



Water Utility Workforce Development Training Workbook

Strategies for finding and keeping quality staff



Smart Management for Small Water Systems



Introduction

People are definitely a company's greatest asset. It doesn't make any difference whether the company's product is cars or cosmetics (or water). A company (water system) is only as good as the people it keeps.

Mary Kay Ash, Founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc.

NOTES



WHO WORKS IN WATER?



[Human Capital]

People are your most valuable assets

You need the right people...
With the right skills...
In the right roles.

**Can you keep up with
the changing demands
in the water industry?**

Workforce Planning Self-Evaluation

1) Which of the following best describes the workforce planning efforts in your system?

- ☐ Our system has a *formal* organization-wide workforce plan approved by the governing body, chief elected official or chief administrative official.
- ☐ Our system has a *formal* organization-wide workforce plan developed and used by the Human Resources office.
- ☐ Our system has an *informal* organization-wide workforce plan developed and used by the Human Resources office.
- ☐ Departments are required to develop workforce plans.
- ☐ Our system does not conduct central workforce planning.

2) Which of these workforce data categories does your system collect?

	No	Developing	Yes
Demographics (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, etc.)			
Age distribution of current workforce			
Skills of current workforce			
Competencies of current workforce			
Average years of service of current workforce			
Time to fill vacant positions			
Employee performance levels			
Turnover rates			
Use a third party			

3) Which of these workforce planning and analysis activities does your system conduct?

	No	Developing	Yes
Retirement projections			
Competitiveness of compensation strategies			
Recruiting plans			
Inclusion of a human resources section in system's strategic plan			

<i>Planning and analysis activities continued</i>	No	Developing	Yes
Short-term staffing needs (1 year or less)			
Long-term staffing needs (more than 1 year)			
Identification of high-potential employees			
Identification of critical hiring areas			
Identification of key positions within the government			
Succession plans			
Training plans			
Workforce gap analysis			

4) Which of these workforce training or employee development activities does your system conduct?

	No	Developing	Yes
Formal cross-training programs			
Formal mentoring			
Leadership development programs			
Management development programs			
Individual development plans			
Individual development gap analysis			
Rotational work assignments			
Identification of organizational competencies			
360-degree evaluations			
Provide money for external training (e.g. to cover conference fees, course registration, etc.)			
Supervisory training			
Formal Coaching			

LIST 3 CRITICAL POSITIONS IN YOUR SYSTEM

1)

2)

3)

Messaging



Water is...



Know Your Audience

Visuals Speak

Use Humor

Make it Meaningful

Facts are 20 times more likely to be remembered if they are part of a story.

So you probably won't remember this one

What story is being told about your utility now?
(by employees, the board, the public?)

What story do you want to be told about your utility?



People ARE going to tell stories about you whether you want them to or not. Choose which ones they tell.

Bob McDonald, CEO Procter and Gamble

NOTES



WHY WORK IN WATER?

Environmental Stewardship

environmental protection appeals to job seekers

Public Service

water is vital to communities—
everyone wants work that matters

High Tech

new technologies improve efficiency & appeal
to younger workers

Stable Employment

communities will always need water = job security

Good Salary

high skill level & training = higher pay range

Professional Development

industry changes = opportunities to learn new
methods, tools & technologies

Professional Organizations

opportunities for networking, training & mentoring

Advancement

opportunities to move to larger systems or
into managerial positions

Union Representation

provides employee protections & networking

Small Town Living

unlimited benefits—short commute, low cost of
living & many more



What is your water industry recruitment campaign message?



Recruiting

Recruitment Checklist

- ☐ List the knowledge, skills & abilities your system needs
- ☐ Have, or be open to, updated technology
- ☐ Determine your systems flexibilities (ex: schedules, communication, etc)
- ☐ Develop a recruitment marketing plan
- ☐ Assess compensation levels—are they attractive?
- ☐ Have a plan for retention

by 2020, Millennials will make up 50% of the workforce

WHO ARE MILLENNIALS?



Born 1980-2000



Millennials are currently aged between 16 and 36

71% want meaningful relationships with their co-workers

75% want to work in a job where they can make an impact

42% want to work for a company that has a positive impact on the world



45% consider flexible working more important than pay



Millennials Value...



