



The Straight Goods – Interview with a recent Auditee

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Always mindful of how valuable differing perspectives are to gaining helpful information on any topic, we asked a recent very successful auditee, Sandra Wilson RPBio, Environmental Risk Manager, BC Hydro, to share some insights into her experience with the Audit. Her Auditor, Wayne Wall, who was very impressed by her responses to the Audit, commented that her audit was characterized by a very good CV, demonstrated she possessed a clear understanding of the questions she was responding to, was clear, complete, concise and well thought out.

Q. What did you anticipate when you were informed your number was up and you would be audited?

Sandra told us that she had attended a Road Show and had some ideas about the Audit process. Initially, she was somewhat apprehensive, wondering how this would all unfold, was not sure what to expect and what amount of time or how involved the process might be. When asked if she anticipated the process would be punitive or constructive, she replied ‘constructive’ as that had been her experience in the workplace with audits.

Q. How did you prepare for the Audit?

Sandra started by looking through the guidance documents prepared and available from the College. She then looked through the questions asked on the Audit Form and categorized them as those that she could answer right away and had the data and records in her possession to work from, and those that needed further investigation or those that she would have to rely on others to supply the needed information. She started to gather the latter information first, respecting others’ timelines and availability to provide the information.

Q. How do you think participation in the Audit might assist you going forward?

She responded that the process reinforced that what she has been doing in her practice meets the requirements of the College. She said she believed she



was meeting the requirements but going through the process reassured her, especially concerning her Continuing Professional Development Credits (CPD).

Q. How much time did you spend on completing the Audit forms?

Sandra received her notification of being audited in mid-December. This was acknowledged by the Committee as a busy time, hard to access people from whom she might need information, so an extension was readily offered and very appreciated. She was uncertain about the level of detail required so took some time to update her CPD providing much more than the requirement. Compiling information from other sources as it came in took several hours and her writing time once information was collected was about 8 hours (Wayne reminded us that her response was very detailed!). She offered some advice to future auditees:

- Keep good updated records,
- The CPD form is available so be familiar with it,
- Print a copy and jot down activities as they occur. Of all of the parts of the audit, the compiling and recording of CPD credits was the biggest issue!

Q. Did you find the guidance provided in the cover letter, related schedules and on the forms helpful?

Sandra: These documents, readily available on the website, were very helpful, especially the explanations concerning the categories.

Q. The organization you work for has systems in place for recording, documenting and storage. How aligned are the audit questions concerning these factors with the processes your workplace?

Sandra's company, BC Hydro, has well defined expectations for these processes and they parallel the questions asked by the Audit indicating that attention to these factors is an appropriate requirement for the College's members.

Q. Have other colleagues in your workplace been audited?

She replied that she was aware that one colleague had been audited prior to her. There is a high degree of awareness concerning the Audit among her colleagues. Recently, in a team meeting, on the topic of professional development, reference was made to the College's Audit. In future discussions on this topic, she looks forward to be able to share her experiences and advice.



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One colleague is contemplating conducting a self-audit for experience and awareness.

Q. How much value do you place on the requirement for successful completion of an Audit?

Sandra: The Audit process lends credibility to the designation and, as such, my employer encourages membership once a person moves into a position where they engage in decision-making that results in potential of increased risk. BC Hydro values the designation highly, it is a requirement of my job, and considered desirable for all biology professionals on staff. The College and its requirements are on people's radar at BC Hydro. Sandra went further to say she works in a multi-disciplinary environment with others with professional designations where the designation is valued and familiarity with the requirements other professionals meets creates an environment of documentation and accountability.

College Matters thanks Sandra and Wayne for taking the time to bring us this additional perspective on the Audit process. If this has raised questions for you, please contact the office of the College of Applied Biology at 250-383-3306. We always value member feedback.