



Module 4

Certificate Program

EFFECTIVE UTILITY MANAGEMENT

Course Syllabus

Effective Utility Management Module 4

Course Overview

This course is designed for water industry professionals who are current or future supervisors and managers within water and wastewater utilities. This course provides students with planning and management tools they will be able to use within their organizations.

This course is conducted as an online, self-paced workshop. The course material consists of workbooks which have been split into each of the lessons. Course completion requires that the student successfully complete all components of the eight individual lessons presented in the course.

Upon successful completion of the course requirements, students will receive a certificate of completion for 2.0 CEUs (20 contact hours) for Basic Utility Planning & Management (EUM - Module 4), which is applicable toward certificates in **Utility Planning and Management** and **Effective Utility Management** from American Water College.

Required Text

Workbook: *Managing the Water and Wastewater Utility*
Included with enrollment

Educational Objectives

- To provide students with an understanding of the regulatory process, knowledge of who makes the regulations, and knowledge of how to influence the rulemaking process
- To provide students with an understanding of what makes a good leader and the basics of how to manage a water and wastewater utility
- To provide students an understanding of strategic planning principles and methods for continuous improvement
- To provide students an understanding of basic utility accounting principles, money management, the budgeting process, and the skills they need to set utility rates

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Evaluation

Students will be quizzed at the end of each lesson to ensure that the learning objectives have been met. Students must complete all course material including videos and quizzes. Please contact our office with any questions.

Support

Students can ask questions of the instructor and/or contact our student support staff with any course-related, content-related or technology-related inquiries. Our office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9 to 5 CT, and Friday 9 to 12 CT.

Contact Info

Phone Number: (661) 874-1655

General Course Inquiries: Info@americanwatercollege.org

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Lesson 1 – The Regulatory Process

Summary of This Lesson

Utilities are governed by a number of rules and regulations. The business of water treatment and delivery are heavily regulated. The effective utility manager will have a working knowledge of the various laws that their utility must function under on a daily basis. This lesson covers the regulatory process, details the relevant regulation agencies, and provides a history of some of the bigger regulations you need to be aware of when managing your utility.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Where the rules and regulations come from
- The rule making process
- Federal agencies with rulemaking power
- How to influence the rulemaking process
- The history of the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act

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Lesson 2 – Utility Management Competencies

Summary of This Lesson

While it's possible to be either a manager or a leader without being the other, an effective utility manager is both a competent manager and a skilled leader. This lesson covers core skills that will help you to be an effective manager while also teaching you the characteristics of a good leader. By working through these skills and characteristics together, you will be one step closer to being an effective utility manager.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Managing in a changing environment
- Leadership skills for effective management
- Management skills
 - ✓ Planning
 - ✓ Organizing
 - ✓ Staffing
 - ✓ Directing
 - ✓ Controlling

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Lesson 3 – Utility Strategic Planning Basics

Summary of This Lesson

Every utility needs a plan. This lesson gives students the tools they need to construct a strategic plan that fits the needs of their utility.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Performing an honest assessment of where you are
- Establishing or re-establishing your mission
- Developing an organizational vision
- Establishing goals and objectives
- Generating support for the strategic plan

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Lesson 4 – The Continuous Improvement Process

Summary of This Lesson

No utility is perfect. Once a utility has implemented a strategic plan there will still be areas that can be improved. This lesson will guide students through the process of making their utility into a self-changing utility that continuously improves it's culture, work processes, and it's employees.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Changing the culture
- Focusing on what needs improving
- Redesigning work processes
- Transitioning to a self-changing organization

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Lesson 5 – Utility Accounting

Summary of This Lesson

Timely, accurate financial information is important to the effective management of a utility. Understanding that financial information is a must in order to make sound business decisions. This lesson covers the gathering and understanding of financial information that will help students to make good business decisions.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Using the financials
- Understanding where the rules come from
- Enterprise fund
- Define accounting jargon
- Governmental Accounting Standards Board
 - ✓ Statement 34
- Generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)

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Lesson 6 – Utility Money Management

Summary of This Lesson

Just like managing a business in the private sector, managing a utility in the public sector means managing assets and money that don't belong to you. However, managers of public utilities are responsible to the public for the maintenance of public assets and the provision of a public service, as opposed to being responsible to shareholders for turning private assets into profit. This lesson covers the financial reports that are used in both the private and public sectors to make sound business decisions. These are the reports that public utilities use to demonstrate to the public that the utility is operating as efficiently as possible.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Financial statements
- Monthly revenue and expense reports
- Balance sheet
- Statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in fund net assets (profit and loss statement)
- Statement of cash flows
- Management's responsibilities for financial management

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Lesson 7 – The Budgeting Process

Summary of This Lesson

An effective utility manager knows that the budget is a powerful tool that sets the direction of the utility. This lesson provides students with the necessary understanding and skills for creating budgets that will chart a course which will lead their utility into a bright future.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Budgeting as a strategic visioning tool
- Budgeting as a management tool
- The budget document
- Various budgeting styles
- The budget checklist
- Capital budgets

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Lesson 8 – Setting Utility Rates

Summary of This Lesson

The lesson covers the rate setting process and how it interacts with the strategic plan of the utility. Through this lesson students will build the skills they need to set rates that will help balance the objectives of their utility and the cost of operation of their utility.

Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will gain an understanding of:

- Setting revenue objectives
- Setting the rate structure
- Operation revenue sources
- Rate structures for industrial and commercial customers
- Wastewater service charge characteristics