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## Hiring Skilled Staff in the Cross Connection Control and the Backflow Industry.

The Backflow industry, among others, has long been struggling to find viable candidates possessing proper skill sets matching industry requirements. The unforeseen event of Covid-19 has forced companies to layoff millions of staff, changing the available skilled labor pool virtually overnight. Being as much of an optimist as possible, I am trying to find a silver lining during this life-changing event that we find ourselves in today.

Many of the people who were laid off during the Covid-19 event are a result of the “Stay At Home Order”. Unfortunately, many of those laid off will never return to their previous jobs. The good news for those who were laid off is that many have skill sets that dovetail nicely into our industry, presenting an opportunity for the newly laid off to begin a new career in the backflow industry. The backflow industry is considered an essential business required to ensure the public’s drinking water systems remain protected from contamination.

As someone who has hired staff in the previous employment climate prior to Covid-19, finding a qualified person in a niche industry makes it even more challenging. If you are hiring, what are the best candidates you should seek out? I have found prospective staff members need to have a personality and work ethic conducive to working within the team construct. Also required are the technical skills that fit well within the multifaceted niche skills of cross-connection control and backflow testing. Finding those skills was difficult to achieve in a weak labor pool because those skills were highly-desired and in great demand. If you are hiring in the position of backflow testing or cross-connection control, seek out those desired skills that translate into team players listed below:

1. Ability to understanding and interpret legal rules and regulations
2. Having a knowledge and understanding of fluid hydraulics
3. Mechanical background and understanding of isometric drawings and flow charts
4. Ability to interpret manufacturer specifications on plumbing systems and composite parts
5. Computer skills with the ability to navigate software programs and communicate using email
6. Having the ability to act as a professional and good steward for the promotion on the importance of cross connection control and backflow testing
7. Problem solving abilities
8. Math and writing skills
9. Understanding of basic troubleshooting technics
10. Team player interacting with multiple groups

When you think of a cross-connection control program, be aware that it takes a team effort to be effective. Many staff and program components are required to ensure drinking water systems remain protected from backflowing contaminates. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

James Probst

AWWA Backflow Committee Chair

E: James@testgauge.net

P: 317-786-8990

5644 South Meridian St. Suite E Indianapolis IN 46217