



**Smart Management for
Small Water Systems**

Water Utility Workforce Development

Webinar

April 4, 2017



American Water Works
Association

This program is made possible under a
cooperative agreement with EPA.



www.efcnetwork.org



Today's Topics

- How did we get here?
- Selling the Water Story
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Succession Planning

Human Capital Management



Who Works in Water?



How did you get into the water business?
What is your story?

Workforce Development

✓ Selling the Water Story

Recruitment

Retention

Succession Planning



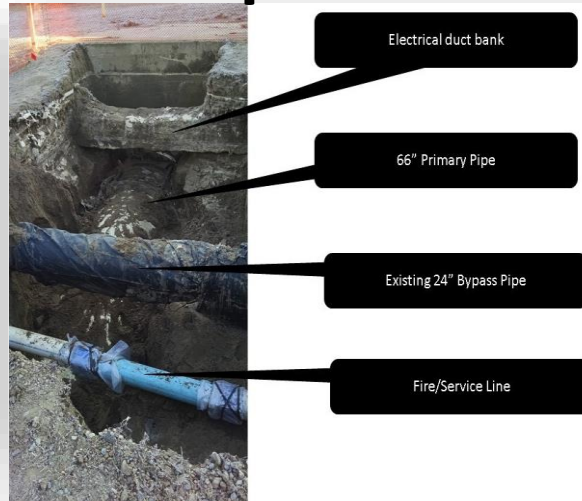
Barriers

Water is...

Typical



Complicated



Political



How Do We Get Others Excited About Water?



What Sells?



Water Isn't Sexy

NOT TRUE!!!!!!

Do you know how often you turn me on?



If only the water faucet could talk to us. It might remind us how often we turn to it for safe water to drink, to wash our clothes, to prepare our food, to provide us with the everyday quality of life we enjoy. It might remind us that the water pipes below our streets make so many everyday conveniences possible.

Our water bills pay to keep our community tap water safe, reliable and there for us — 24/7 without fail. For more information about what your tap water delivers, visit *[insert utility web address here]*.




Only Tap Water DeliversSM

(Place Utility
Logo Here)

Presented in cooperation with

 American Water Works Association

A close-up, high-speed photograph of water being sprayed, creating a dense field of droplets and bubbles. The water is captured in mid-air, giving it a dynamic, almost crystalline appearance. The background is dark, making the bright, white water droplets stand out prominently.

When showering, make it a

Quickie.

Shorten showers – save 2.5 gallons per minute.



We're in a drought! Hetch Hetchy
water – too good to waste.
sfwater.org/conservation



San Francisco
Water Power Sewer
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission



Smart Management for
Small Water Systems

www.efcnetwork.org

GARDENS GONE WILD

Use native, water-efficient plants. It's a DROUGHT.

BAWSCA
Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency



Hetch Hetchy
Regional Water System

bawasca.org/DROUGHT



GO FULL FRONTAL

Upgrade your washer. It's a DROUGHT.

sfwater.org/DROUGHT



San Francisco
Water Power Sewer
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

  
#DROUGHTSF

Water Can Be Funny and Sexy



WATER IS...

























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WHERE
SAFE WATER
BEGINS

Workforce Development

✓ Selling the Water Story

✓ Recruitment

Retention

Succession Planning



Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Needed by the Operator of the Future

Based on the observations by both managers and operators, it is clear there are a set of predominant KSAs that are needed in future operators.

Technical Background

- Science, engineering, technology, and math (STEM)
- Ability to use computers and software programs as a tool

Personal Characteristics

- Dedication and reliability
- Drive, ambition and initiative

Soft Skills

- Critical thinking, problem solving and decision making
- Planning, organizing, directing and controlling

Recruitment

- How effective are your current practices?
- What changes will you have to make to recruit the talent you need?
- What can you do in the short-term?
- Long-term?



Recruiting the Next Generation

You might need:

