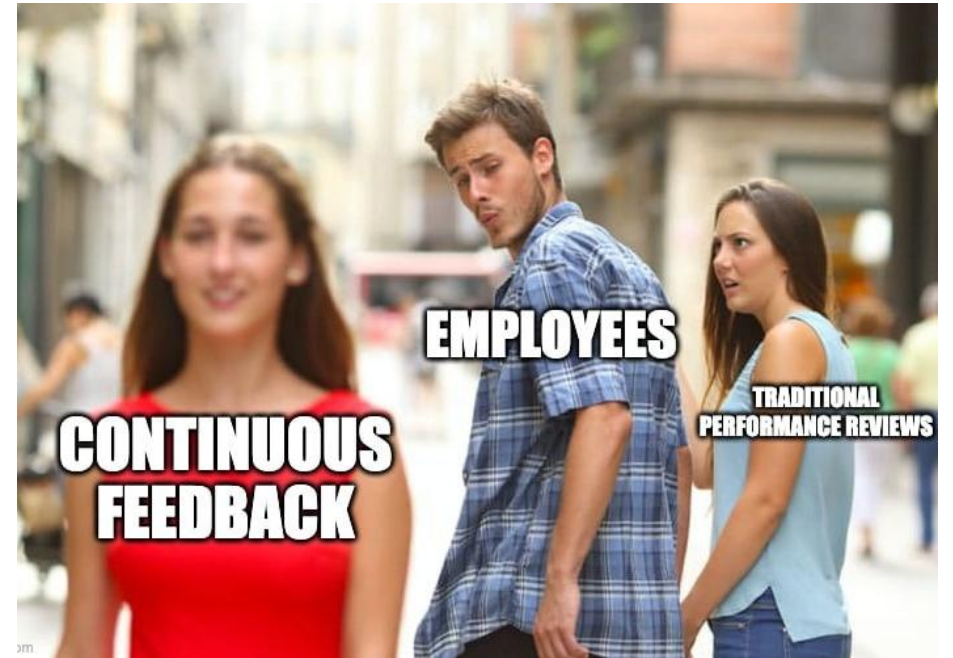
Physical Comfort & Workplace Safety

- Make controlled spaces more livable (break rooms, bathrooms, workstations)
- Keep spaces clean, warm, and well-stocked
- Prioritize **workplace safety**

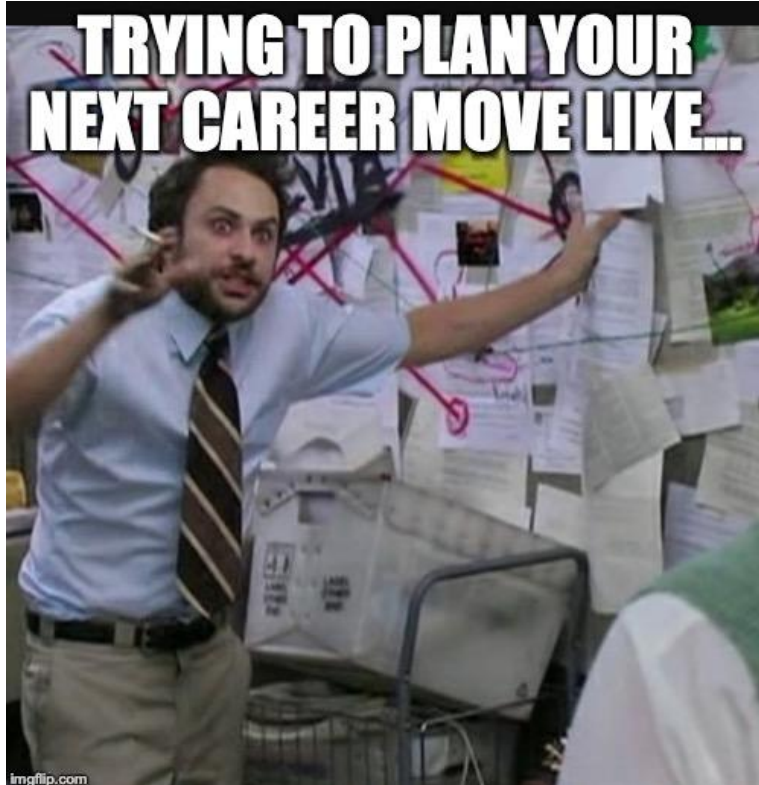


Recognition and Feedback

- Don't wait for annual reviews! Give (or ask for) feedback in real time
- Frequent, meaningful feedback builds trust and loyalty
- Recognition is (usually) **free**



Offer Growth and Career Pathways



- Encourage training and development
- Talk about long-term goals and advancement pathways during check-ins
- Let staff know you see their potential

Career ladders = retention ladders

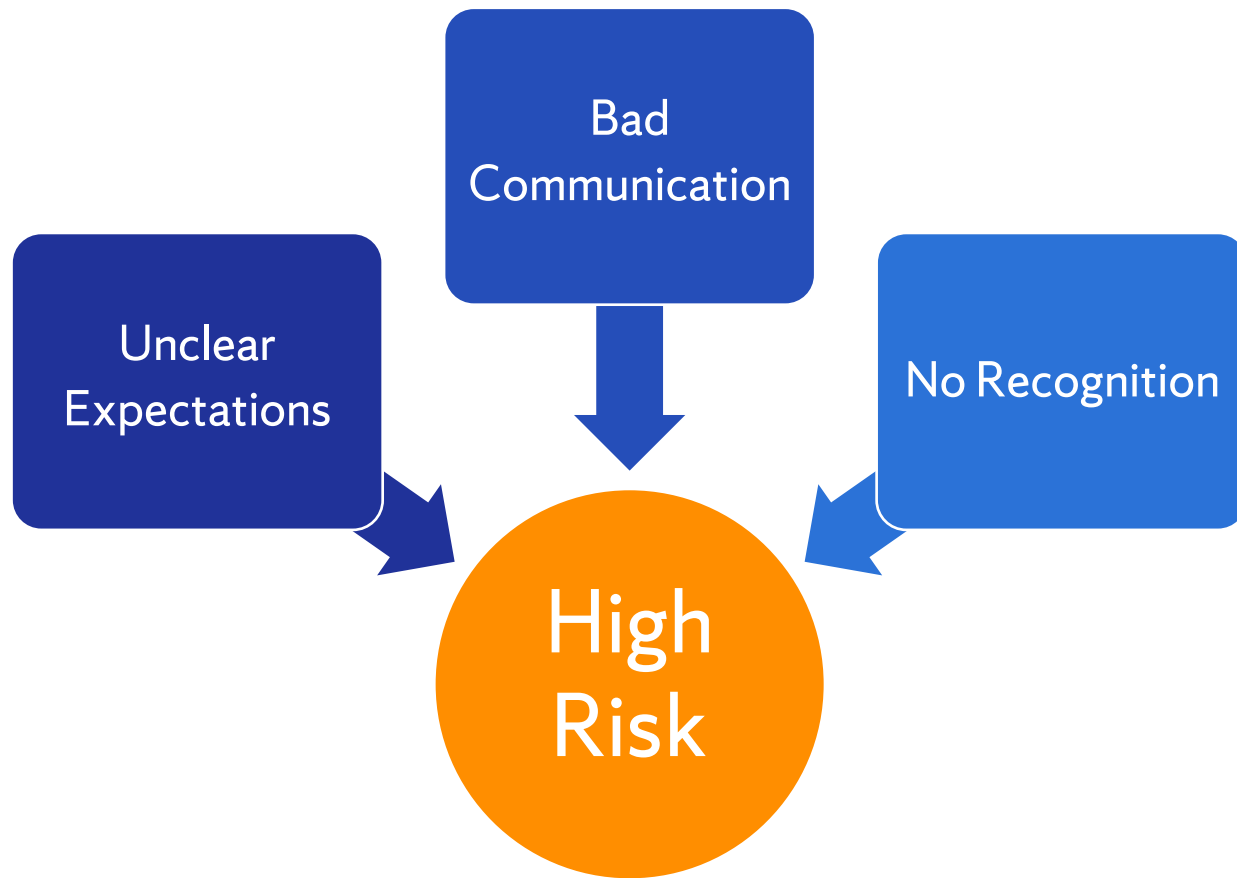
Wrap-Around Supports: Meeting Real Life Needs



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Management Matters

“People Don’t Quit Jobs, They Quit Managers”



- Poor management is a top driver of turnover
- Great managers build loyalty and retention
- People management deserves training!

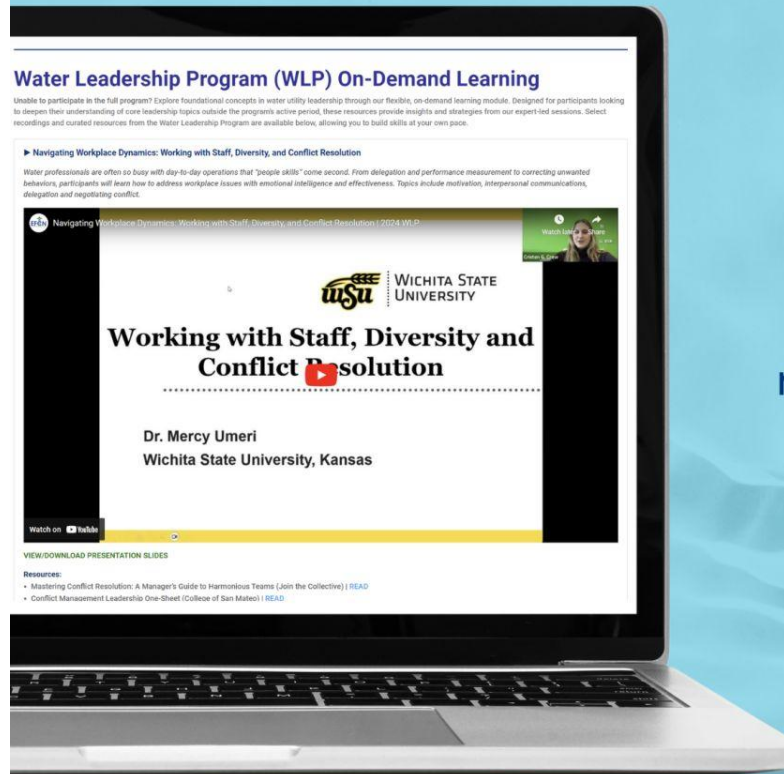
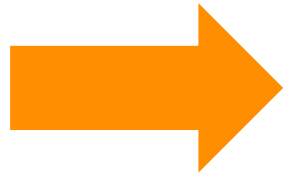


On-Demand Leadership Learning

Curated materials from
the *EFCN Water
Leadership Program*

Visit:

efcnetwork.org/water-leadership-program



Water Leadership Program: On-Demand Learning Module

Enhance your water utility
leadership skills with our
**NEW On-Demand Learning
Module!** Access expert
insights and curated
resources at your own pace.

