

# Top 10 Suggestions to Being a Better QA Officer -- the QA Officer Perspective

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**#10**

**Continually expand your knowledge and understanding of your laboratory's requirements, the science & technology used by your laboratory, and the interrelationships between these bodies of knowledge.**

## Resources:

### a. TNI Standards

<http://www.nelac-institute.org/>

<http://lams.nelac-institute.org/>

<http://www.pjr.com/past-webinars> – ISO specific

<http://www.a2la.org/faq/printable17025faq.cfm> – A2LA FAQs  
about ISO 17025

### b. Code of Federal Regulations

<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/ECFR?page=browse>

## Resources:

c. State Rules & Regulations – check websites for any autoemail notification services and sign up for them. This is frequently the means that a state uses to communicate changes.

d. Methods

EPA websites

<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/methods/cwa/>

<https://www.nemi.gov/home/>

<http://www.epa.gov/wastes/hazard/testmethods/sw846>

USGS methods

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/twri/twri5-a1/index.html>

2015 MUR

<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/methods/cwa/mur2015.cfm>

Synectics website which includes methods under multiple programs (SW-846, EPA Water, Superfund, etc.)

<http://synectics.net>

# #9

## Assimilate multiple perspectives:

- a. Take at least one assessor training course: You need to see through the eyes of an assessor to be an effective QAO.
- b. Spend time in the lab to learn, not to assess: You need to see through the eyes of production staff, too. This also helps them become more comfortable with you.
- c. Understand the needs of your clients.

# #8

## Listen with an open mind:

- a. Be willing to go back to the standards upon which your policies are based and re-evaluate historical interpretations.
- b. Talk with clients to understand their concerns and drivers.

# #7

## Seek “fitness for purpose” – not perfection:

Meet the client’s needs; it does not always help to exceed the client’s needs.

# #6

## When confronted with difficult decisions, evaluate your options:

Refer back to #s 7 and 8

Think about what is really needed.

Review the regulations relating to the issue and be sure you are interpreting correctly.

Don't let emotions drive your decision.



# #5

## Organize and prioritize your workload:

- a. Microsoft outlook email rules – direct emails on related topics to specific folders
- b. Outlook calendar – schedule time to work on your own tasks
- c. Use risk management principles to help set priorities  
(see next slide)

# #5 (cont.)

IMPACT	ACTIONS		
<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>	Considerable Management Required	Must Manage and Monitor Risks	Extensive Management essential
<b>MODERATE</b>	Risk are bearable to certain extent	Management effort worthwhile	Management effort required
<b>MINOR</b>	Accept Risks	Accept but monitor Risks	Manage and Monitor Risks
	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
	<b>LIKELIHOOD</b>		



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# #4

## Ensure you have the necessary resources to drive and conform to your policies:

- a. Hardware & Software – use your IT staff as a resource and be one for them; teach them about the regulatory oversight in this industry
- b. Technical expertise
- c. Training

# #3

## Invest (this will require support from lab owner/president):

- a. in automation of the LIMS and Document Control
- b. in training – look for outside courses, webinars (many are low cost)

TNI training sessions <http://www.nelac-institute.org/content/eds-home.php>

Calibration training

<http://www.azdhs.gov/lab/license/resources/calibration-training.htm>

Radiochemistry training (6 most common methods)

<http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw000/radionuclides/training/index.html>

## #2

# Connect with your clients:

- a. Responding quickly to client concerns and questions goes a long way to establishing a relationship that will endure when you might have to contact them with bad news.
- b. If you have extensive long term projects, set up a regular call schedule for both sides to check in and discuss the progress, roadblocks, etc.

**...and our #1 Suggestion for Being a  
Better Quality Officer is...**

# #1

## Forge and maintain healthy working relationships by refining your people and communication skills:

- a. Be present – slow down into the moment and connect with what you're doing. Give conversations and tasks your full attention until they are complete.
- b. Network with your counterparts in the industry. Your competitor can also be your friend!
- c. Share a meal or a drink 😊

# Questions/Comments??

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