- Technology
- Flexibility
- Marketing
- Compensation
- Rethinking retention



Creating Interest in Water Careers

Re-Framing Benefits of Working in the Water Industry



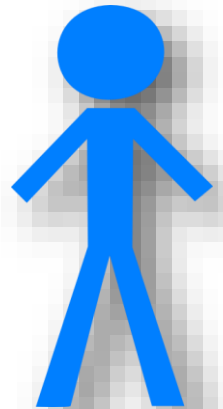
Environmental
Stewardship



High-Tech Nature



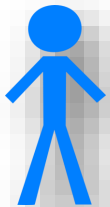
Public Service



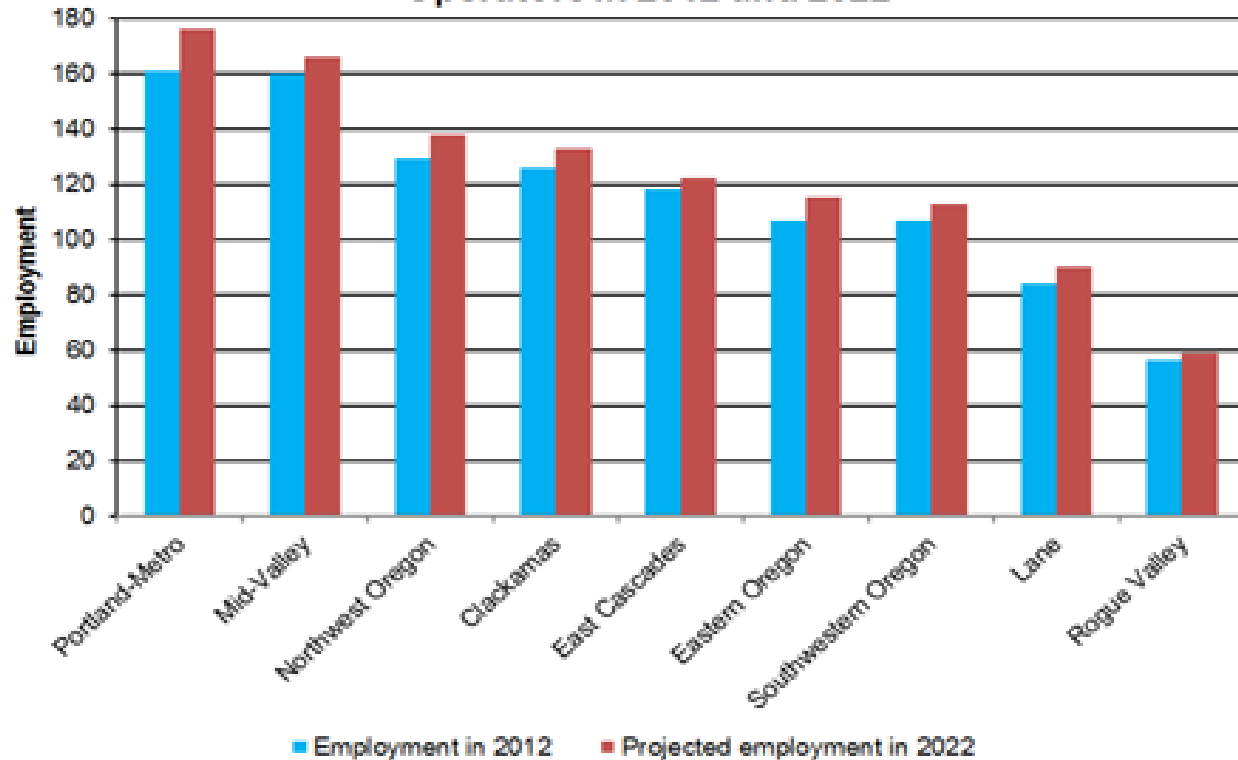
Personal Benefits

Benefits of Working in Water Industry

Stable
Employment



Oregon Employment of Drinking Water and Wastewater Operators in 2012 and 2022



Benefits of Working in Water Industry

Professional Organizations



Benefits of Working in Water Industry

Professional Development & Training



Earn CE Credits!

Spring Water Treatment Operator Courses:

Level 3 | April 25 – May 27

Spring High-Tech Operator Courses:

Level 2 | April 18 – May 7

Level 3 | May 9– May 28

ELEARNING PROGRAM

Welcome to AWWA's eLearning program, offering **self-paced** and **instructor-led** online courses for water industry professionals. We offer quality training and **professional development and continuing education units (CEUs)** with the ability to learn on your own time and at your own pace.

Explore a variety of subjects, methods, and strategies with an **eLearning Subscription** or **Webinar Bundle**. Available for individuals and organizations!

AWWA members receive discounted pricing on Distance Learning products. Learn more about [membership](#).

FEATURED COURSES

NEW! Total Water Solutions Courses

- **EL206 - Why Are Water Service Lines Important**
- **EL207 - Residential Meters**
- **EL208 - Fire Hydrant Basics for Pressurized Water Systems**

Benefits of Working in Water Industry

Quality
of Life





Meaningful Work

Operators Say...

The most satisfying aspect of their work is contributing to the environment and public health



2015 New York Water Environment Association Survey

Recruitment

Outreach/Internships



K-12



Veterans



Post-Secondary



Mid-Career/Professional

Where to Find Good Employees

Cast a Wide but Targeted Net



**Professional
Organizations**



Where to Find Good Employees

Employee Referral Program

Incentivize your current employees to find your next hire.

POWERED BY
CENTER PARTNERS

REFERRALS

THEY REALLY PAY OFF



\$150 THAT'S RIGHT, YOU CAN MAKE UP TO \$150 FOR EVERY PERSON YOU REFER!

BONUS DETAILS

Applicants must put your FULL NAME on their application when they apply.
For each of your referrals who are hired you will receive a \$50 bonus. Once



Every individual has a network.
Every network has a sea of prospects.

Who do you know?

- ▶ You know great people.
- ▶ We're looking for *great people*.
- ▶ You *refer* them to us.
- ▶ We *hire* them.
- ▶ You *earn cash or extra PTO for every referral hired and gift opportunities for every referral interviewed!*

+ 1 = \$750

+ 2 = \$1,500

+ 3 = \$2,250

Get the idea?
Now there's...