LEARN MORE



efcnetwork.org/water-leadership-program





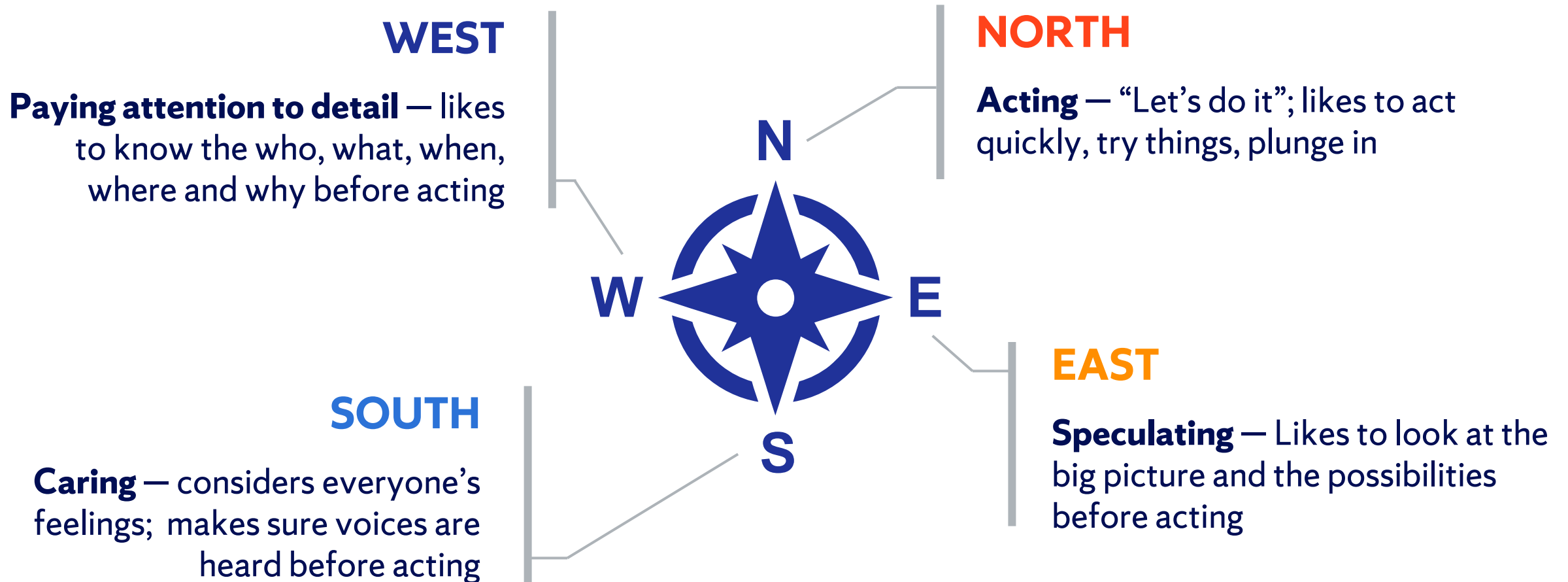
Turning Differences into Team Strengths

Why it Matters for Workforce Retention

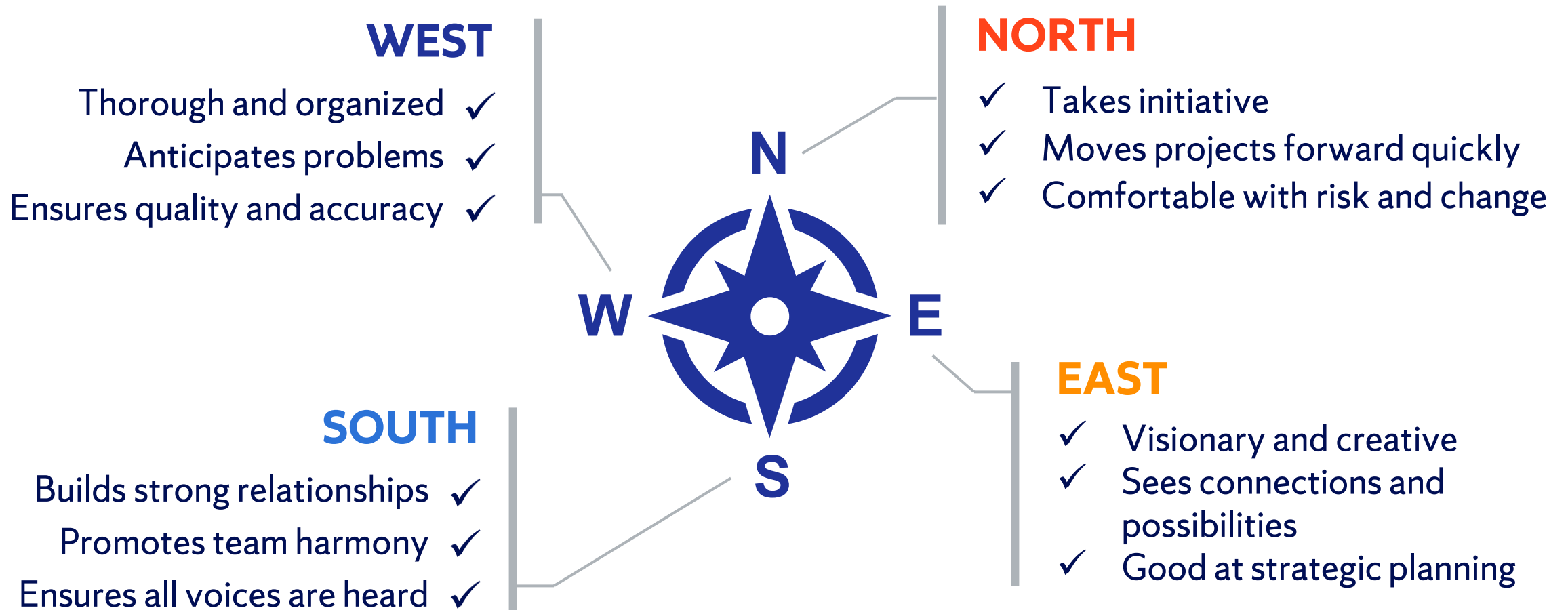


- We stay where we feel understood, valued, and able to use our **natural strengths**
- Diverse personality types bring **balance** to teams
- Feeling **appreciated** leads to higher job satisfaction and reduced conflict

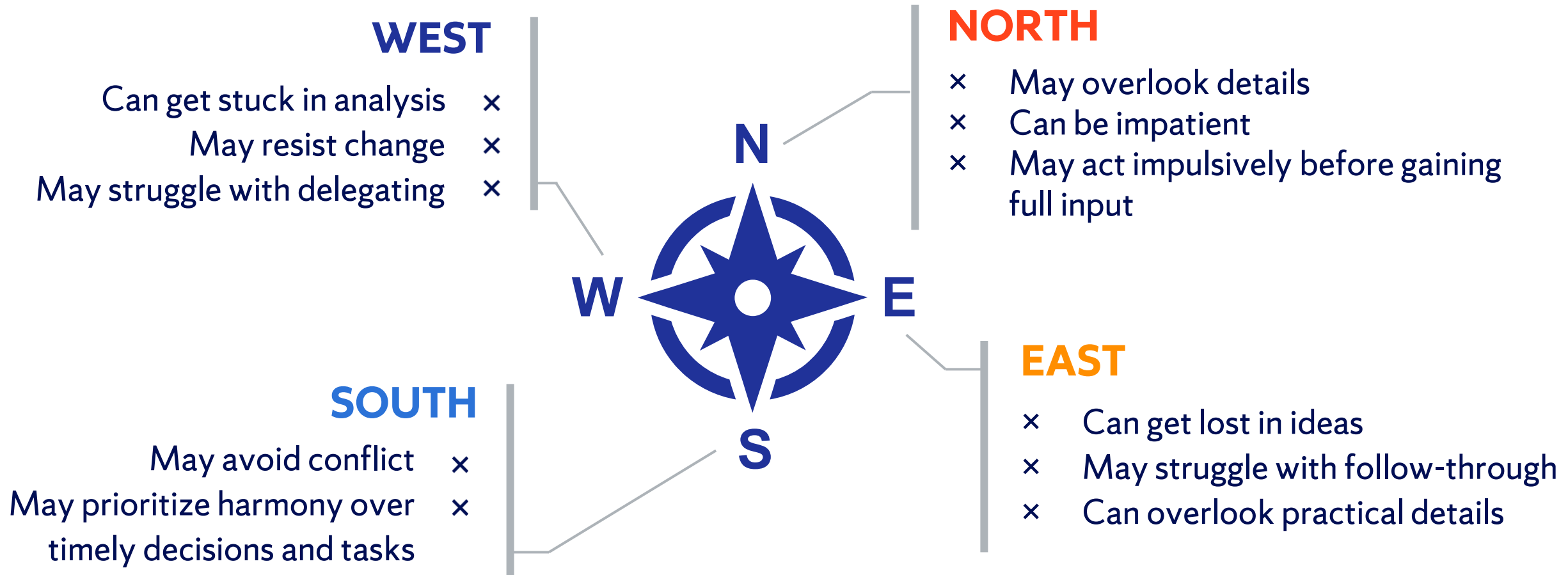
The Personality Compass



The Personality Compass - Strengths



The Personality Compass - Weaknesses





Discussion Questions

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your type?
2. What type do you find most difficult to work with and why?
3. **How should your type adapt to work with others?**
4. **How should others' types adapt to work with you?**





Preparing for Workforce Transitions: Succession Planning

DON'T YOU
THINK WE'RE
CUTTING IT KIND
OF CLOSE?

**JILL'S RETIREMENT PARTY
AND SUCCESSION PLANNING
KICKOFF MEETING**



What is Succession Planning?

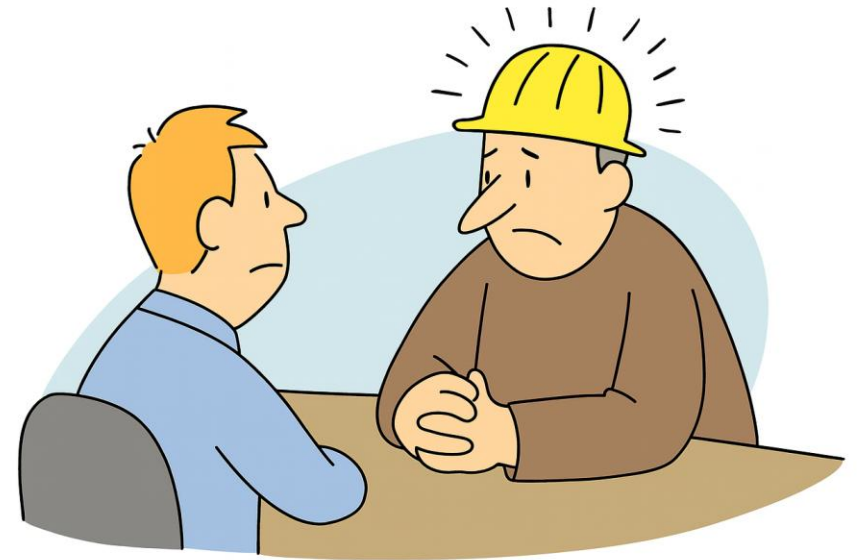
Someday, all of this could be yours, but I still haven't created a succession plan...



A systematic approach to **ensure continuity** by identifying potential successors for **critical work positions**

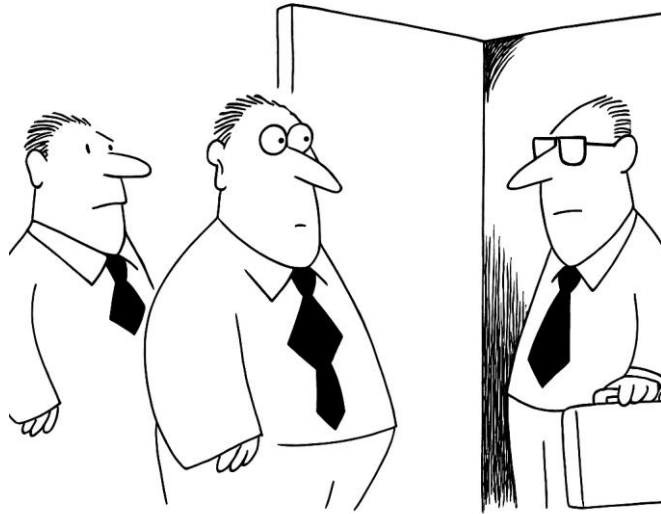
Benefits of Succession Planning

- Ensures skilled employees for key positions
- Supports employee development and advancement
- Avoid service disruptions
- Facilitates knowledge transfer
- Improves employee retention

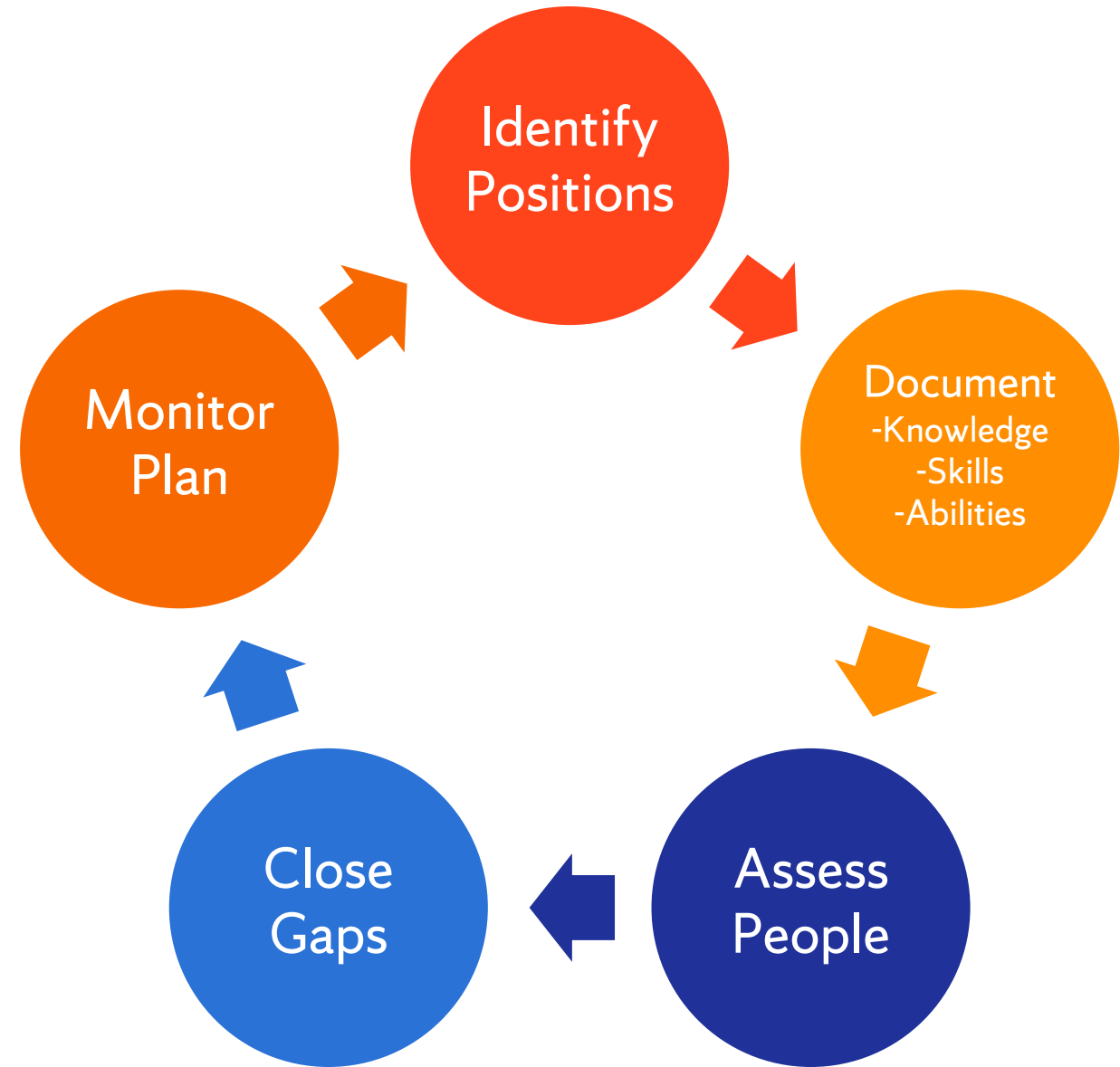


Our succession plan is we don't talk about it.

Developing a Succession Plan



"That's the closet for our backup CFO."



Start With Goal Setting



Example

River Falls, WI

2019-2023

River Falls Water Utility Business Plan



Objective: Invest in Employee Training

- Evaluate appropriate training levels.
Identifying the appropriate trainings for employees to give them the best tools to supplement the organization.

Objective: Invest in Workforce Flexibility and Efficiency

- Review the roles of employees to eliminate redundancies.
Assess duties, job titles, and job descriptions of utility workers to support and enhance organizational, City, and customer needs. Promotion of a positive

**Service
Population:**
4.5k

Conduct a Gap Analysis



- Next 5-10 years
- Focus on critical tasks
- Community demographics
- Regulatory changes



Pick Your Target



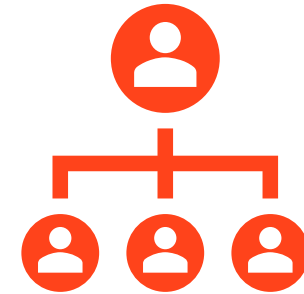
Individual

Understand how an employee's current strengths align with the skills needed for their role



Team

Identify where team abilities meet or fall short of what's required to deliver key functions



Organization

Evaluate whether your overall workforce has the capacity to meet present and future demands

Pinpoint Important Skills

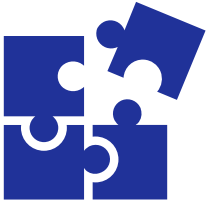


Identify the **knowledge, skills,** and **abilities** each role should have





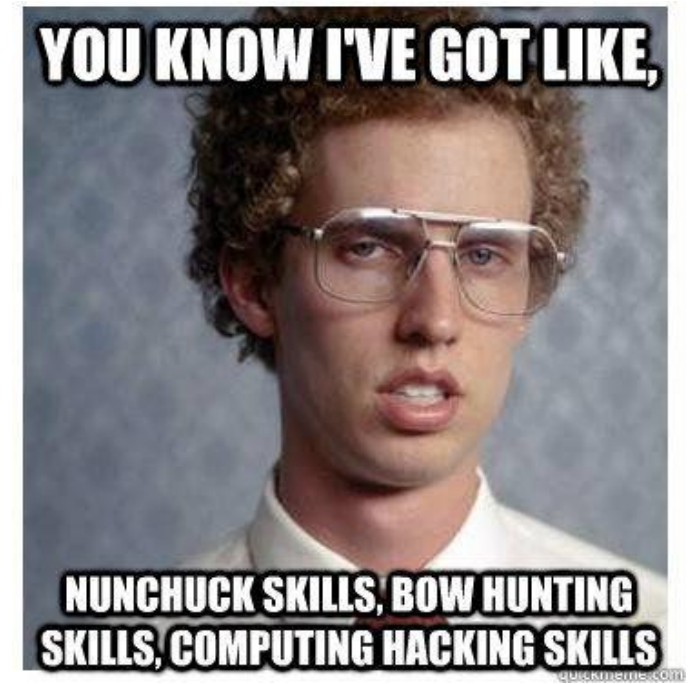
Compare to Current Skills



Look for gaps between what's needed and what staff can do today.

