

## Innovation in Certification 2018 Ah-Ha! Moments

- The BAYWORK presentation was great and sparked a lot of ideas! (x5 Ah-Has!)
- Believe keeping water clean is building a cathedral! (x4 Ah-Has!)
- As regulators, we believe everything must be "required". I can "recommend" a higher standard and watch the cream rise to the top!
- Validate and assess, assess and validate, continually. Mediocre training produces mediocre operators that will not grow.
- Treat your students as equals, establish a personal connection. Respect will come when they see your passion!
- Compliance is the commodity, *not* education or learning!
- I need to reconsider requiring all trainers to give assessments for their students to earn CEUs.
- We must adapt or die.
- How do I evaluate the effectiveness of our trainings? I need to do more to assess whether our training is encouraging the rights changes in behavior!
- We are "mentors". Take it to the "personal" level.
- Don't kill the fly with a sledgehammer - don't act on whims. Make data-driven decisions when you create policies.
- While regulator and regulatee often did not choose the single *most* pressing issue, we frequently shared the top four issues. Even though we have different perspectives, there was commonality between us in the issues that we see as impactful to our industry/profession.
- "I'm not the smartest person in the room." I always learn so much from others at ABC conferences!
- Suggestion to obtain copyright of exams. Ethical behavior agreement to be signed by test taker immediately prior to the examination.
- The 40% of companies failing leads to the question - why are others not? Adaptability? Resilience? Networking?
- There are many resources available for small systems.
- Knowing how to do it and doing it how you know it needs to be done.
- The longer you wait to adapt, the harder it's going to get. Start the work today.
- How do you measure return on investment for human assets? Shift in thinking is required!
- Just because someone knew how to do the job 40 years ago doesn't mean they know how to do it today!
- I need to look into policy if I discover an examinee cheats during an exam.



- The legal ramifications of testing and noncompliance. Is the agency that employs operators held to the same standards as the certifying agency?
- Deviating from established policy and procedure may set you up for legal liability.
- I did not realize sharing memorized or emailed questions one remembered from a recent test taken is taboo. I believe our regulation does not address this issue.
- It's about ongoing relationships, not just while students are in the classroom.
- We have lots of problems in common and sharing will help solve them!
- Keep a vision of the mission to truly protect the public interest.
- I loved learning about the rules/regulations ongoing continuing education requirement in the state of Iowa. Good stuff!
- I like the idea of the trainers buffet. I think the operators will, too.
- We cannot charge for ADA accommodations, unless it creates an undue burden.
- Bill Edgar said: "Online training has been evolving over the years. Where we are today is attributed to everyone in ABC and our work with IACET. We are what we are today as a result of working with you and providing what you need." What we need has also changed over the years. Our needs are now *much* more comprehensive and complex than in 2000!
- Routines are learned, not the science or reasoning behind it. That's why our operators fail.
- Regulations change and will in most cases be validated by other regs. But troubleshooting process and maintenance is paramount to achieving success.
- If we don't tell our story, no one else will.
- Recommend standards even if you can't require them. Great idea!
- If we don't address our workforce issues, particularly pay, we are going to lose our good operators to companies like Walmart and McDonalds.
- There is a fine balance between training for exams and training to the exam. We need to be careful with wording during training sessions.
- Show growth potential in water sector, not just operator potential.
- If you want an answer, ask a question!
- Workforce solution = remove the word "qualified".
- We have been connecting things for the last 20 years.
- Organizations are dying at a faster rate than 40 years ago.
- "If you're looking for qualified staff, take out the word 'qualified'!" – Dean West
- "There is no shortcut in this life!" - Ramzi Mahmood



- The relationship between regulators, trainers, and operators must be mutually beneficial and not cannibalistic!
- There is a difference between "accommodation" and "ADA required accommodation".
- Every jurisdiction is facing operator shortages.
- It is unethical for schools to train by saying: "This is a test question.", and then give the answer.
- Our job is to make it possible for operators to do their job.
- Short training videos for operator training and staff development can be beneficial.
- As leaders, it's our jobs to create environments for others to prosper.
- Too many licenses required hinder getting the job done! Modules should be considered as options (badges).
- I have been attending these conferences for 20+ years. The issues are still the same, but with modern technology, the issues change emphasis and I see hope for more networking and sharing solutions in this technological age. The basics of making a plant work are changing as we're making exam questions more challenging.
- Always have two interviewers.
- Make your presence known to regulators - we are experts.
- Validating regulatory competency involves specialized training of operators in protecting water resources for public health.
- Technology is like a moving train - if you don't hop on, you're left far behind. But how do we close the gap between operators who embrace it and those that resist it?
- Don't lower the bar - when other programs want us to lower standards we always recommend that they raise theirs to be more like ours!
- What we need is an attitude shift, not a competency shift. What it means to be an operator is changing as the profession changes, and attitude is vital to accomplishing this transition.
- I plan to use email to send renewals next year.
- The commodity is compliance, not education and training.
- Micro nuggets can be a great learning tool.
- Pechakucha.org
- Some approval procedures for CEUs can seem unfriendly or difficult. We need to be part of the solution, not the problem.
- It's always about the relationships! Regulators and trainers; certification program and operators.
- It's advisable to monitor the web and social media for persons sharing test questions.
- I want to look into PDF and online applications.
- At the First-Time Attendees' Breakfast, it was mentioned that water and wastewater operators are as important as firefighters - and no national certification examination.



- When looking at ADA accommodations, you have to think if that accommodation will alter what the examination is intended to accomplish/show.
- Evening fun (at a piano bar) can increase conversations and networking during the final day of the Conference.
- The key to a more robust level of workers is cooperatives between utilities and employers of certified operators.
- There is so much information sharing available if you just LOOK FOR IT.
- Our industry loses people to seemingly "lower" fields. How do we retain folks?
- There is no significant difference between in-class training and online learning if the variables are kept consistent.
- We, as a state, should at least examine/review how we can protect ourselves from legal issues relating to negligent certification.
- After networking with others in the industry this week, I have found a surprising number of things I can really work on when I get home.
- I have not been to a Conference for a few years and was very happy to see how much ABC has grown and changed in a few short years. The change is so positive and effective! Thank you Paul and your team (Staff and Board) for providing great leadership. Hope you stay for a long time.