Even **More** to **Think** about

Get more details about the program at:

Scan to see how referring works!



www.drivetime-erp.com

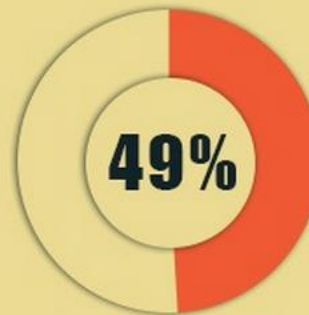
Drivetime is an equal opportunity employer.

Where to Find Good Employees

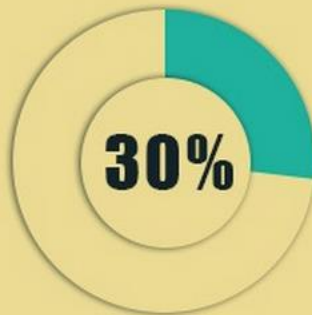
Be Visible Where Your Future Employees
Spend Time... Social Media



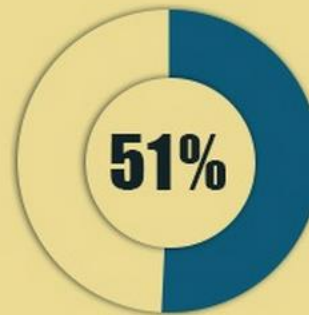
94% of recruiters use or plan to use **social media** for recruiting



Employers who used social media to hire found a 49% improvement in **candidate quality**



30% of all Google searches, about **300 million per month**, are employment related



51% of current employees are **either actively seeking** or open to a new job.

Outreach Opportunities

K-12 Outreach Opportunities

- Develop and deliver in-school educational programming
- Offer field trip opportunities
- Host camps
- Develop and conduct internship/employment program for high school students
- Participate in career fairs/days
- Create and market industry career pathways



High school internship
(King County, WA)



Kid's Camp
(City of Fresno Water
Division)



In school programming
(Jacksonville Electric
Authority)

Outreach Opportunities

Post-Secondary

- Design and implement post-secondary internship programs (technical schools, community colleges, universities)
- Visit classrooms or give tours
- Participate in career fairs/days



INTERN PROGRAM

Inland Empire Utilities Agency provides college students (undergraduate or graduate level) or an individual who has graduated from an accredited college or university the opportunity to explore a wide range of career paths within a regional wastewater treatment agency. Interns are assigned to an Agency department for a specific period of time to learn the administration and operation of the Agency. Assignments may include general administrative duties as well as working on special projects.

Outreach Opportunities

Professional/Mid-Career

- Design and implement an employee referral program
- Host an open house at your water treatment facility
- Design and implement a 'Citizens Academy' to expose current professionals to municipal potential careers

What Is The Citizens' Academy?

The City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Citizens' Academy is a four-week program that provides Richmond citizens an inside look at the operations of DPU. Participants will be introduced to the five utilities DPU operates: natural gas, water, wastewater, stormwater, and electric streetlighting. Tours of various DPU facilities and demonstrations of equipment will be conducted. This program will provide citizens an opportunity to ask questions about the department's operations.



Employing Veterans: Programs & Funding

State/Regional Specific Contacts

For specific program information and program approval



[National Association of State Approving Agencies \(NASAA\)](#)



[U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service \(VETS\)](#)

Where to Find Good Employees

Update Job Descriptions

Communicate knowledge, skills and abilities that align with industry re-branding

- Indeed.com
- Monster.com
- Craigslist
- LinkedIn
- Careerbuilder
- Glassdoor
- Local Paper
- Trade organization listserv/website
- Your website
- Your social media
- Word-of-mouth
- Trade schools

Job Description with a Message

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

(The main reason for the position, in what context and what is the overall end result)

The Water Treatment Plant Operator is responsible for of the water plant in order to ensure that residents have safe and clean water in accordance with federal, territorial and municipal legislation, policies and standards.

SCOPE

(The way that the position contributes to and impacts on the organization)

Reporting to the Public Works Foreman, the Water Treatment Plant Operator maintains the water plant. This includes maintaining the water and sewer treatment plant and facilities.

The delivery of safe and clean water is vital to the safety and health of the community. Failure to provide adequate services will jeopardize the health of the community. Failure to meet federal, territorial and municipal legislation and water quality standards will significantly jeopardize the health and well-being of residents and may result in liability for the municipality. Failure to deal with residents and the public in a courteous and respectful manner will lead to complaints concerning municipal services.

RESPONSIBILITIES

(Major responsibilities and target accomplishments expected of the position including the typical problems encountered in carrying out the responsibilities.)

1. Maintain the water treatment plant systems in order to ensure the availability of a clean community water supply

Main Activities

- Maintain the treatment plant systems
- Maintain and operate the filtering and chemical treatment processes
- Inspect, service and repair components of the water treatment plant including water

Job Description for
a Water Treatment
Plant Operator

Northwest
Territories –
Municipal and
Community Affairs

Workforce Development

- ✓ Selling the Water Story
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ **Retention**
 - Succession Planning



Compensation

Going beyond the \$\$\$

- What is the benefits package?
- Flexible schedule/ Compressed work week
- Home everyday
- Tuition or training assistance
- Bonus time off



Evaluation Basics

- Review performance continually
- Consult others on performance
- Inform employees of assessment process
- Set goals in advance
- Set SMART goals
- Let employee help set goals
- Align goals with organizational objectives
- Keep an open mind about employee's future goals



Evaluation

Set the bar appropriately and retain the best workers.

