

ISSN 2835-9526

# Environmental Business Review

ENVIRONMENTALBUSINESSREVIEW.COM

## INSIGHTS

### SAFETY KNOWLEDGE STEWARD

ANGELO GARCIA, III, PRINCIPAL-INDUSTRIAL HYGIENIST, FUTURE ENVIRONMENT DESIGNS, INC.



\$15



Environmental Business Review

ISSN 2835-9526

ValleyMedia, Inc.

600 S ANDREWS AVE STE 405

FT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301

www.environmentalbusinessreview.com

# PRESERVING EXPERIENCE: HOW CONTINUOUS TRAINING SUPPORTS THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

By Angelo Garcia, III, Principal-Industrial Hygienist, Future Environment Designs, Inc.

**Editor's Note:** Environmental health and safety leaders must address the growing risk of knowledge loss as experienced professionals retire and workforce expectations evolve. This perspective highlights why continuous training, mentorship and knowledge transfer have become essential to sustaining safety performance and organizational resilience.

## The Industry Is Facing an Experience Gap

One of the greatest challenges facing the environmental health and safety industry today is not simply finding workers — it is replacing experience.

Across the asbestos, mold, indoor air quality, and occupational safety and health industries, seasoned professionals are retiring after spending decades developing practical knowledge that cannot be fully learned from textbooks, regulations, or PowerPoint presentations alone. These workers learned through field experience, problem-solving, mentoring, and years of exposure to real-world situations. They understood how to recognize hazards before they escalated, how to adapt when conditions changed unexpectedly, and how to communicate safety in ways workers could understand and apply.

Unfortunately, much of that knowledge transfer is no longer occurring the way it once did.

Years ago, companies often hired younger workers who spent time learning under experienced professionals before taking on larger responsibilities themselves. Today, tighter budgets, shrinking profit margins, workforce shortages, and project deadlines make that model increasingly difficult. Many employers simply cannot afford to have additional personnel on projects long enough for traditional mentorship and knowledge transfer to take place. As a result, experienced workers retire, and decades of field knowledge leave with them.

This is creating a significant experience gap throughout the industry.



## Experience Matters in Environmental Health and Safety Training

At Future Environment Designs, we recognized this challenge years ago. With 38 years of experience in environmental training and consulting, we understand that training today must do far more than satisfy a regulatory requirement. It must help preserve and transfer institutional knowledge to the next generation of workers entering the industry.

That is where experience matters.

For more than four decades, Angelo Garcia III, CIEC, CEOP, has worked throughout the asbestos, indoor air quality, environmental, and occupational safety and health industries, gaining firsthand experience in the field, in classrooms, and alongside workers confronting real hazards every day. That experience allows Future Environment Designs to provide more than regulatory information. It allows us to teach the practical side of the industry — the lessons learned through years of field conditions, compliance challenges, project oversight, and worker protection.



*Every interaction with workers becomes an opportunity to reinforce safe work practices, explain why procedures matter, address field questions, and connect regulatory requirements to real-world jobsite conditions.*

There is a major difference between simply reading regulations and understanding how those regulations apply in real-world situations. Workers benefit when instructors can explain not only what the standards require, but why they exist, where mistakes commonly occur, and how experienced professionals recognize and address hazards before incidents happen.

## Training Must Become Continuous Learning

At Future Environment Designs, our training philosophy is built around continuous learning and ongoing support because competency is not developed in a single class. It is built through repetition, reinforcement, field application, and access to experienced guidance over time.

We understand that many workers entering the industry today may never have the opportunity to spend years learning under veteran supervisors the way previous generations did. That makes structured knowledge transfer more important than ever.

Our training library, negative air app, and sampling charts were developed to support that process by giving workers and employers continued access to educational resources long after the classroom portion of training is completed. Workers can revisit procedures, review regulations, reinforce best practices, and continue learning as they gain field experience.

Our philosophy that “training never ends” reflects the reality that environmental health and safety professionals must continually adapt to changing regulations, evolving hazards, and new workplace challenges throughout their careers.

## At-Your-Convenience Training: Supporting Workforce Readiness

Our At-Your-Convenience training services also recognize the operational realities employers face today. This service exists to keep workers continuously ready for regulated work.

As a full-time training provider for firms, our wrap-around services ensure workers are cleared, documented, and ready to return directly to the job. It brings instruction, respirator fit testing, medical coordination, documentation management, and regulatory guidance into a single continuous process.

More importantly, this process becomes part of the overall knowledge transfer system. Every interaction with workers becomes an opportunity to reinforce safe work practices, explain why procedures matter, address field questions, and connect regulatory requirements to real-world jobsite conditions.

Instead of training being treated as an isolated event, it becomes an ongoing relationship that continuously supports worker development and competency.

This approach helps employers overcome one of the biggest workforce challenges facing the industry today. While companies may not always have the budgets or staffing levels necessary for traditional long-term mentorship programs, they still need workers who understand hazards, follow proper procedures, and can perform regulated work safely and compliantly. Continuous training support helps bridge part of that experience gap by reinforcing lessons that might otherwise have been learned only through years in the field.

## Preserving Knowledge for the Next Generation

Knowledge transfer is becoming one of the most important workforce issues in the environmental and safety industries. Replacing retiring workers is not simply about filling positions. It is about preserving decades of practical experience, maintaining safety culture, protecting workers, and ensuring the next generation is prepared to handle increasingly complex environmental and occupational hazards.

The industry cannot afford to lose that experience without replacing it with strong education, practical Asbestos

The industry cannot afford to lose that experience without replacing it with strong education, practical training, and ongoing professional development.

At Future Environment Designs, we believe experience should not retire. It should be transferred, reinforced, and shared with the next generation of environmental and safety professionals who will carry the industry forward. **EB**