Not sure what skills you already have? Use:

- Staff surveys
- One-on-one conversations
- Supervisor input and performance reviews
- Training needs assessments





Prioritize the Most Critical Skills

Which skills matter the most?

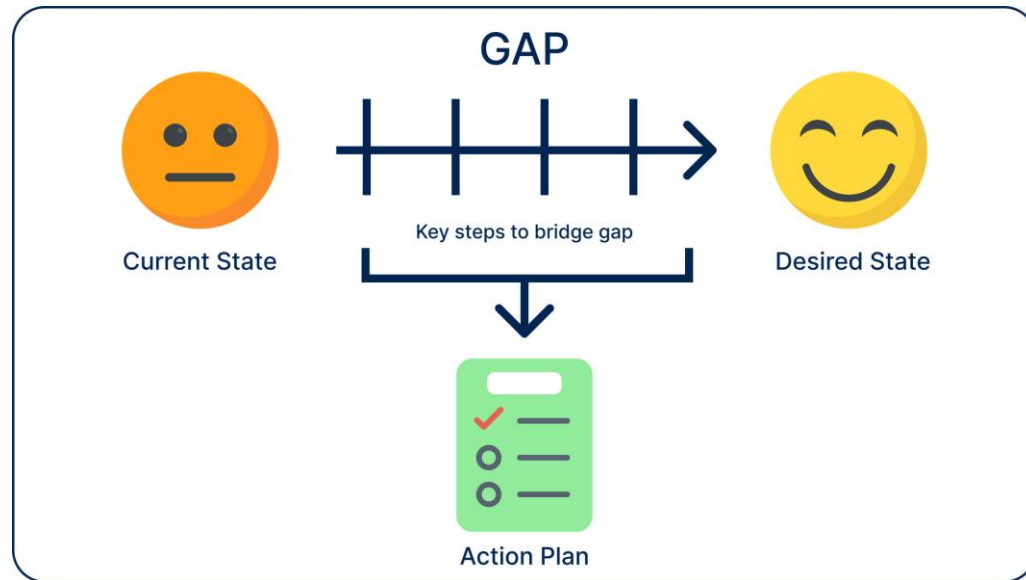
Ask yourself:

- *Is this gap affecting performance, safety, or compliance?*
- *How much time, money, or risk is involved?*
- *Is this skill needed soon due to retirements, regulations, or system upgrades?*





Plan to Bridge the Gap



Consider a mix of strategies:

- *Hiring*
- *Mentorship*
- *Training and development*

Choose the right tools based on urgency, budget, and available resources.

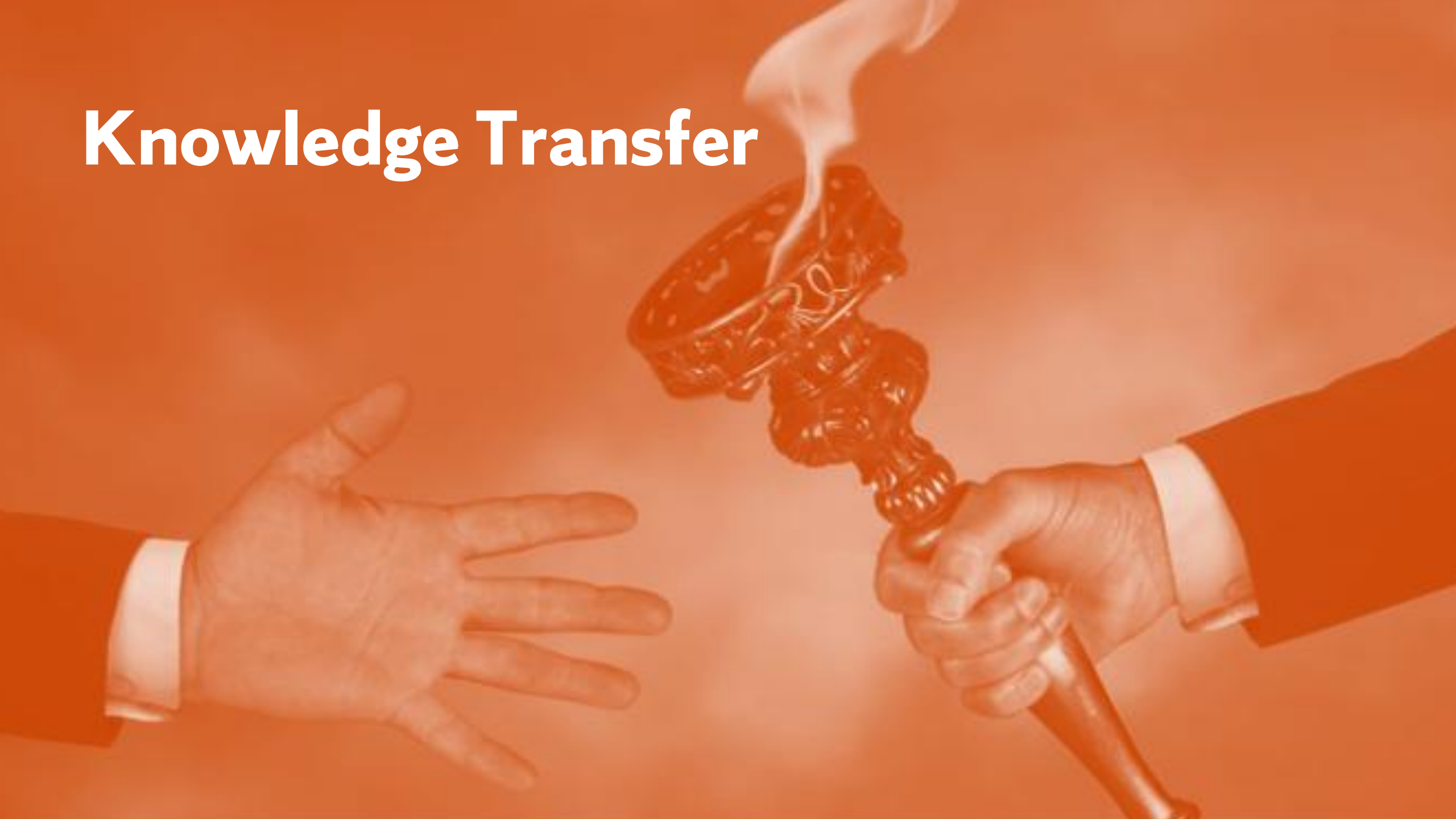
Resources for Training & Staff Development



Rocky Mountain Water
Environment Association
Elevating Water Professionals

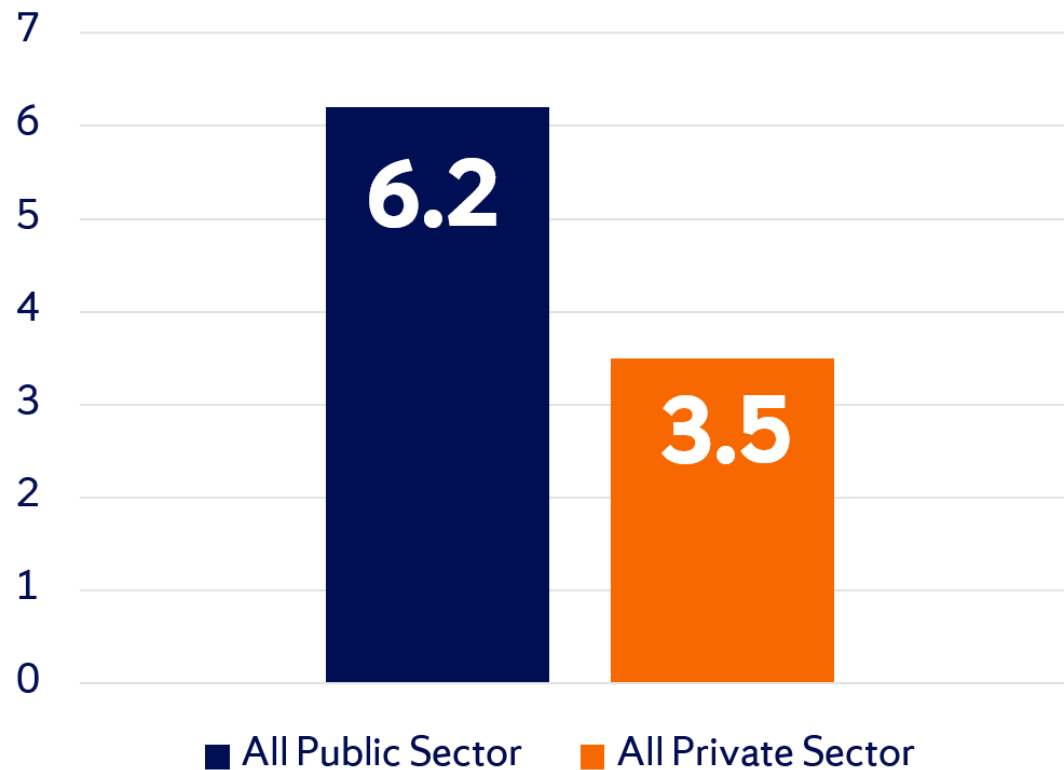


Knowledge Transfer



Turnover Hurts More When Experience Runs Deep

Median Years of Tenure for Wage and Salary Workers in January 2024



Employees with long tenure carry unique, **practice-based expertise** built through experience



New hires may take up to **two years** to reach the productivity level of departing experienced staff

Organizational Impact ↑



MEDIUM RISK

Employees that are **unlikely** to leave soon, but if they were to leave, the impact would be **significant**



HIGH RISK

Employees that are **more likely** to leave soon, but if they were to leave, the impact would be **significant**



LOW RISK

Employees that are **unlikely** to leave soon, but if they were to leave, the impact would be **minor**



MEDIUM RISK

Employees that are **more likely** to leave soon, but if they were to leave, the impact would be **minor**

Probability of Vacancy →

Explicit vs. Tacit Knowledge

Explicit Knowledge:

- ✓ Manuals
- ✓ Documents
- ✓ Procedures
- ✓ How-To-Guides
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Databases
- ✓ How-To-Guides
- ✓ Notes
- ✓ Records

Tacit Knowledge:

- ✓ Individual Skill
- ✓ Expertise
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Experience
- ✓ Ideas
- ✓ Insights
- ✓ Intuition
- ✓ Observations
- ✓ Cultural Beliefs
- ✓ Values
- ✓ Attitudes
- ✓ Mental Models



*Readily transferrable
to others*

*Known but not always
articulated*

Methods for Transferring Knowledge



- Overlapping positions
- Desk manuals
- Pictures & video
- Interviews
- Work teams
- Job shadowing

Files & Documents



Manuals



Maps



Photos



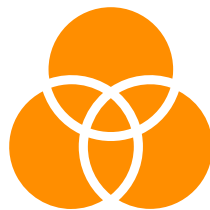
Videos



Notebooks



GIS



*System
Diagrams*



*As-built
drawings*



Policy Guides

Training & Development



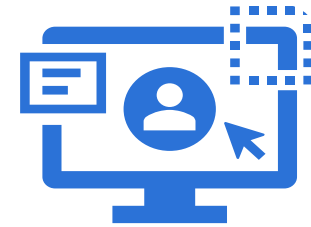
Online



Workshops



Mentoring



*Computer
simulations*



Classroom

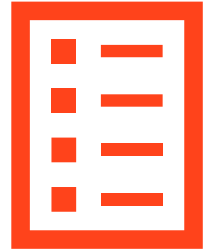


Inter-agency

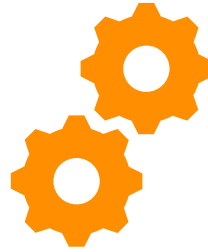


*In-house
training*

Document Your Processes and Practices



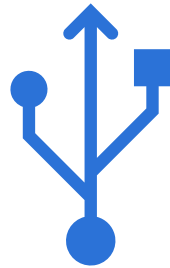
Maintenance
schedules



Day-to-day
Operations



Regulated
Work



Technology



Training &
Mentoring



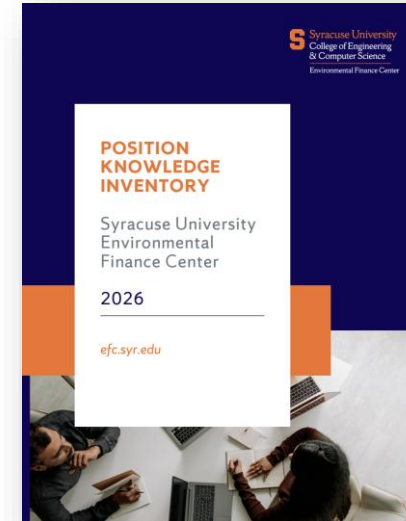
Job Sharing

Try a Position Knowledge Inventory

- Captures the **unique skills, knowledge, and responsibilities** tied to each role
- Helps identify **what is known** and what is **undocumented**
- Can be used to document **institutional know-how**, guide **succession planning**, and safeguard **critical workflows**



efc.syr.edu



You get a Position Knowledge Inventory. You get a Position Knowledge Inventory.

Everyone gets a Position Knowledge Inventory!

At a minimum... capture the basics:



- Usernames and passwords
- Assigned assets
- Updated manuals
- Contact info for vendors, key contacts, etc.