When evaluating new hires, municipalities should consider the following:

- Transparency; so new employees know what is expected of them
- Providing standard rubrics for common titles to help evaluators
- Assessing each new hire's future potential (not just that they meet the minimum for their current position)

Evaluation Process At-a-Glance:

- Staff self-evaluation
- Supervisor reviews, does own evaluation
- Meet to discuss and set goals for future. Agree, sign, file
- 360 review
- Peer-to-peer reviews (best to be informal)

Sample Evaluation Questions

Use as many open-ended questions as possible.

- What accomplishment(s) are you most proud of?
- In which area(s) would you like to improve?
- What have I done to help you do your job better? What have I done to hinder your job performance?
- Do you have the resources and tools you need to perform your job?
- What are your goals for the next six months/year?
- What do you want your next position at this utility?
- Are there any other concerns you have going forward?

Use the Evaluation Form and Meeting to Set Goals for Future

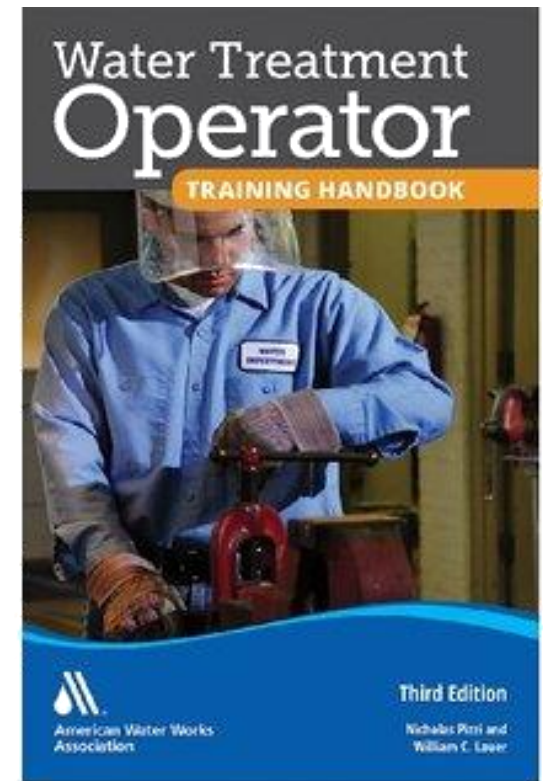
- Pass my 3A certification within 1 year
- Learn more about plant management
 - *SMART Goal*– spend 3 afternoons each month shadowing the plant manager for 1 yr
- Attend trainings and/or webinars to increase my knowledge base
- Increase my communications with peers and management

Learning Objective	Methods and Strategies to meet the Objective	Resources Needed to Achieve Objective – Information, Money, Training, Equipment and/or Time	Deadline or Benchmark Dates	How will success of each learning objective be measured?	Verified? Yes () No ()
I want to learn more about interacting with elected officials and how decisions are made.	I will attend meetings with Department Head and BOS members including individual meetings, work sessions and BOS meetings. I will meet with the Department Head afterward to assess, evaluate and discuss the meetings.	Time to attend meetings. Time with Department Head for review and discussion.	4 months. Goal is to attend 4 individual meetings with BOS members.	Department Head will discuss content, answer questions and evaluate each meeting with me. I will conduct one individual meeting with a BOS member that the Department Head will observe.	
I want to learn more about the budget process including preparation, presentation and justification.	I will work with an experienced Budget Analyst. I will attend budget training workshops	Time to attend budget class Time to attend budget meetings	6 months to go through entire budget cycle including department preparation, budget review and BOS approval	I will meet with Department Head after budget cycle to discuss and evaluate. Next year, I will make department budget presentation at department staff meeting.	
I want to learn to conduct public meetings and make effective presentations.	I will take over public meeting facilitator role from Department Head. I will need to take a PowerPoint class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint class • Time to take classes • Money for classes if not offered by HR • Time to meet with Department Head to do run-through of PowerPoint presentation 	Three (3) months to complete classes. Six (6) months to complete objective.	Department Head will observe me conducting the meeting and will assess how well I prepared for the meeting by seeing how I handle questions from the audience, and by getting feedback from audience members.	

Training

Employees require tremendous investment and reinvestment

- In-house training – site specific knowledge
- Funding recertification training
- Incentivize training
- Offer training modules for non-operator positions
- Send to conferences to network



“People worry about paying to train staff who then leave...

...But what happens if we don't pay to train them and they stay?”