Opportunity



Dedicated to Larger Purpose



Role in the "Big Picture"



Work-Life Integration



Collaboration

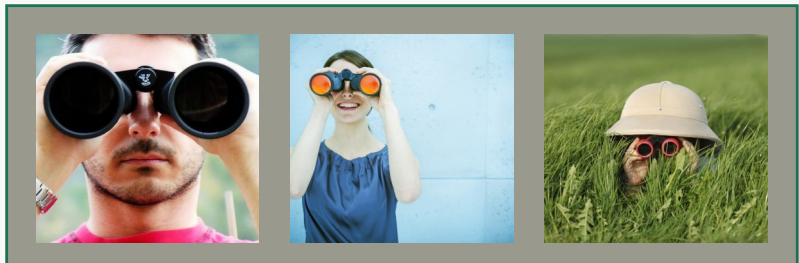


Positive Feedback

NOTES

WHERE TO FIND GOOD EMPLOYEES

- Employee Referrals
- Social Media
- Professional Organizations
- Local Groups or Associations
- K-12 Outreach Programs
- College, University or Technical School Outreach
- Citizens' Academy Programs or Tours
- Veterans Programs



Recruitment Exercise—*Hot Topics / Cool Ideas*

Who will you target?

How will you target them?

Who & what do you need?



Job Descriptions

Water Plant Operator – Russell, KS

SALARY RANGE: \$13.24 - \$18.75

Example #1

The Water Plant Operator is an entry-level, rotating shift position involving semi-skilled work in connection with water filtration and pumping to provide safe drinking water to the City. An employee in this position is responsible for learning the operation and filtration equipment and direct supervision, analysis of field samples, collecting and testing water samples, adjusting chemical feed equipment for proper operation and general maintenance of the water plant. Work follows prescribed procedures and is reviewed regularly by the supervisor.

Requires a high school diploma or G.E.D. and a valid driver's license. The employee is required to obtain and maintain at least a Class I Water Operator Certification after one year in the position. Must be a resident of Russell County within 6 months of hire date.

The applicant chosen will be subject to a pre-employment assessment and drug screening.

Applications and a complete job description are available at the Russell City Building • 133 W. 8th St. • P.O. Box 112 • Phone (XXX)XXX-XXX or at www.russellcity.org. Position open until Friday,

Water Treatment Plant Operator—Northwest Territories, Municipal and Community Affairs

Example #2

Purpose of Position

The Water Treatment Plant Operator is responsible for 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

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

- 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...


How could one of the job descriptions on page 10 be rewritten to incorporate the messaging and recruitment concepts from today?



Water Plant Operator – (Insert your system name here)

Retention

NOTES



Recruitment
Compensation
Evaluation
Training
Employee Focus

Evaluation = Expectation Conversation

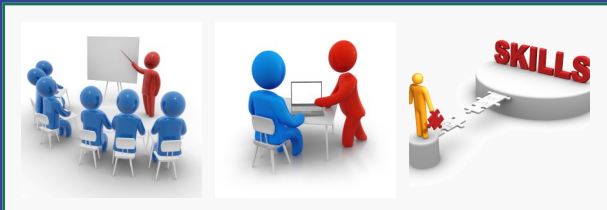


- ⇒ Continually tell staff about good and poor performance
- ⇒ Be sure staff knows how and what will be evaluated
- ⇒ Set challenging AND attainable goals
- ⇒ Staff's goals should align with organizational objectives
- ⇒ Keep an open mind about the staff's future goals

Training

Invest in Staff Training to Retain Them

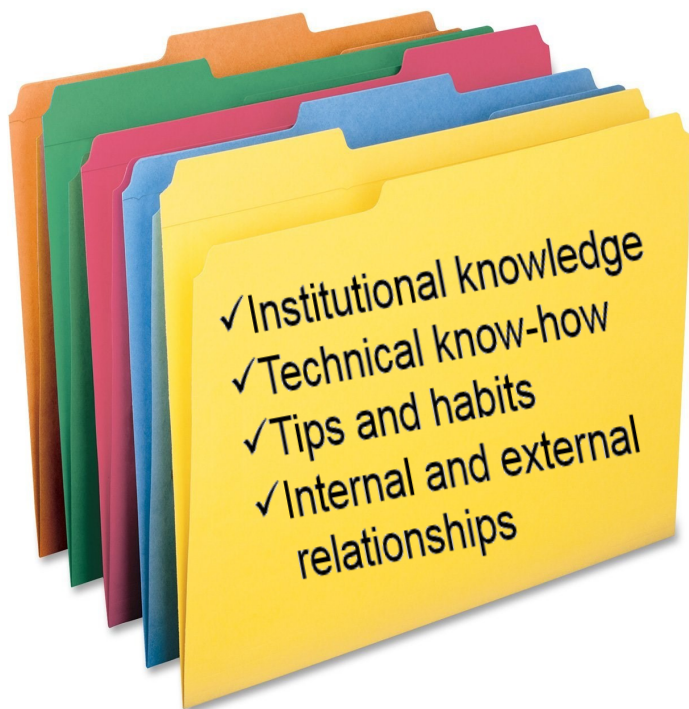
Offer in-house training Fund recertification
Send to conferences Incentivize training



Recognition is the #1 way to improve work motivation and employee engagement!

Knowledge Transfer

What to Transfer



KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Methods

Work Teams

Job Shadowing—hire before retire

Mentoring

Desk Manuals—Videos

Databases

Cross-Training

Overlapping Positions

Professional Organizations

Retention & Knowledge Transfer Exercise —

If I Knew Then...What I Know Now...