Quick Role Snapshots



Mentimeter

Break Time!
Come back at
10:45 AM

Averi Davis

Program Manager

E: adavis02@syr.edu

efc.syr.edu

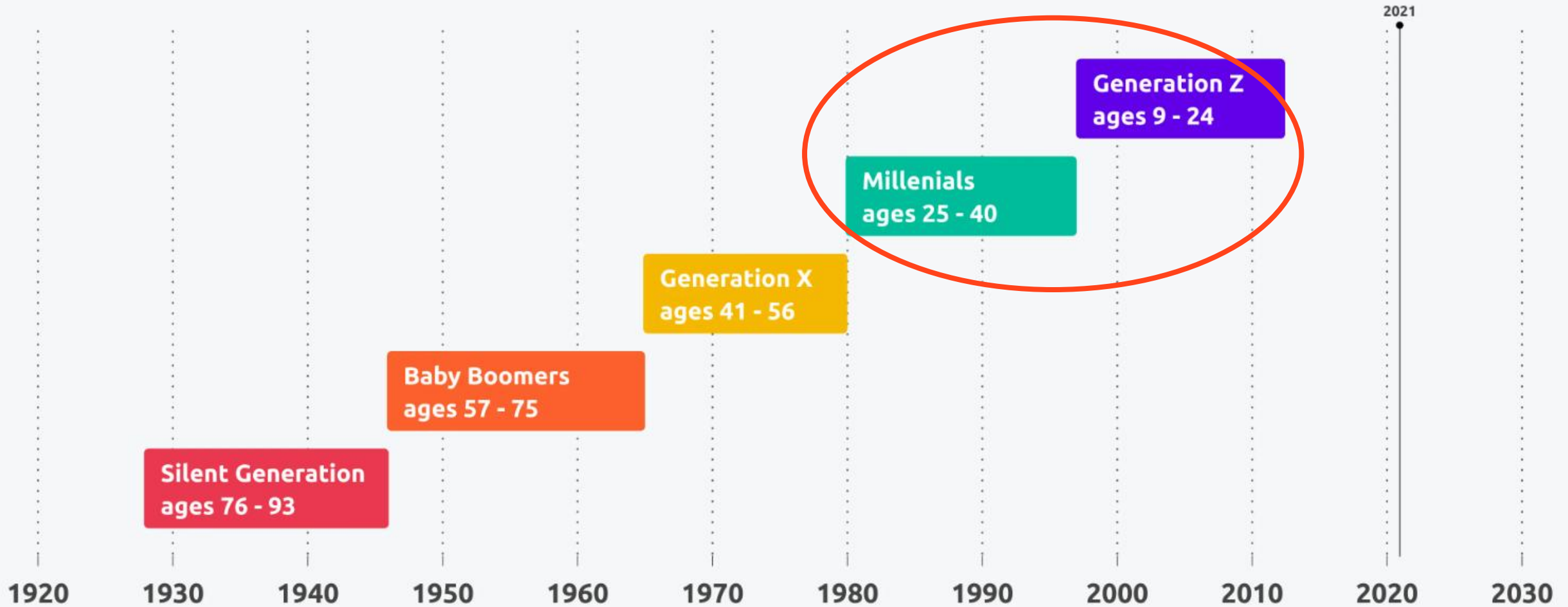


Recruitment & Creating Interest in Water Careers



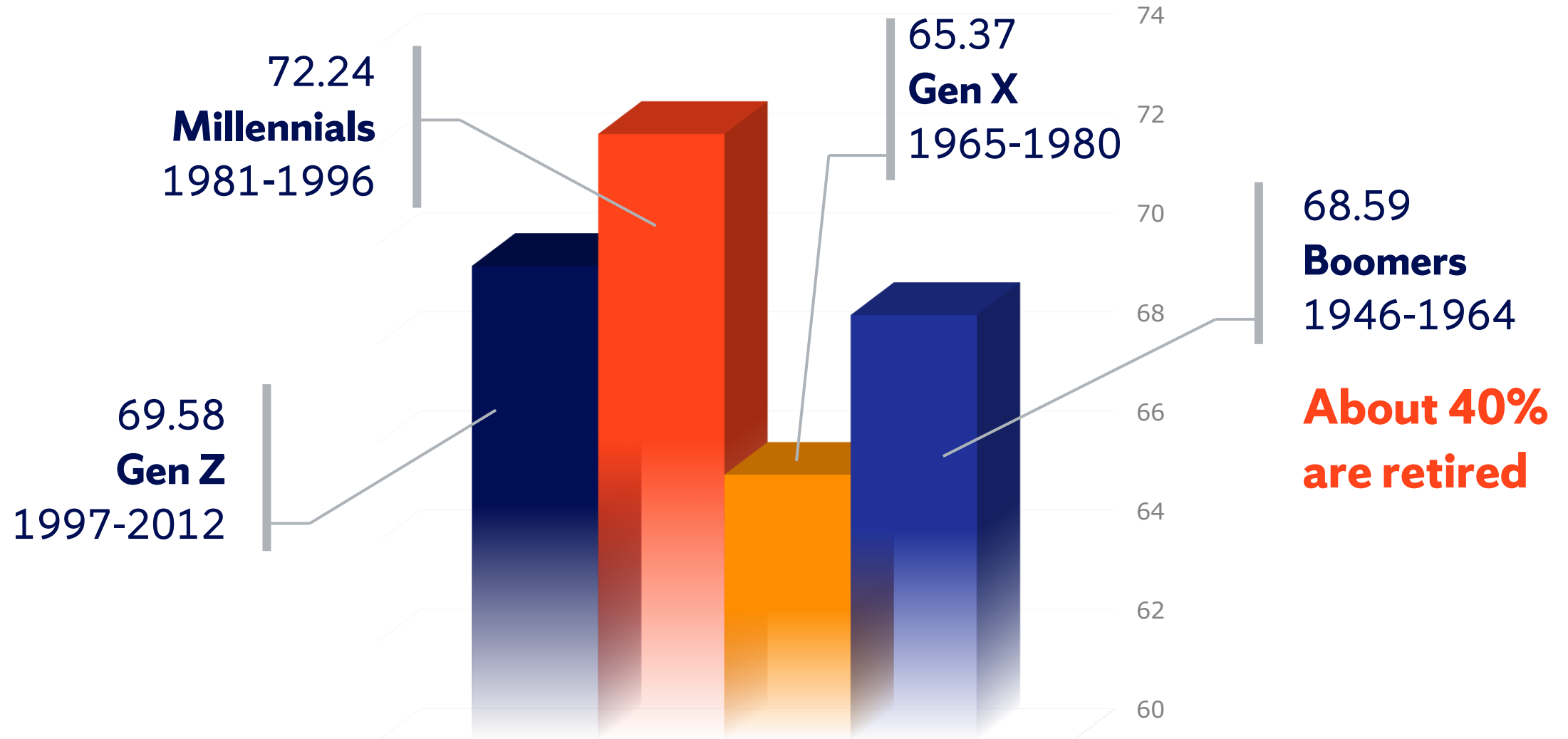
**How did you start working
with water? What's your
water story?**

The Generations Defined



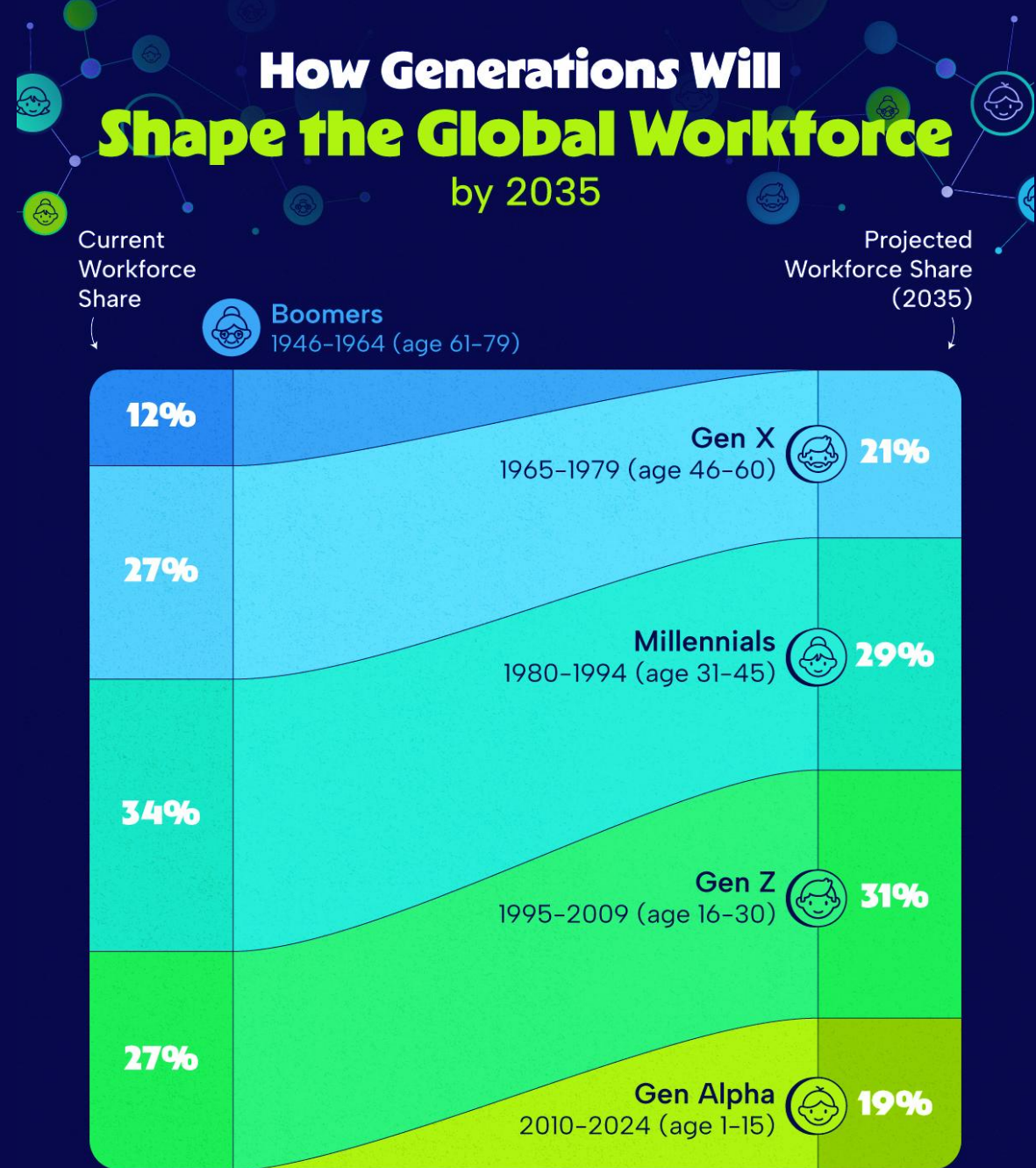
Source: Wikipedia

Generations by Size (millions)



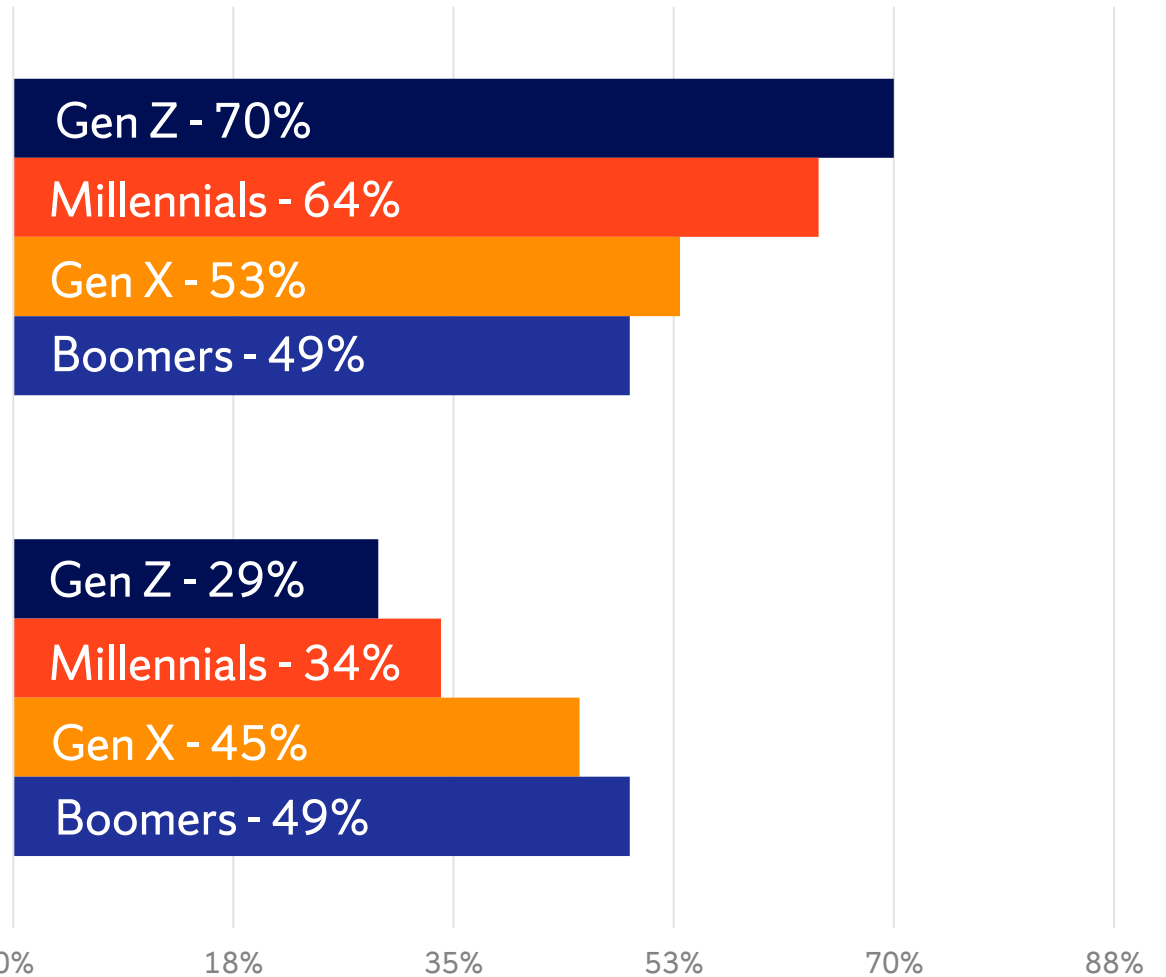
Who is working with us?