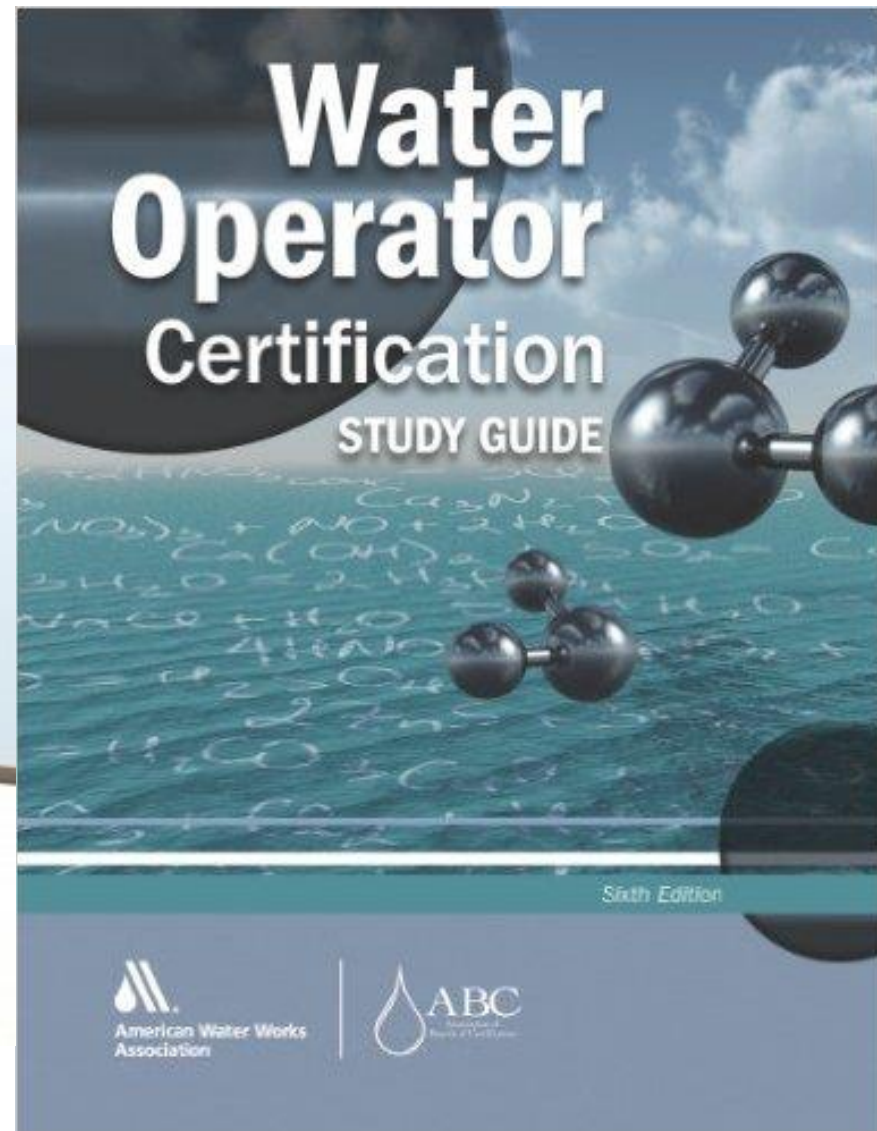
Mentoring and Coaching

DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



Licensing & Recertification



Assess your work environment





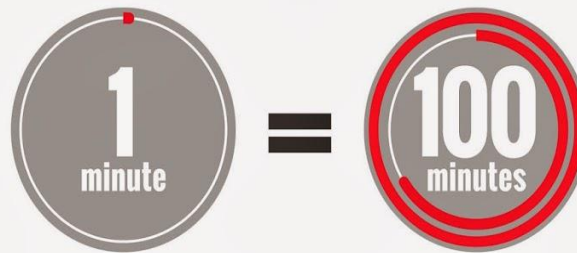


How can we make our work environment more attractive? Take pride?



Recognition

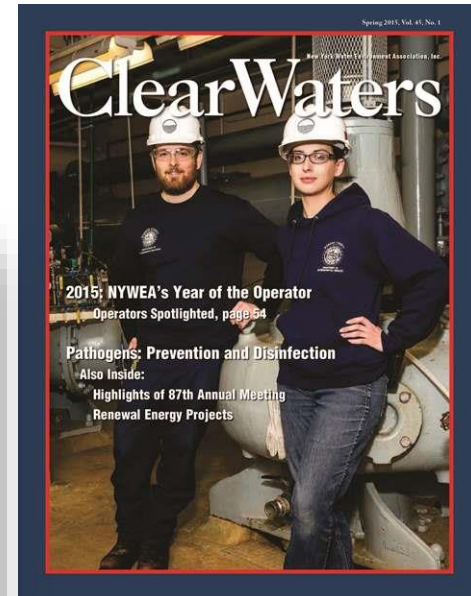
“Recognition is proven as among the best method of improving work motivation and employee engagement.”



