

TRAINING

By Tim Tice Groundwater Specialist

For the “x” number of odd years, classroom style training has been a part of the job description in which we at Oregon Association of Water Utilities hold. I am quite proud to be a member of a team that constantly evaluates the way we structure the classes, look at the needs of the people, the comfort of the location and most of all, the building of camaraderie between the two. Should we add a little FUN into the mix or is the word “voodoo” when it pertains to education?

Some of you may have attended one of the classes presented by OAWU and our hope is that it was a good experience. But how can we make it a better experience?

If you have not sat in on a class session or two with OAWU, this next question is still relevant. When you go to a class, is it to better your position / career, is it because you are genuine in your desire to learn and improve, or is it because the boss or the regulations say that “you have to”? Could it be for the get away, trying to blend a little business with pleasure? Any how, what is the specific reason why we attend classes or why we choose one class over any other?

In evaluating classes, the team approach works well for OAWU. Every employee has an idea and current methods can be improved, especially when all of us are thinking to enhance the overall experience.

As we move toward the seasons of change, 2007 will be here before we know it. The training calendar is being devised, tweaked and substantiated for the most part, to improve the experience you have in attending our classes. The challenge this article poses to you, the reader, is to let us know what you feel is important when it comes to having a great experience. A simple e-mail to our office, office@oawu.net with a suggestion would be greatly appreciated. Remember, all of us have an idea and there is no such thing as a bad idea, it may be that it needs to be fine-tuned.

We feel that if “we plan our work and work our plan” the outcome will be a win-win situation for everyone. A “liaison” in business means that we, as a leader in the water industry are the link between the people that have something to offer and those in need. Need? Information, applicability, resources are all something we need from time to time.

What is it that you sense you need? How can we assist you in such a request?

The notion that people who change their minds about anything are weak is a misnomer, where those who embrace change and adapt, keeping an open mind stay ahead in the race. By instilling the perception that change is good, one develops good habits towards the ideas of change. It is the acceptance of change that will continue to keep one in front as the leader.



Provide a base-line quality standard and define a higher level through accepting change. We consider you the reader as part of the team that can assist us in defining such a level. You may be scratching your head saying, how? Assistance in understanding clear learning targets regarding subject matter, location and length of courses are all points to consider, and who would know better than the attendees.



Class styles vary about as much as the number of presenters. The subject has a lot to do with how a class can fly. Open forums discussing personnel and management topics can be quite lively. Discuss regulations, liabilities, sexual harassment and the plane never achieves lift off. People feel some subjects are taboo. While visiting a water system, talking about class format, the supervisor said, “As long as that gentleman is teaching a class, I will be attending”. What a remarkable compliment! Something that we can all strive for at each task assigned to us.

As we at OAWU consider the tasks we are endeared with and the complexities involved completing such tasks, training is a major portion of the work. So if

you attend our sessions because of the style of teaching, location, fun or to just see our smiling faces, it is very much appreciated. Without the support of the members and associate members, we probably would not exist today. Let us know how we are doing both in and out of the classroom. We can assure you that comments are read and put to good use. Enjoy the summer months, since we know autumn is the season of change. Best of everything that life has to offer! Mr. opTIMist