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/charted-how-generations-will-shape-the-workforce-by-2035/>

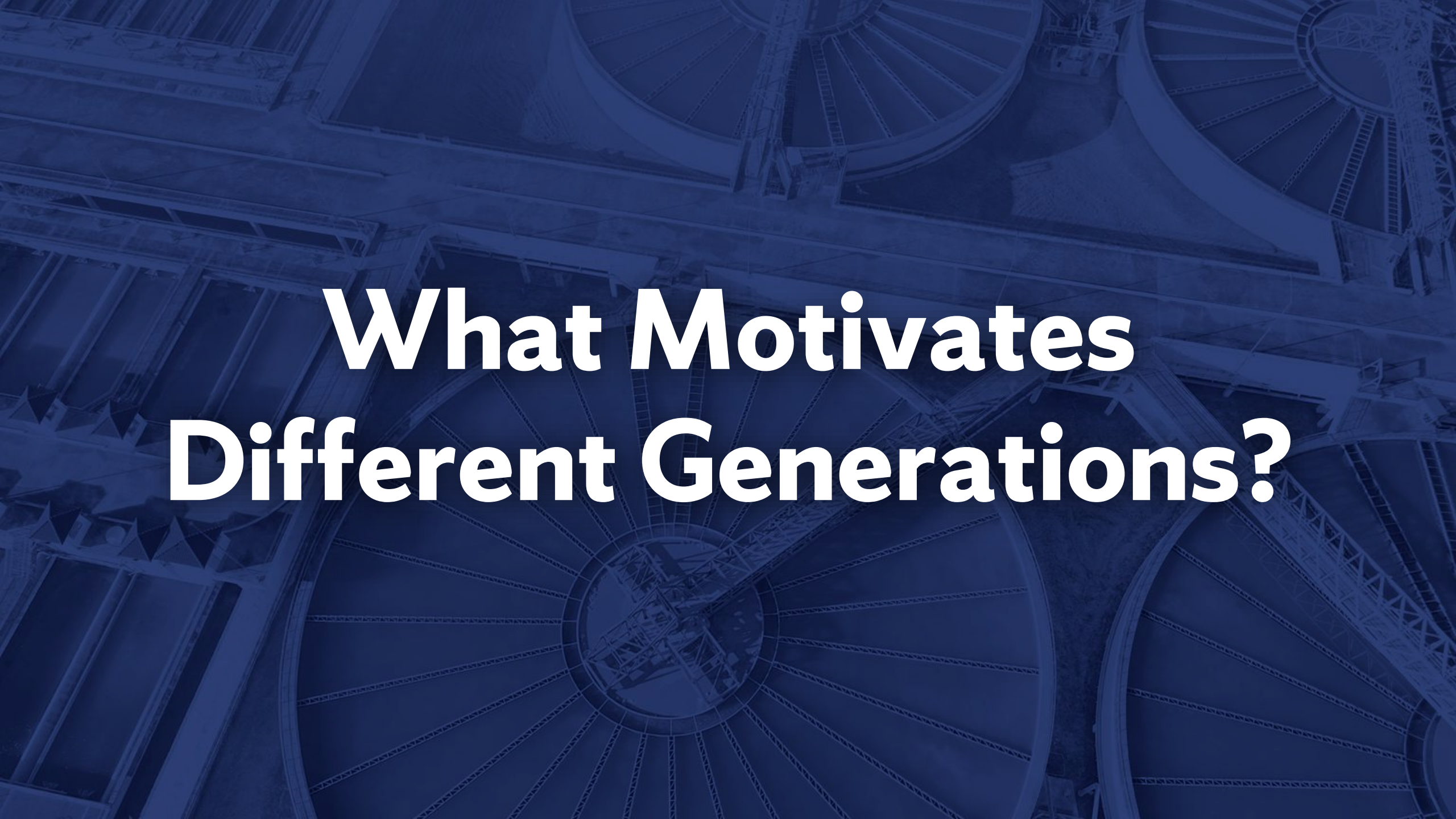


Should government do more to solve our problems?

Government Should Do More



Doing too Much: Leave it to Business

An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant, featuring several large circular aeration tanks with radial internal structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

What Motivates Different Generations?



Generation Z (Gen Z)

[ˌje-nə-ˈrā-shən ˈzē]

The generation of people
born from 1997 to 2012.

What Does Gen Z Want from Work?

Source:

Handshake



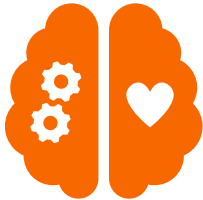
Stability and job
security



Skill building
opportunities



Work-life
balance



Value alignment
and purpose



Positive employer
reputation



Desirable
location



**The generation of people born
from 1980-1996.**

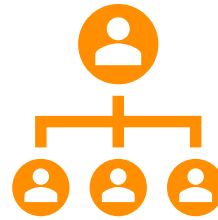
What Do **Millennials** Want from Work?

Source:

GALLUP®



Opportunities to
learn and grow



Quality of
supervisor



Quality of
management



Interest in type
of work



Opportunities for
advancement

An aerial photograph of a water treatment plant, featuring several large circular tanks with radial support structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

**Convert Your Messaging
into Smart Marketing**

Communicate Your Values



Your mission, visuals, and story should be matched to your target audience's values

- Environmental Stewardship
- Public Service
- Community Sustainability
- Work-Life Balance
- Learning and Development

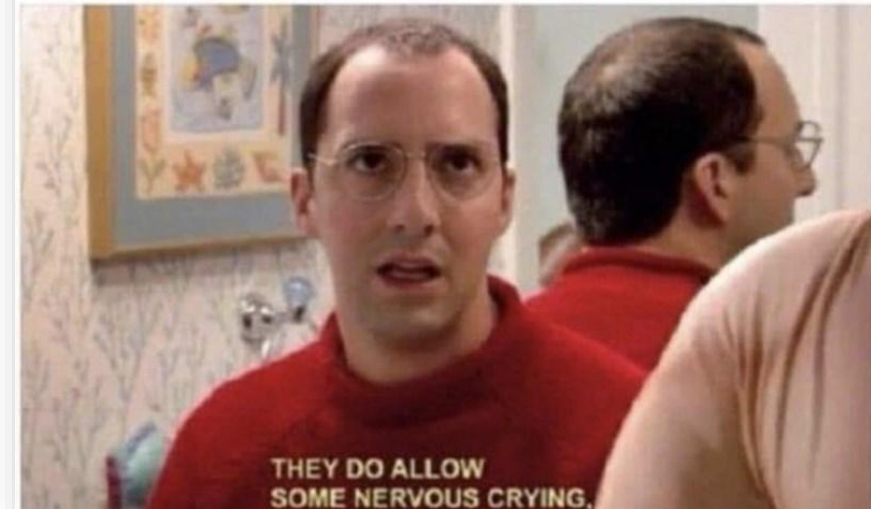
Offer (and Emphasize) Personal Benefits

Going beyond the \$\$\$

- Flexible schedule
- Vacation time
- Compressed work week
- Time off for volunteering
- Training and conferences

Friend: My job has pretty good benefits - 401k, vacation & catered lunches. What about yours?

Me:



The image shows a worker in a hard hat and safety vest working on a large industrial pipe. The worker is positioned on the left side of the frame, leaning over the pipe. The pipe is a large, horizontal metal pipe that runs across the middle of the image. In the background, there is a large, dark-colored building with a gabled roof. The entire image has a strong orange tint. The text "Use Visuals" is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

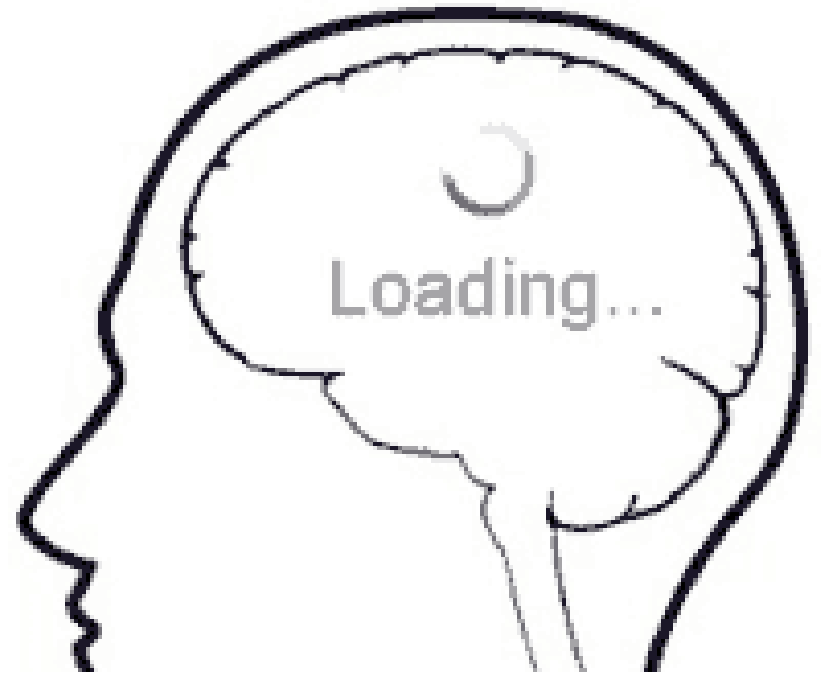
Use Visuals



**Our minds are
not a book**

We process images
far faster than text:

13 milliseconds



Gosh what a great day yesterday. We got up early and cooked some breakfast by the campfire and then hiked for an hour in the predawn light before we got to our destination which was Mirror Lake when there was no one there and the lake was still and I could get a perfect shot in the best light with no people in the background



Textual Description

A plane figure with four equal straight sides and four right angles

Visual Description





JOB DESCRIPTION JOB TITLE: Wastewater Plant Operator

DEPARTMENT: Water & Sewer

RESPONSIBLE TO: Chief Wastewater Plant Operator

JOB CONTENT: Performs work as directed for the successful operation and maintenance of CUB's wastewater treatment plant equipment, buildings and sites. Under direction of the Chief Operator, strives to assure plant effluents meet or exceed all State and Federal regulations. Performs inspections, sample and data collection, laboratory tests and plant maintenance as assigned.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Monitors and controls process equipment for proper operation and chemicals to ensure effluent water meets or exceed all State & Federal regulations.
2. Understand and stay current with the State & Federal regulations requirements.
3. Collect and record data for record maintenance/reporting to designated state agencies
4. Monitor treatment process for compliance, inspect the equipment, monitor conditions, meters, and gauges to determine plant load requirements/functionality
5. Work in multiple areas of the plant and on different shifts as needed
6. Performs general maintenance including cleaning, construction, mechanical, electric, instrumentation etc...
7. Assists/Performs in administration functions of various treatment chemicals, weekly and daily report generation.
8. Maintain bulk chemical inventory
9. Installs, tests and repairs equipment throughout plant facilities as directed.
10. Collects samples performs laboratory tests and interpretation of the results according to all State & Federal Regulations.
11. Work on process improvement projects and standard operation procedures.
12. Ability to extract, evaluate and utilize data for process improvement from all applicable resources
13. Performs preventive, predictive and emergency maintenance on plant facilities/equipment.
14. Communicates with Chief Operator, coworkers and others effectively.
15. Performs housekeeping, cleaning, painting, mowing, etc. to assure outstanding plant appearance.
16. Performs duties in a safe manner. Adheres to all CUB safety policies.
17. Personal and work site safety in a construction environment.



JOB DESCRIPTION JOB TITLE: Wastewater Plant Operator

DEPARTMENT: Water & Sewer

RESPONSIBLE TO: Chief Wastewater Plant Operator



WHY WORK WITH US:

Impactful Work: Play a key role in ensuring clean water and a healthier environment for our community. Your contributions directly enhance public health and support local ecosystems.

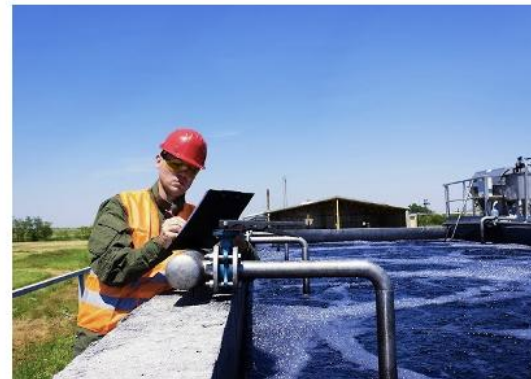
Community Focus: We pride ourselves on fostering a strong sense of community. Join a team that values collaboration, innovation, and service to our

neighbors.

Career Development: We offer ongoing training and professional development opportunities, helping you grow your skills and advance your career in a rewarding field.

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WHY WORK WITH US:

Impactful Work: Play a key role in ensuring clean water and a healthier environment for our community. Your contributions directly enhance public health and support local ecosystems.

Community Focus: We pride ourselves on fostering a strong sense of community. Join a team that values collaboration, innovation, and service to our

neighbors.

Career Development: We offer ongoing training and professional development opportunities, helping you grow your skills and advance your career in a rewarding field.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Monitors and controls process equipment for proper operation and chemicals to ensure effluent water meets or exceed all State & Federal regulations.
2. Understand and stay current with the State & Federal regulations requirements.
3. Collect and record data for record maintenance/reporting to designated state agencies
4. Monitor treatment process for compliance, inspect the equipment,



JOB DESCRIPTION JOB TITLE: Wastewater Plant Operator

DEPARTMENT: Water & Sewer

RESPONSIBLE TO: Chief Wastewater Plant Operator

JOB CONTENT: Performs work as directed for the successful operation and maintenance of CUB's wastewater treatment plant equipment, buildings and sites. Under direction of the Chief Operator, strives to assure plant effluents meet or exceed all State and Federal regulations. Performs inspections, sample and data collection, laboratory tests and plant maintenance as assigned.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Monitors and controls process equipment for proper operation and chemicals to ensure effluent water meets or exceed all State & Federal regulations.
2. Understand and stay current with the State & Federal regulations requirements.
3. Collect and record data for record maintenance/reporting to designated state agencies
4. Monitor treatment process for compliance, inspect the equipment, monitor conditions, meters, and gauges to determine plant load requirements/functionality
5. Work in multiple areas of the plant and on different shifts as needed
6. Performs general maintenance including cleaning, construction, mechanical, electric, instrumentation etc...
7. Assists/Performs in administration functions of various treatment chemicals, weekly and daily report generation.
8. Maintain bulk chemical inventory
9. Installs, tests and repairs equipment throughout plant facilities as directed.
10. Collects samples performs laboratory tests and interpretation of the results according to all State & Federal Regulations.
11. Work on process improvement projects and standard operation procedures.
12. Ability to extract, evaluate and utilize data for process improvement from all applicable resources
13. Performs preventive, predictive and emergency maintenance on plant facilities/equipment.
14. Communicates with Chief Operator, coworkers and others effectively.
15. Performs housekeeping, cleaning, painting, mowing, etc. to assure outstanding plant appearance.
16. Performs duties in a safe manner. Adheres to all CUB safety policies.
17. Personal and work site safety in a construction environment.