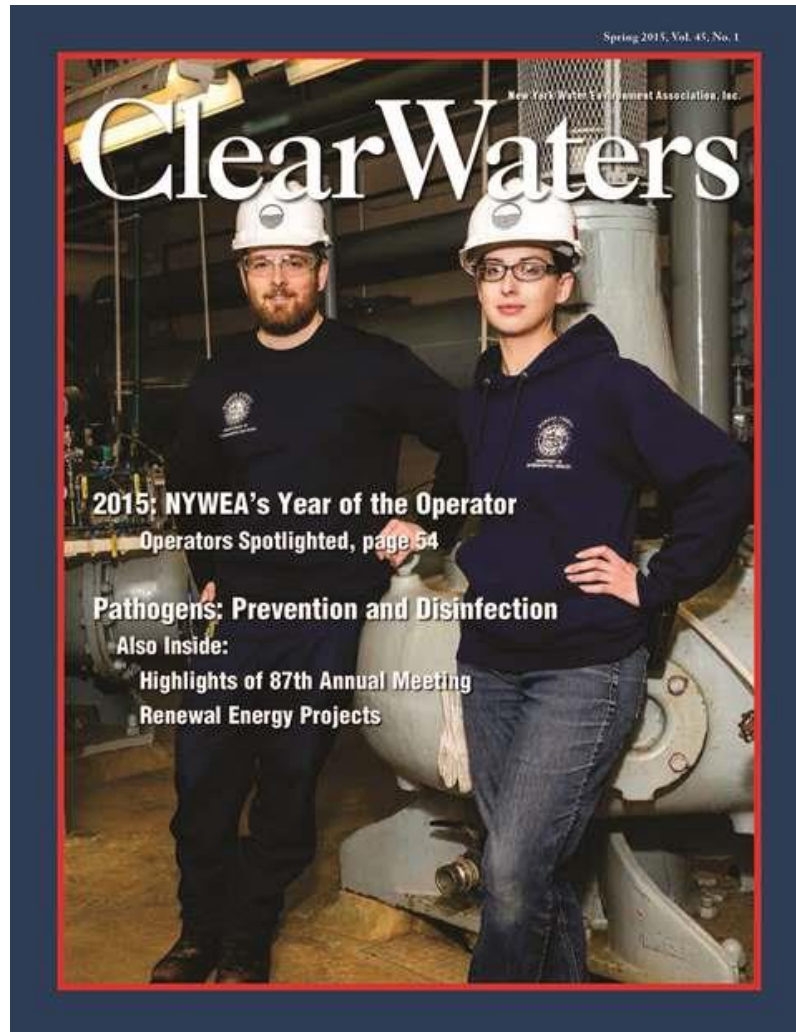
1 minute spent on recognising behaviour
= 100 minutes of initiative in return.



Yet 2 out of 3 people receive no workplace recognition in a given year.



Recognition



Recognize and reward employees...and those pursuing certifications.





Ops Challenges: Networking, skill-building, training and recognition

Positive Workplace Relationships

- Birthday recognition
- Occasional “Happy Hour”
- Evening/weekend family BBQs
- Christmas Party



Workforce Development

- ✓ Selling the Water Story
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Retention
- ✓ Succession Planning



Employees
Leave.

They always do.

Preparation for that
day is Succession
Planning



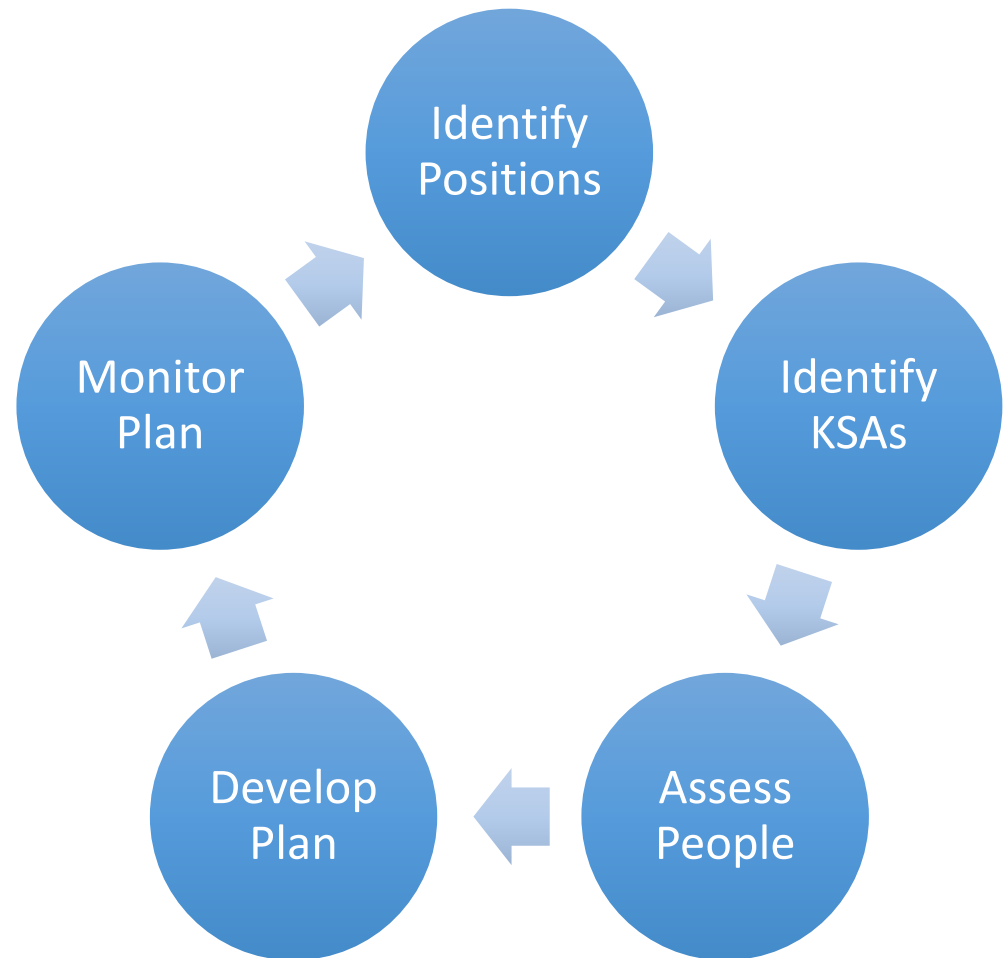
Are You Ready for People to Leave?

