

A new approach to PASEC training 2016

Hot Training Tips PASEC

Statement of the problem: Until recently, PASEC training events were scheduled about once or twice each year. In each of these events, team leaders were encouraged to bring their equipment and as many team members as possible to act as tutors for members who had not yet participated in formal training. The first of the big lessons we have learned by doing training as a rather large scale event was that the most effective component of the training was the assistance given to the new folks by experienced team members. A second lesson has been the difficulty in getting many members to participate in yet another meeting. What has emerged from this experience is the need to create a training program that is more or less continuous. New people who join a team with no relevant experience will begin their training at the first stream visit with their new team and this training will continue as long as needed in future team activities.

Specific needs that must be met with the new training approach: There are specific situations that must be met in this new approach.

1. New equipment procedures. In these situations no team member has experience with the new equipment. A first step in learning how to use the new equipment properly is to begin with the training of at least one person on each team. This can be done individually or in a small group setting.
2. A monthly "to do" list: This list is prepared through the collaboration of Training and Quality Control and is transmitted monthly to team leaders and each team member. The monthly meetings of PASEC provide an excellent forum for determining what the next month's topics need to be. The specific wording along with the attachments of visual aids will be created outside the monthly meetings. Example entries for this memo might include one or more of the following:
 - a. Encourage members who have not conducted a highlighted test to complete it with assistance provided by experienced members.
 - b. Best procedures for using the colorimeter that are not easily found in the manual for the device.
 - c. Complete the low nitrate colorimeter test just to get experience in how it works,
 - d. Review the procedures and calculations of the Hach kit tests even as they become a backup for the colorimeter tests and are not used every month.
 - e. Highlight specific facts about the measurement procedures like how to use the low and high values (the proper range of values) to check your measurements.
 - f. Discuss which tests involve multiplying by a constant and which tests display the actual value to record.

- g. Encourage members to write down values in more than one place in order to facilitate an end of measurement audit of values.
 - h. Encourage a formal end of session audit of the values contained on the data sheet with the participation of as many members as feasible.
 - i. Initiate a “test of the month” headline that will encourage team members to concentrate on all the procedures required by a specific test.
 - j. Transmit training videos and images as needed.
 - k. Transmission of a training check list to be followed by team members who want to keep a record of their expertise.
 - l. Other appropriate comments/proposals.
3. Create more training opportunities. The visit of the Quality Control team might include an observation of procedures in addition to providing a set of measurements. While most of the training will be conducted by experienced team members, ad hoc team visits by a specific volunteer who is not a team member might be another way to assist teams in meeting the measurement quality standards. This proposal primarily uses email to communicate to team leaders and team members alike. The team leader will have to make copies of these communications to give paper copies to members without email.
4. Create a library of documents, images and videos: As work continues to develop training images, descriptions and videos that are useful for training, a library of these objects needs to be created. As the training letters are composed they are placed in their own category perhaps in a directory on our web site. This procedure will allow the repeat of a particular training letter or a slightly modified version of it and will save much time in mounting and continuing this approach to training.