

Innovation in Certification 2019 Ah-Ha! Moments

- Know your "why", share your "why", tell your story. If you don't, who will? (x8 Ah-Has!)
- Allow the free fall! Give your "students" time to answer the question and the opportunity to absorb and develop their answer. Allow for the period of disequilibrium. (x7 Ah-Has!)
- Manage energy first, then time. (x4 Ah-Has!)
- Peter Brooks of waterTALENT recommends turning the water job recruitment message to veterans into a challenge: "Do you have what it takes to be a water operator?" (x4 Ah-Has!)
- AWWA's water audit software can be useful - more states should utilize it. (x4 Ah-Has!)
- I had not thought about needing to defend the value of certification. Good to think about arguments we might need.
- Great trainers focus outward on their learners, not inward on themselves.
- We need to be more transparent with our course approval process.
- I would like to make study plans for our different clarifications.
- What new ways are out there for use by "cheaters"? ie: contact lenses with built in cameras.
- Acceptable water loss is 0%.
- I think that the states should work with ABC to standardize CEU provider applications.
- The student engagement derived from active learning is amazing.
- When you multitask, nothing gets done!
- Using a "percentage" as a measurement doesn't always truly reflect the situation or compliance.
- I had never considered the possibility that the percent of meters that were functioning was so small. I always thought the problem was with un-metered systems! Good to know!
- Need to do more outreach to examinees with resources after

they fail and before they test. More clear info on the website on resources.

- Variability of standards from state to state can be a detriment to a positive thing.
- "Processes in training": different way to help people learn and absorb info.
- We need more incentives to attract women to become operators. (It was great to see and meet all of the amazing females in this group!)
- If you are not on the table, you are on the menu. Make sure your issues are on the table.
- It is amazing how invaluable industry networking can be and how, regardless of state, province, or nation, we are all so similar.
- The idea of management boot camp: this could be used at multiple levels (not just management) for succession planning.
- Bloom's activity (having participants write questions) really brings clarity on the taxonomy.
- Learning requires nurturing.
- Testing for certification won't continue regulation training through the life of the certificate. Updated regulation training with renewal of certifications sounds super valuable.
- Find a "buddy" to help recruit a vet! Help enlisted military get certified before getting out.
- Is there an opportunity for some basic transparency standards for approval of courses (clear application, clearly stated renewal timeline, specific requirements defined, etc.)? This is a good first step before talking about blanket approvals, etc.
- The CDC has free online training courses.
- I had no idea there was such a difference in water compliance between Indian reservations and nationwide systems.
- We need to have a better method of regularly



communicating with our operators.

- The sudden awareness that seasoned operators might need regulatory refreshment.
- Why reinvent the wheel? Take advantage of guidance available from ABC!
- As regulations change, training must change and be updated. Some seasoned/old operators may now know less than new operators.
- Adult motivation = problem-centered learning
- Is it a true "shortage" of available operators, or poor planning at the utility level to train and promote existing staff? Is this an issue certification can fix?
- Requiring operator training in regulations as a part of the renewal process is a great idea.
- AWWA has an exam prep app.
- Requiring rule training as part of CEUs and on certification renewals.
- Education and training are not the same thing - need to assess our goals in our classes.
- "We are protecting lives through knowledge and understanding." - Mary Howell
- We need to provide more regulatory training, focusing on "why", not "how much."
- Individual operator effort and accountability is an important factor in their success in passing an exam. "More training" is not always the answer.
- States have such varying regs, but we all have the same goals.
- Trainers and regulators are embracing and adapting well to the new standardized testing. Very innovative ideas to incorporate regulatory issues and teach them to operators.
- Guide students to Khan Academy before exams!
- Find a state that has strict CEU approvals and become their buddy so if they approve, we approve!



- Open digital badges! Awesome, just what I'm looking for to document student experience.
- Breaking down complex instruction into layman terms - learner-centered. Incorporate visuals to simplify complex verbiage.
- I'm surprised that legislators see certification programs as an antitrust issue and/or a cash cow.
- Provide unexpected rewards to engage students!
- Assimilation vs Accommodation: these two different learning processes need to be quickly established before adult learning can really take place.
- Importance of empathy in student motivation.
- The understanding of andragogy vs pedagogy.
- The need to develop streamlined guidelines for military veteran certification.
- Use "operational plan" as part of capacity development as requirement for SRF funding -
- require rate setting to ensure competitive wages for operators, succession planning, etc. Good thought for integrating cap dev and op cert!
- Workforce development: think way outside the box, such as apprenticeship programs, "school" programs, women, and veterans.
- Flipped classroom model may be the solution to our problem making sure that our entry level operators are getting the basics. I think that we need to develop an entry level class covering the basics that would work as the foundation for further trainings.
- Reciprocity issues are even larger than I originally thought. This is an issue in all states.
- You'll never teach an adult anything unless it's connected to something they already know.
- I found wateroperator.org's explanation of what different states require to accept CEUs for online training very interesting and informative.



- Pass rate on repeat exam is expected to be lower than first time test takers!
- There is still confusion, even at legislative levels, over terminology: certificate vs certification, certification vs licensure, registry vs registered.
- It is difficult to prove a negative. ie. Proving that certification prevented a major incident.
- AWWA veterans program: the state credentialing body should know the volunteers in our state.
- It is remarkably easy to get a goal accomplished when you expand your view to include people and organizations outside your comfort "box". Need to look at team building along an "Oceans II" line where everyone can best use their unique talents.
- "Utilities that refuse to send their operators to train outside of their utilities are setting their operators up to fail." - Alan Cranford
- It's ok to ask students to do pre-work for training. The burden is on the student to prepare and follow up to fill in gaps.
- Bring in pre-existing knowledge to introduce new.
- Women are an untapped resource when it comes to operators in the workforce.
- "We must work with our people. We need to mentor them." - Mary Howell
- Work to convince people that working in the water sector is a worthwhile career in an important industry.
- AWWA exam prep app : the number 1 question I receive is: "what can I use to study?"
- Competency is more relevant than the ability to memorize rules and regulations.
- "Let's create the guiding voice to change the future of the water workforce." - Paul Bishop
- We need to engage and respect existing mid-career operators to retain them. We need more thorough succession planning in our utilities' communities.