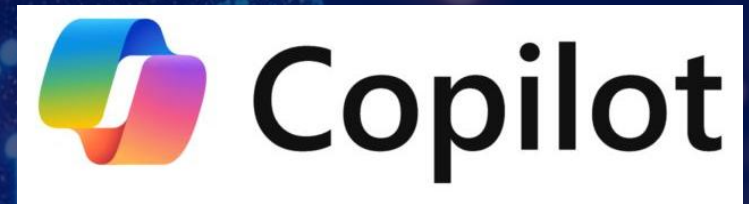
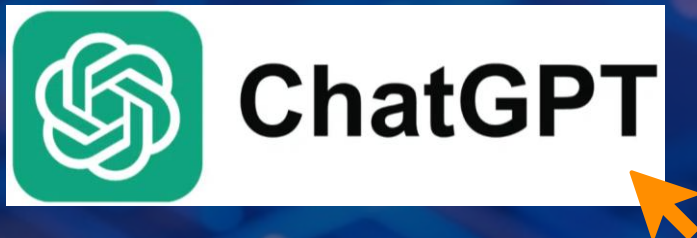
[Canva.com](https://www.canva.com)
Free version offers
tons of job
flyer/poster
templates, stock
images, etc.

Other graphic/document
design platforms (Microsoft
Word, Google Docs, Adobe,
etc.) also work





**Try a Little Artificial
Intelligence**



...and many more!



ChatGPT

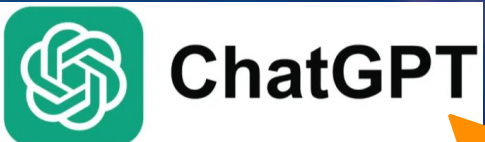


Copilot



Gemini

- Good for generating:**
- *Marketing language*
 - *Images (proceed with caution)*



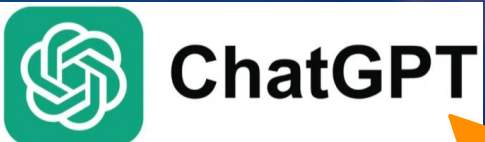
I need good marketing language for an entry-level job at a rural wastewater treatment plant

Here's a draft you can adapt — it's written to sound approachable, appealing to both locals and people considering a relocation to a smaller community, while still making the work feel important and stable:

Start a Career That Keeps Your Community Flowing

Looking for a hands-on career with **great benefits, job stability, and room to grow**? Join our team as an **Entry-Level Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator** and be part of the essential work that **keeps our town healthy and our waterways clean.**

No prior wastewater experience? No problem — **we provide the training and certifications** you need to succeed. You'll learn valuable technical skills, work with modern equipment, and **gain a career path in one of the most stable industries in the country.**



I need good marketing language for an entry-level job at a rural wastewater treatment plant

The more specific, the better!

Here's a draft you can adapt — it's written to sound reachable, appealing to both locals and people coming from outside the community, while making the work feel important.

Start a Career That Keeps Your Community Healthy
Looking for a hands-on career with room to grow? Join our team as an **Entry-Level Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator** and be part of the essential work that **keeps our town healthy and our waterways clean.**

No prior wastewater experience? No problem — **we provide the training and certifications** you need to succeed. You'll learn valuable technical skills, work with modern equipment, and **gain a career path in one of the most stable industries in the country.**



**55% of millennials
watch video several
times a day**

**70% of Gen Z watch
videos 3 hours/day**



Use Videos!

1-3 minutes



What do you hear?



Johnson County Wastewater · Follow

Johnson County Wastewater · Original audio

 We are hiring line repair and construction team members! If you are interested in playing an important role in maintaining your community's clean wa... [See more](#)



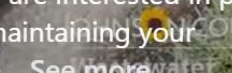




Johnson County Wastewater · Follow

Johnson County Wastewater · Original audio

 We are hiring line repair and construction team members! If you are interested in playing an important role in maintaining your community's clean wa... [See more](#)



That's the sound of

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

A PERSON-CENTERED CULTURE

GREAT PAY AND BENEFITS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Johnson County Wastewater · Follow

Johnson County Wastewater · Original audio

 We are hiring line repair and construction team members! If you are interested in playing an important role in maintaining your community's clean wa... [See more](#)





Johnson County Wastewater, KS
(Not bad, but could be better)



[https://www.instagram.com/reel/D**bD-dryTzWz/**](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DbD-dryTzWz/)



City of St. Joseph, MO

Great example of **authenticity** and allowing prospective applicants to hear directly from your current staff

**Colleen Armstrong, Stormwater
Quality Coordinator**





POV: Public Works got a
disposable camera
for the week



Carrollton Public Works, TX
Great example of authenticity, **creativity**,
and leveraging **online trends**



Navigating Job Portals & Postings

Industry-Specific Job Portals: Drinking Water & Wastewater



American Water Works Association

Log

ABOUTMEMBERSHIPEVENTSRESOURCESJOB BOARD

Job Board

Discover & Share Opportunities for Water Professionals

Job Seekers: Find your future in the water sector by clicking below. With our all new job board, you will be able to search job listings, upload a resume for hiring managers to review, and subscribe to job posting alerts.

Search Water Sector Jobs

Employers: If you would like to post a job, please read all details below before proceeding.



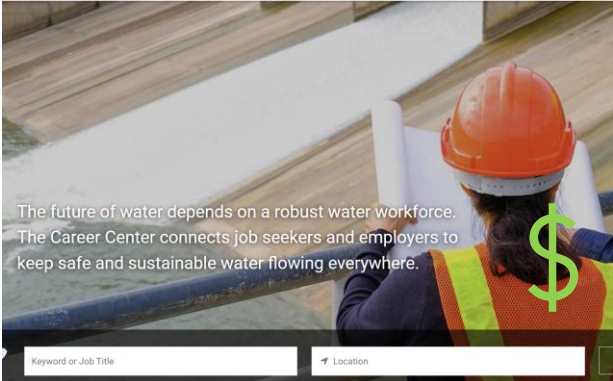






CAREER CENTER

Employers



The future of water depends on a robust water workforce. The Career Center connects job seekers and employers to keep safe and sustainable water flowing everywhere.

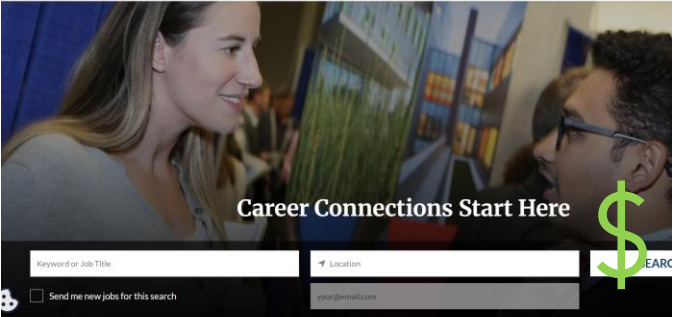
Keyword or Job Title

Location



Career Center

EmployersJob SeekersHome



Keyword or Job Title

Location

Send me new jobs for this search

your@email.com





Planning • Design • Construction Services
WATER AND WASTEWATER PROJECTS
FOR WATER UTILITIES • LOCAL GOVERNMENT

HOMEABOUTTRAININGAPPRENTICESHIPMEMBERSHIPNEWSJOBS & EQUIPMENTDOWNLOADSLINKS

Job Listings & Equipment

Jobs & Career Opportunities

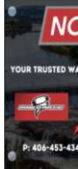
Explore employment opportunities in Wyoming water, wastewater, public works, utilities, and related industries.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

Posted: 09-08-26

Organization: City of Sheridan

Position: Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator



YOUR TRUSTED WATER

P: 406-453-4344



Provide



Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association

About • Events • Operations Challenge • Membership • Careers • Resources • Login

Employment Opportunities

RMWEA Career Center

All communities need clean water, so all communities need people like you. In choosing to work in the water/wastewater industry, you will embark on a rewarding, innovative, and challenging career that makes a lasting impact on public health and the environment.

RMWEA employment opportunities are continually updated with new employment listed for careers in water and wastewater.

Please select the category and type below to view associated postings.

Category: --All Categories--

Sort By: Post Date (newest to oldest)

Keyword:

Search

34 Result(s) Found

Field Operator

We are looking for a Field Operator to join our team! The

Contact Information

Contact Name: Tucker Figueroa





HomeJob BoardWhy Water?RecruitmentResourcesLoginPost A

Reimagine Your Future with Rural Water



Search For Your New Job Today

Keywords

SEARCH JOBS

Free (login required)

Keep Using Traditional Job Boards

Traditional job boards still dominate (even for younger generations)

- Don't forget about student career platforms and engagement:
Handshake, career fairs, career centers, guidance counsellors

indeed


glassdoor

Handshake

MONSTER

 ZipRecruiter®

Don't Overlook Social Media

Social media as a **search tool** is rapidly evolving

- *Treat social media as **supplementary**, especially when looking to build a pipeline of young talent*

Linked 

 Instagram

 YouTube

 TikTok

 facebook



Rocky Mountain Water
Environment Association
Elevating Water Professionals



[HOME](#)[ABOUT](#)[TRAINING](#)[APPRENTICESHIP](#)[MEMBERSHIP](#)[NEWS](#)[JOBS & EQUIPMENT](#)[DOV](#)

Apprenticeship

WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship is a training model that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages.

STRUCTURE & RESPONSIBILITIES

WARWS

WARW2



Other Outreach Channels that Work



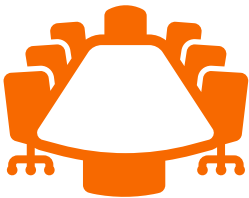
Community colleges,
technical schools



Unions and labor
groups



Community-based groups,
local non-profits



Economic Development
Organizations / Workforce
Development Boards



Industry/interest-specific online
portals like [Josh's Water Jobs](#),
[Idealist](#), or [Green Jobs Board](#)



Veteran
organizations

Making Your Work Visible

- Share to early and often to increase public support for:
 - Infrastructure upgrades
 - Public health
 - Compensation
 - Growth
- Leverage local nonprofits and schools
- Participate in community events
- Create online content
- Engage with young people and artists



LIFESTYLE

NYC sewage plant's strangely popular Valentine's Day tour goes virtual

Plant the Seeds Early: Future Water Leaders

Get K-12+ students curious about water careers now

- Partner with **local schools** to host tours, classroom talks, and internships
- Visit the FWL **Educator's Resource Hub** for ready-to-go lesson plans, videos, and career materials



Learn More:
[efcnetwork.org/resources/
educators-resource-hub](https://efcnetwork.org/resources/educators-resource-hub)



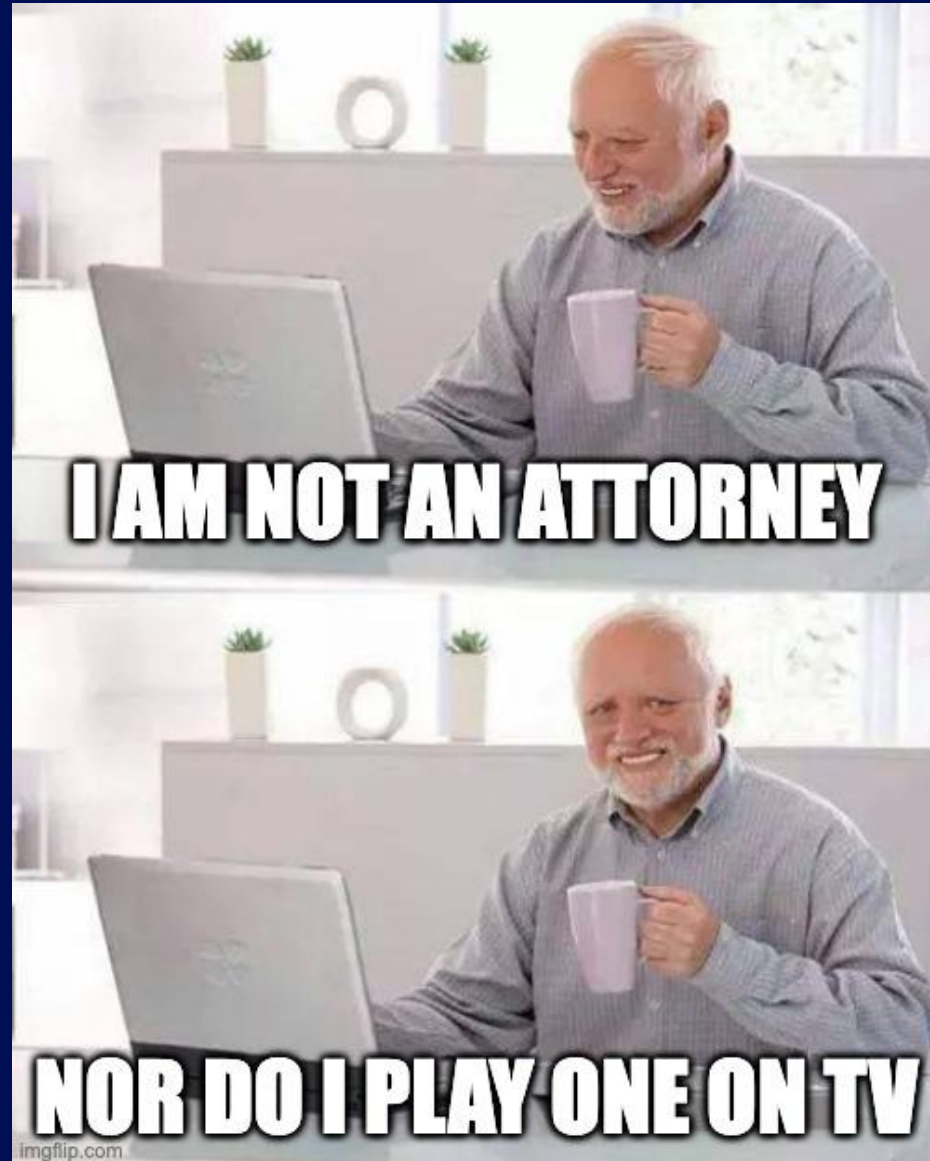
Back to Mentimeter!



Mentimeter



Collaborative Solutions for Small Systems



Why Consider Regional Collaboration?