- Retirement
- Leaving for a different job
- FMLA
- Other circumstances...

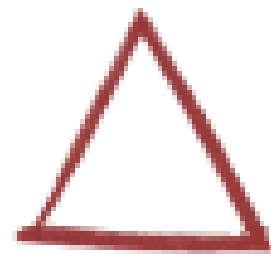


Succession Plan

Systematic approach to building replacement workers to ensure continuity, by identifying potential successors in ***critical*** work processes

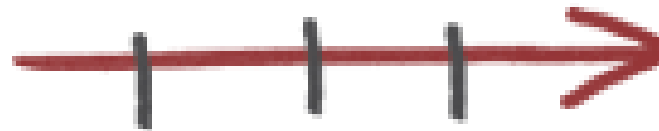


Gap Analysis



Current
State

GAP



Key factors for change



Desired
State



Action Plan

Review Your Workforce

Demographics (of workforce and community)

Employee Profile

- Age and years of service
- Competencies and skills
- Knowledge

Workforce Breakdown

- Managers
- Lab staff
- Operators
- Maintenance



Current State:

What Knowledge, Skills and Abilities do you have today?

Think across the board – not just for operators; everyone who is tied to your water system



Desired State:

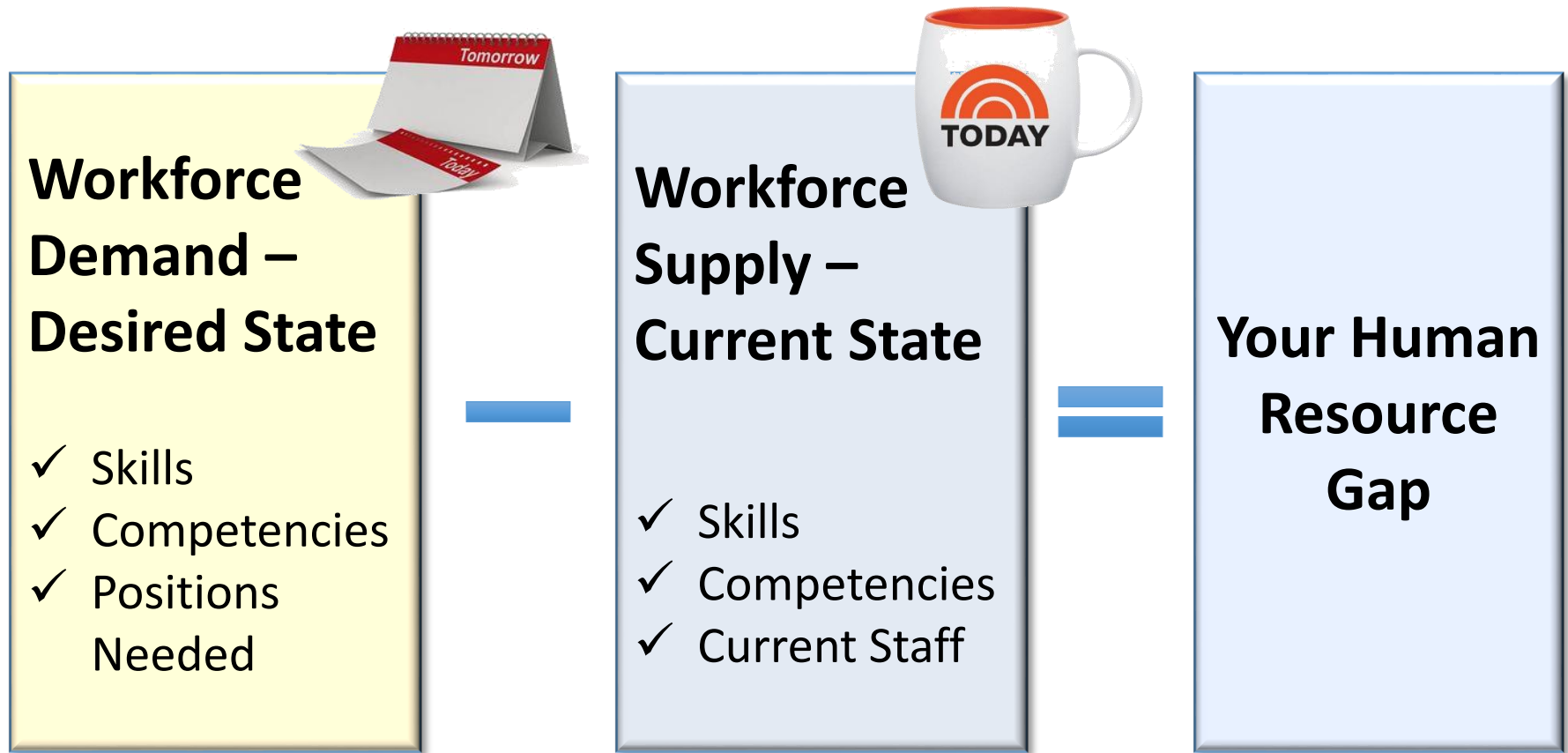
What Knowledge, Skills and Abilities do you need 5 – 10 years from now?

