

THE VALUE OF TRAINING

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATRICK COVINGTON, T CHEST



Patrick Covington is an environmental services operations manager at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration and is currently working on his M.B.A. with a human resources concentration. He has been in the environmental services field for 10 years. He became the first T-CHEST in Minnesota and is becoming a CHESP. Patrick also participates on the AHE education & knowledge management committee.

Q What made you sign up for the T-CHEST program?

I was actually looking for some kind of accreditation program for our operating room (OR) staff. Everybody who works in the OR has some type of certified education except environmental services. When I found the CHEST program on the AHE website, I knew the program was what I was looking for.

We have 200+ employees, and maintaining an effective training program is difficult. The CHEST program standardizes the training into easy to follow and understand modules. I have almost finished training the management staff and will begin training employees within the next two months.

Q How did you get your facility to see the value and approve the cost?

I did not have trouble convincing my director that the training was needed.

Q To you, what's the most important part of the training program?

I think the infection prevention section makes the largest impact on the learners. My management team really understands the importance of cleaning versus

disinfecting and why each is important. In addition, the focus on protecting patientization by en

receiving the right training from designated training staff; I am the only training manager for 200+ employees, and I cannot do it all! The CHEST certification will also inject a lot of pride into the staff and motivate them to keep cleaning standards high.

Q As a trainer, what's the most important thing to keep in mind when delivering the info to your trainees?

Take it slow and make sure the employees are understanding the message. In my hospital English is a second language for the majority of the environmental services department. I need to ensure what I am saying is being heard and successfully understood. That is why I think consistently asking the staff follow-up questions provided in the training keeps them engaged and allows the trainer to gauge how much information is being retained.

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