Infrastructure Challenges | *ex. aging, failing pipes or facilities*



Capacity Challenges | *ex. growth, changes in population resulting in changes in demand*



Emergency Needs | *ex. emergency personnel, capacity*



Economies of Scale | *ex. efficiency, rate stability*



Disasters and Changing Conditions | *ex. drought, contaminated sources*

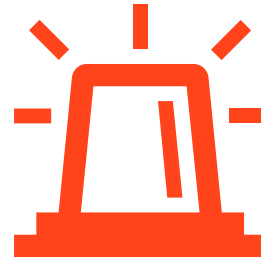
An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant, featuring several large circular aeration tanks with radial internal structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue filter.

Regional Collaboration Can Take Many Forms

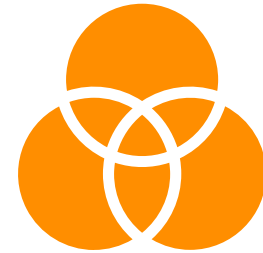
Options for Regional Collaboration



Interlocal
Cooperation



Emergency
Connections



Consolidation

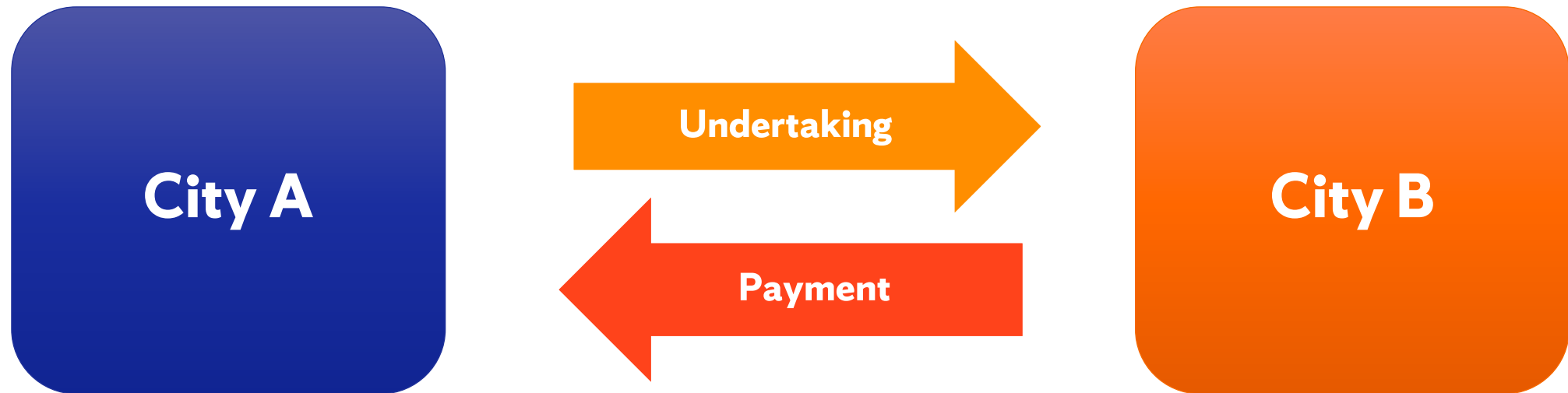
An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant, featuring several large circular aeration tanks with radial internal structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The title 'Interlocal Cooperation' is centered in a bold, orange font.

Interlocal Cooperation

3 Forms of Interlocal Cooperation

On Behalf of Another

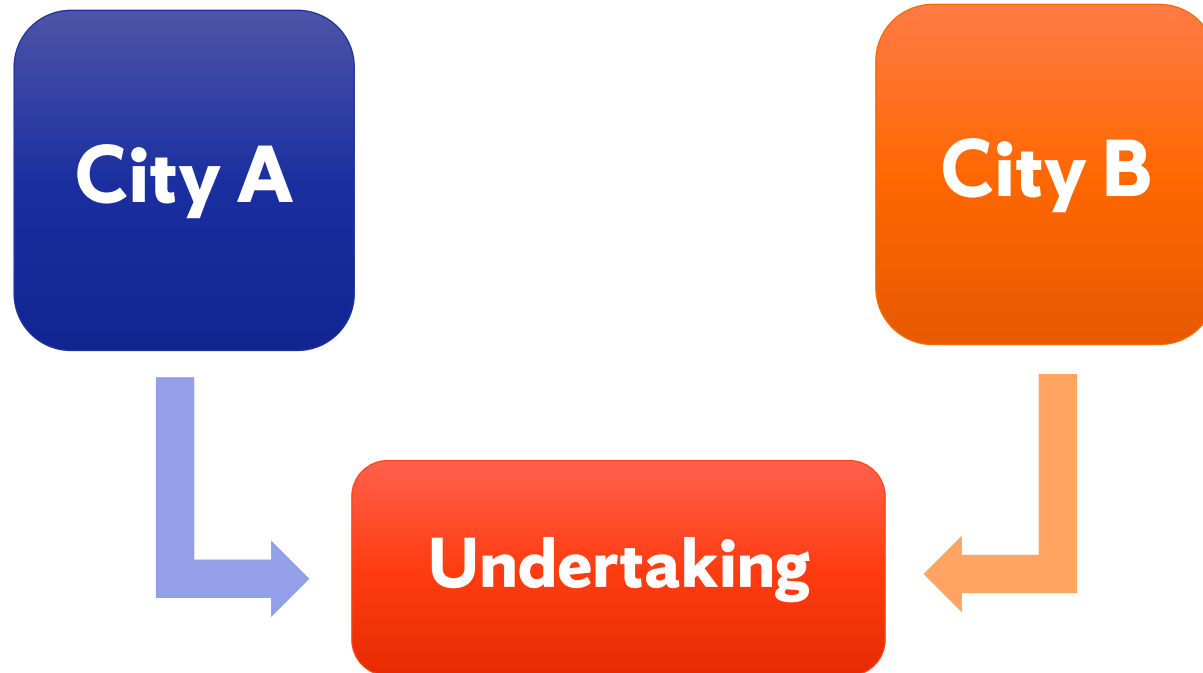
Retain independent legal authorities and one unit performs the undertaking for another



3 Forms of Interlocal Cooperation

Jointly

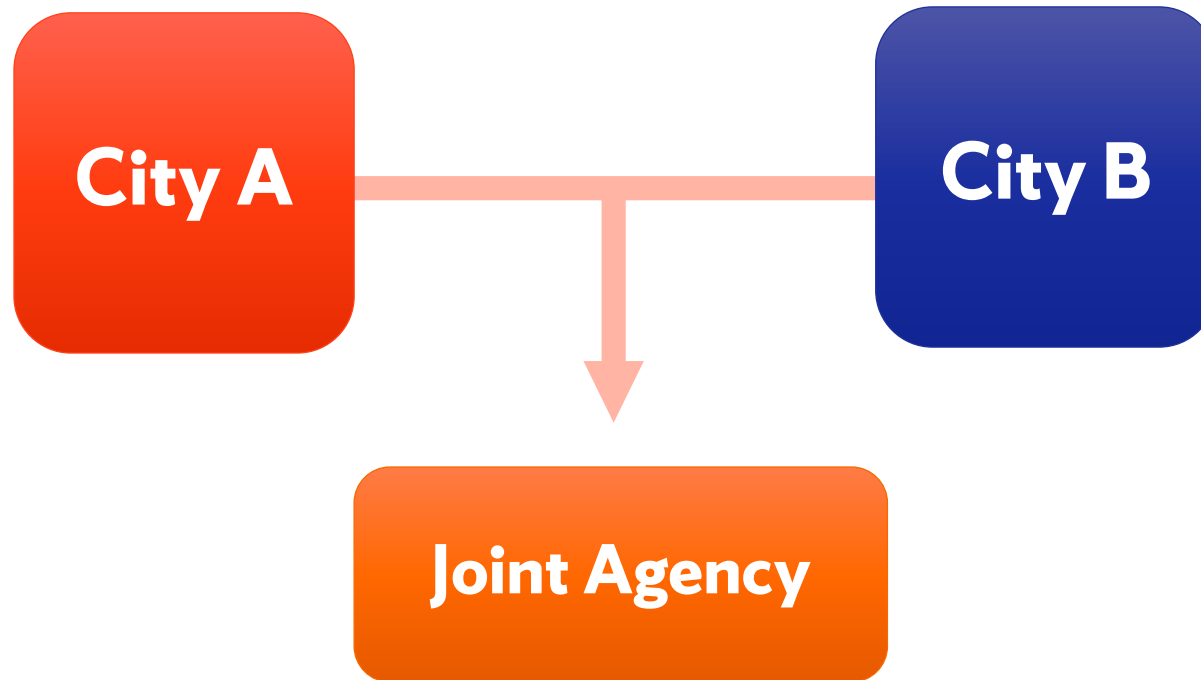
Retain independent legal authorities and agree to perform undertaking collaboratively



3 Forms of Interlocal Cooperation

Joint Agency

Confer independent legal authorities on joint agency to perform undertaking



Wyoming Joint Powers Act

“ Any power, privilege or authority exercised or capable of being exercised by an agency **may be exercised and enjoyed jointly** with any other agency having a similar power, privilege or authority. ”

- WY Stat § 16-1-104 (2025)

If an agency cannot exercise the power on its own, **it cannot do so through a joint powers agreement**

The power **must** be common to both agencies to be exercised jointly



Wyoming Joint Powers Act

Two (2) or more agencies may jointly plan, own, lease, assign, sell, create, expand, finance and operate:



Water including (but not limited to) surface water drainage, sewerage, water and soil conservation or solid waste facilities



Who can enter a Joint Powers Agreement?

“Agencies”

Counties	Municipal corporations	School districts	Community college districts
Cooperative Tribal governing bodies	Eastern Shoshone Tribe business council	Northern Arapaho Tribe business council	Other joint powers boards

or special districts specifically involved in providing facilities or functions enumerated in W.S. 16-1-104(c);

WY Stat § 16-1-103 (2025)

What must the agreement contain?

Duration and purpose of the agreement

Organization and powers of any **separate legal entity** created

Each agency's **ownership/interest** in shared facilities, services, or products

How shared facilities will be **operated and maintained**

How the joint effort will be **financed and budgeted**

How the agreement may be **terminated** and how **property** will be distributed

The **administration** of the joint effort (if no separate legal entity is created)

Any other necessary provisions

WY Stat § 16-1-105 (2025)

Me checking my contract to see where is written that I need to work with fools



Joint Boards (optional)

- Must have at least **5 members** who are qualified electors of the counties in which the board operates (appointed by the governing bodies of participating agencies)
- Once official, becomes a public corporation with the power to sue and be sued
- Can create a fiscal manager to manage finances
- Can hire staff and consultants and use staff/resources from participating agencies



"Item three, does anyone have the slightest idea what 'governance' means?"

WY Stat § 16-1-106 (2025)

Making a Joint Powers Agreement Official

An agreement or amendment does not take effect until:



The governing body of each participating agency approves it



The Wyoming Attorney General reviews and approves it for compliance with Wyoming law and the state constitution



The agreement is filed with the records keeper of each participating agency



WY Stat § 16-1-106 (2025)



Emergency Connections

Emergency Connections: 3 Types



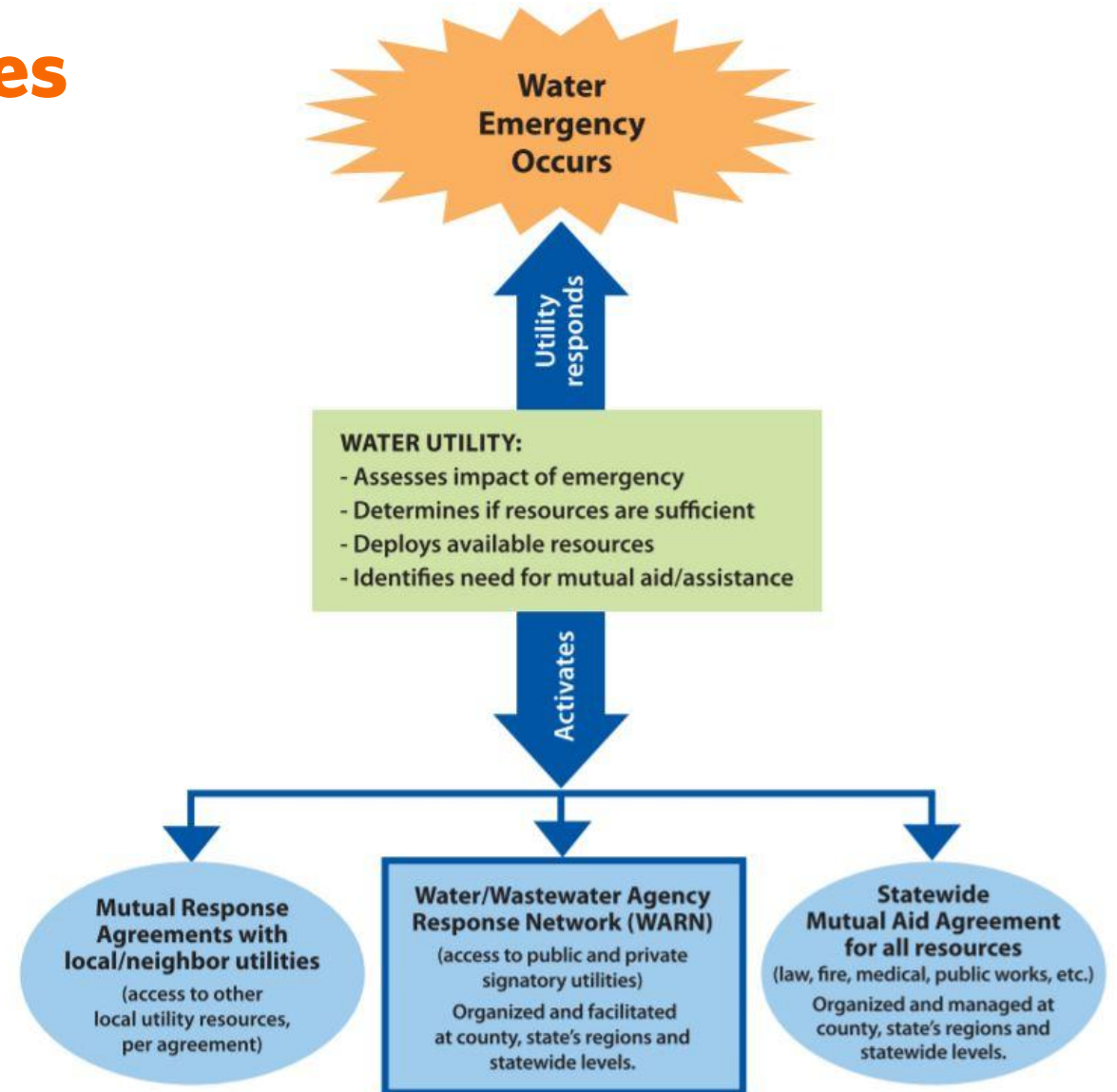
Mutual Response Agreements



Water/Wastewater Agency Response Networks (WARNs)



Statewide Mutual Aid



Emergency Connections | Mutual Response Agreements

- Established with local, neighboring or nearby **counties**, cities, or utilities.
- If this approach is pursued, it's important to detail the relationship in a contract with explicit details including:
 - The parties
 - The responsibilities of each party
 - How the emergency response will occur
 - Any financial responsibilities of the parties



Emergency Connections | WYOWARN

(Wyoming Water and Wastewater
Agency Response Network)

Why are WARNs beneficial?