If you could go back in time, what 3 pieces of advice would you go back and tell yourself during your first year on the job to help you in your career field?

How could you share these 3 things with new hires within the first 6 months?

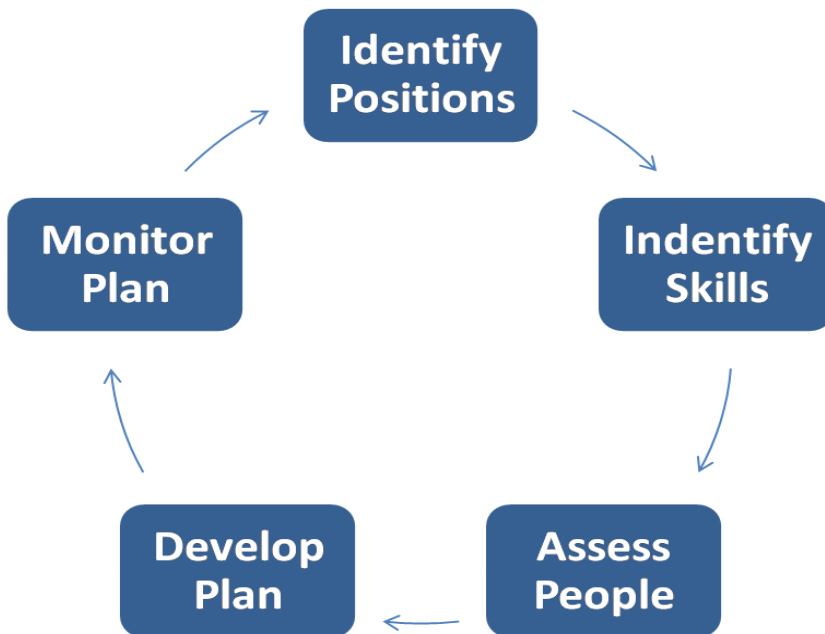
How would you evaluate mastery during or by the 1st year evaluation?

Succession Planning

Before companies (water systems) can start thinking about their succession plans, they have to understand their jobs.



Sharlyn Lauby, HR Bartender

NOTES

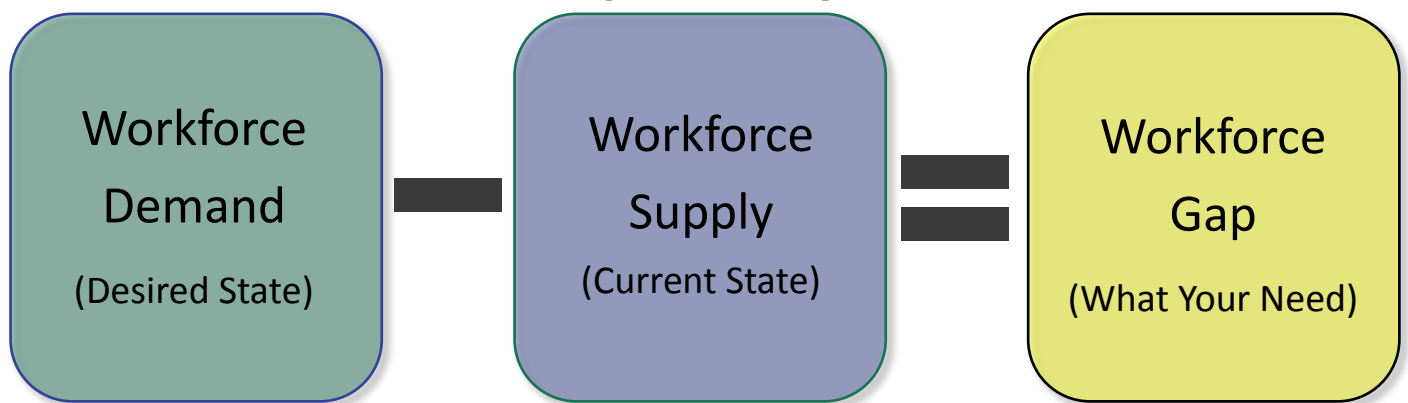


Avoid Pitfalls

- Keeping it secret
- Underestimating talent within
- Not valuing the “soft skills”
- Not holding managers accountable
- Considering only upward succession
- Expecting employees to self-identify
- Not offering training
- Producing too many candidates for too few spots

 Today	 Future
Knowledge—Skills—Abilities	Knowledge—Skills—Abilities

Gap Analysis



What's missing? Can you handle the gap with professional development or training?

If you remove one of your employees, what gaps open up?

You have options: reorganize duties, provide training or hire.



Workforce Development

Carryout



What are we doing well?

What could we improve?

In the next 3 months, I will _____

to improve _____

_____.