Think about:

- local demographic changes
- environmental changes
- political changes
- technological changes
- regulatory changes



Analyze Workforce Gaps



Identify Who is Leaving...and When

Which jobs are likely to experience retirements in the next five years?

What is the impact?



Human Capital Criticality



Retooling

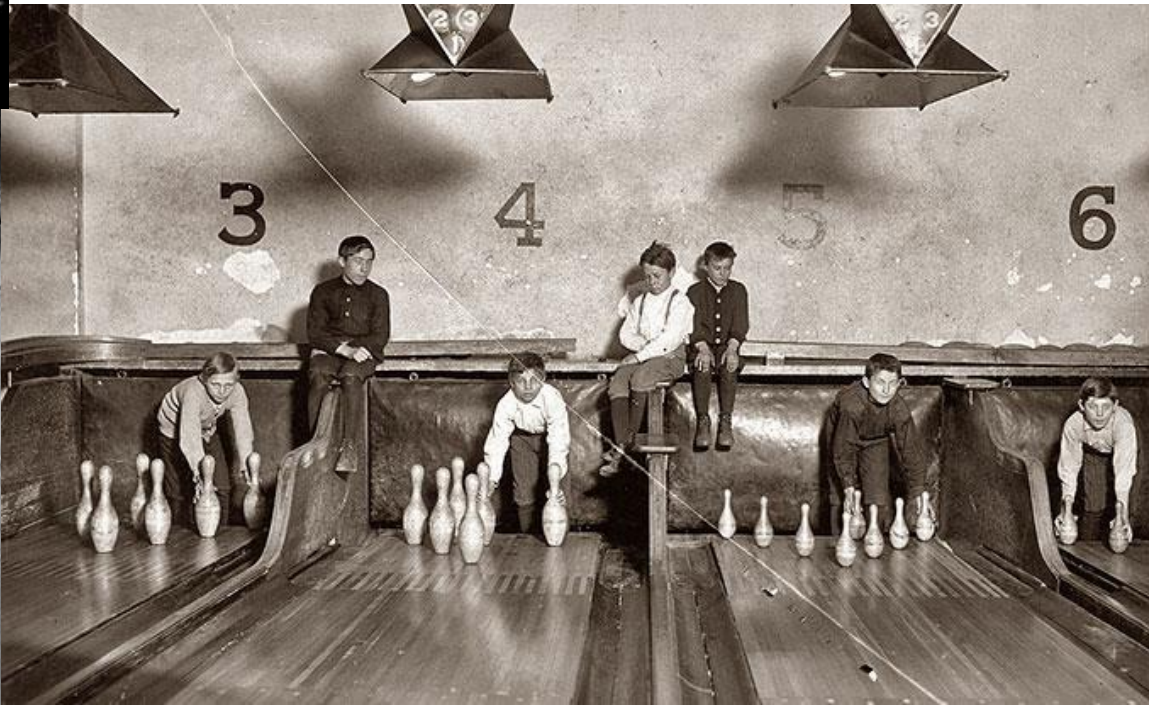
Are there alternative ways to get the work done...





Reinvention

... or, should the job be done at all?



Think About Redundancy

- Cross training
- Multi-skilling
- Retiree/Part timer
- Outside sources of talent
- Contractors



Contracting Possibilities?

- Electrical
- Instrumentation & Control
- Payroll
- Maintenance/ Grounds

Common Pitfalls



- Keeping it a secret
- Underestimating talent within
- Narrow minded thinking – too old/young, rough, different
- Focusing exclusively on hard skills (value soft skills)
- Not offering training/development opportunities
- Expecting employees to self-identify; help them see what they can be
- Not holding managers accountable for succession planning
- Considering only upward succession. Lateral?
- One size fits all program
- Producing too many candidates for too few spots

So, to wrap up...

- Recruiting requires re-branding
- Reach new markets through new avenues
- Create the pipeline
- Develop knowledge, skill & ability sheets for each position
- Retention requires reinvestment and recognition
- Plan for folks to leave



Contact Me

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