- More membership means greater likelihood of a successful emergency response
- Increased pool of finances, supplies, equipment, and personnel
- No obligation to send resources
- **Mutual Aid Agreement is already created for you** - just need to deliver to appropriate attorneys, board members and/or government leaders for approval



Model Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement for Intrastate Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN)

1
2
3
4 This Model Agreement contains procedures and standards for a water and wastewater utility
5 Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. The Model is based on existing water and wastewater
6 utility Mutual Aid and Assistance agreements implemented in California, Florida, Texas,
7 Louisiana, South Carolina, Oregon, Georgia, and Pennsylvania. While the Model shares some
8 similarities with each of the eight agreements, it is a unique document in and of itself.
9
10 Creating an agreement for Mutual Aid and Assistance involves a number of policy decisions.
11 The Model Agreement proposes specific approaches to Mutual Aid and Assistance Program
12 issues; however, reasonable minds will differ as to whether the approaches presented in the
13 model are the best. Accordingly, notes are included for each provision of the Model Agreement.
14 These notes highlight significant issues that arise in the drafting of a mutual aid and assistance
15 Program and how the Model Agreement approaches those issues. The notes also explain why
16 certain provisions are included in the Model Agreement.
17
18 Representatives of the water and wastewater industry can use this Model Agreement as a tool
19 to facilitate discussion on drafting an Intrastate Mutual Aid and Assistance agreement that best
20 illustrates their needs. However, while each intrastate steering committee may revise portions of
21 this Agreement, it is important to note that this Model Agreement allows for inclusion and
22 eventual connection with a national interstate mutual aid and assistance agreement. Because
23 mutual aid and assistance programs require standardized operational procedures, consistency
24 between the intrastate agreements is critical. Thus, major modifications to this Agreement
25 would preclude using it for connection with an interstate program for mutual aid and assistance
26 program.
27



Emergency Connections | Statewide Emergency Aid

- Organized and provided on the state, **county**, and local government level



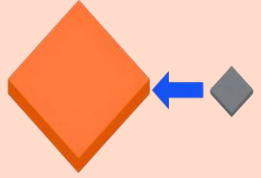
FEMA



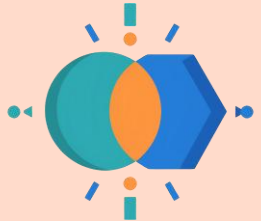
An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant, featuring several large circular aeration tanks with radial internal structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The word "Consolidation" is centered in a bold, orange font.

Consolidation

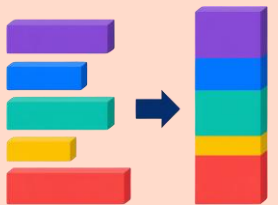
Forms of Consolidation



Direct Acquisition - a high-capacity utility absorbs another.



Joint Merger - two or more utilities (often of similar capacity) consolidate to become a new entity that is jointly owned.



Balanced Merger - hybrid of the other two types. Participating parties create a governance structure that allows for the previously existing utilities to participate in decision-making.

Questions To Ask Before Formalizing A Partnership

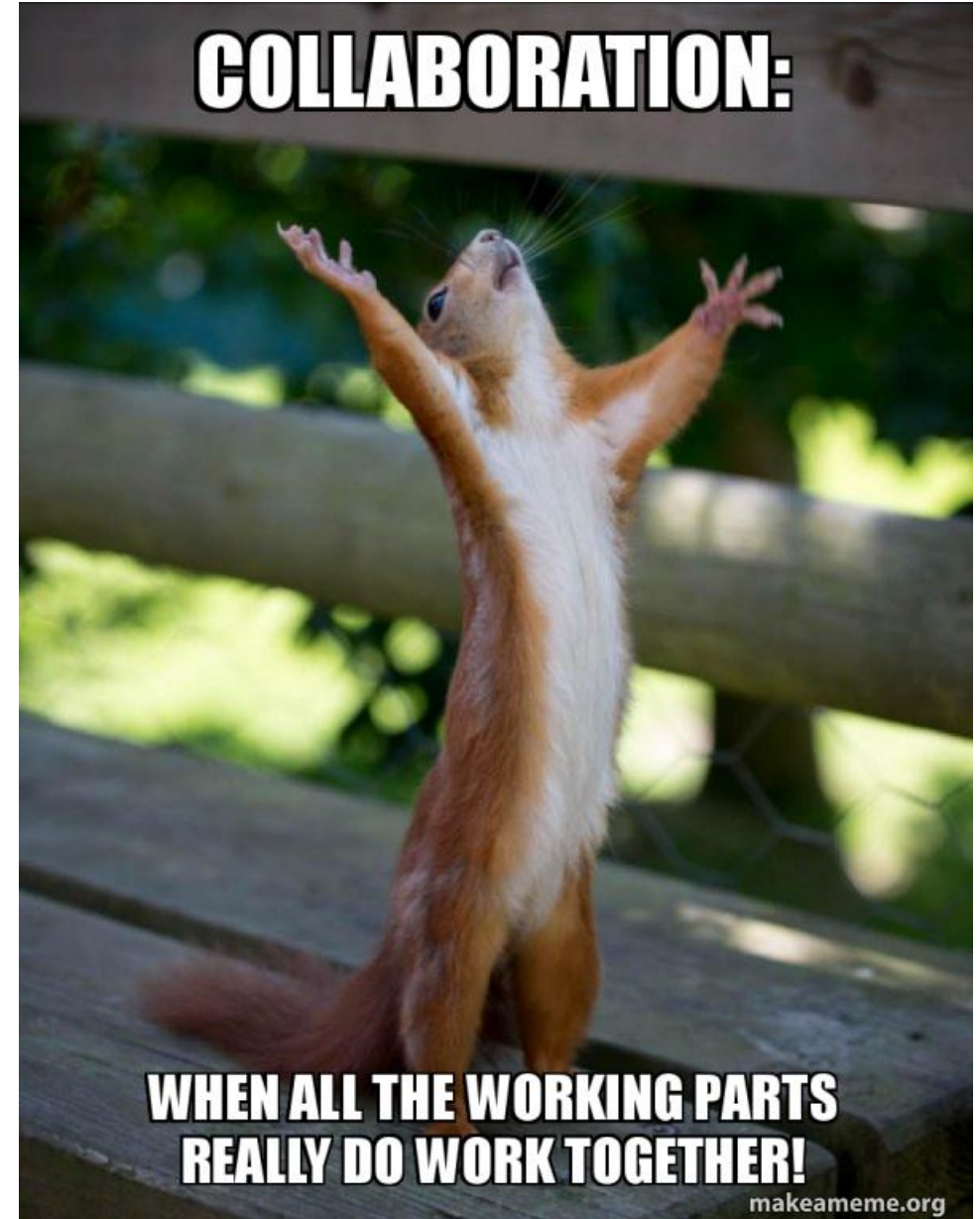
- Feasibility of Consolidation Options
- Value of Physical Assets of the Systems
- Outstanding Obligations and Responsibilities
- Governance Structure for Consolidated Utility
- Board Representation for Utility
- Resolving Disputes
- Impact on Customer Rates

Why is this important?
Sets the stage for all that follows



Why Regional Approaches Can Help

- Economies of scale and efficiencies
- Promise of economic development
- Access to capital from investors
- Revenue stability
- Better water quality
- Increased capacity
- Higher operating efficiencies
- Lower rates
- Reduced regulatory penalties



Appealing to Decision-Makers

Technical Staff

Decision Influence:
Process and operational challenges

Primary Concerns:
Reliability, maintenance, preparedness, and safety

Financial Leadership

Decision Influence:
Resource allocation and procurement

Primary Concerns:
Capital costs, funding, and affordability

Executive Leadership

Decision Influence:
Strategic priorities and final decisions

Primary Concerns:
Public perception, compliance, and managing risk

Governance Bodies

Decision Influence:
Approvals and policy changes

Primary Concerns:
Fiscal responsibility, public opinion, and community development

An aerial photograph of a water treatment plant, featuring several large circular clarifiers with radial support structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

Wyoming Water Workforce **Peer Roundtable**

Water Workforce Peer Roundtable

- What is the biggest workforce challenge facing your utility right now?
- How has your utility tried to address workforce challenges? What has worked well, and what hasn't?
- Do you have recruitment, retention, or other workforce successes that other utilities could learn from?
- How are you preparing for retirements, staff turnover, or knowledge loss?
- Where could partnerships or regional collaboration help address workforce needs? Where might they not?

Water Workforce Peer Roundtable

- How can industry groups, state agencies, or TA providers best support your workforce needs?
- After hearing this presentation, what resources, training, or shared services do you think would help your utility the most?
- Looking across everything we discussed today, is there an idea, lesson, or approach you want to bring back to your utility?

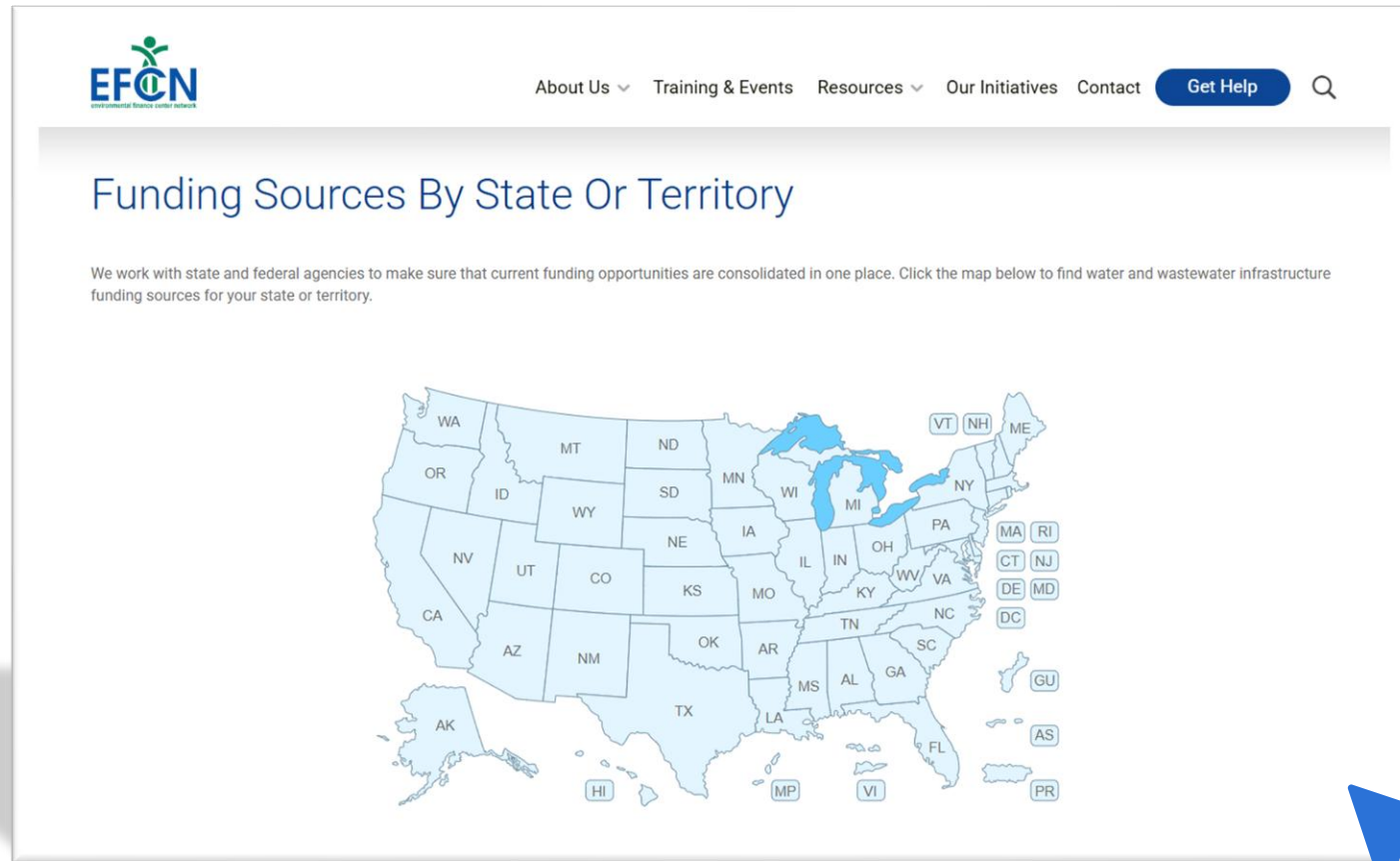
An aerial photograph of a water treatment plant, featuring several large circular clarifiers with radial support structures. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

**You don't have to
do it alone!**

-
- The map displays the following Environmental Finance Centers and their locations:
- Environmental Finance Center** (Washington)
 - WaterNow** (California)
 - CAPACITY COLLABORATIVE** (Oregon)
 - ONE WATER SOLUTIONS INSTITUTE** (Colorado)
 - ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER** (Utah)
 - SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER** (New Mexico)
 - MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY MISSISSIPPI WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH INSTITUTE** (Texas)
 - Great Lakes Environmental Infrastructure Center** (Wisconsin)
 - Governance Finance Officers Association** (Michigan)
 - Stony Brook University College of Engineering & Computer Science Environmental Finance Center** (New York)
 - neefc** (New England)
 - ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER** (Pennsylvania)
 - MOONSHOT** (Maryland)
 - MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY** (Virginia)



Explore Funding for Water Infrastructure and Workforce Projects



Visit:
efcnetwork.org/resources/funding-tables/

You Don't Have to Do it Alone!



Rocky Mountain Water
Environment Association
Elevating Water Professionals



Thank you! Questions?

Please complete our post-training evaluation:



Or visit: tinyurl.com/bdm4d9av

S Syracuse University
College of Engineering
& Computer Science
Environmental Finance Center



Averi Davis
Program Manager
E: adavis02@syr.edu

efc.syr.edu