

FOCUS ON CRA



CI, CRA, and EPCOT



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It's that time of year: spring, and the annual events are in full bloom all around. One of my favorites is the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow's Annual International Flower and

Garden Festival. For all you Disney fans and Central Floridians, you've quickly put it together that I'm referencing the world famous EPCOT showcase. People from all nations celebrate our "oneness," yet understand the limitless variety of our unique individuality. That's a mouthful for just stating the fact that we're pretty much all the same, yet vastly different. Each with unique talents and skills, independent, yet linked together. You might ask what that has to do with being or becoming a Certified Radiology Administrator (CRA). Let me sketch the perspective.

While strolling through EPCOT last evening with our pals Max and Sally, it hit me that I just don't have the time or resources to have my yard look anything like the expertly manicured and spotless grounds. Sure my trees and grass are green and pretty well manicured, but clearly this thing called "work" takes up way too much of my daylight hours for them to look remotely like EPCOT. As a result, I've deducted that there are no revenues to be generated from tourist activity at 825 Chichester Street.

Unlike me, Disney spends millions on maintaining and improving their properties and as a result they draw people from around the world, generating more resources. They seek the voice of the customer, reinvest, and continually improve. We visit and are amazed. We experience something unique and craft that into our stories, enhancing the dream, engaging more visitors, and the cycle grows. Could continuous improvement (CI) be that simple?

In our professional efforts, we all lead our teams along the CI path. It's important for patient safety and it's rewarding when

we revel in success, no matter how fleeting. Realizing that optimal performance costs less, our superiors encourage and seek the best teams. Our organizations will pay more for the best players. They know that in the long run, it's more economical, too. When it comes to building your team, I'm confident that you, too, seek the best. However, in this age of high litigation, how do you know for sure that the references you obtain for a job candidate are factual, or better yet, meaningful? When someone says, "We always found him loaded with work to do," did it mean he was always busy or under the influence? How about, "You'll be fortunate to get this candidate to work for you"? Now, what exactly does that mean? Maybe the reviewer subscribes to the LIAR's club (LIAR being the acronym for Lexicon of Inconspicuously Ambiguous Recommendations), which means you better look for the double meaning in every response; otherwise, your outcome may not be as anticipated.

Obtaining credentials requires resource expenditure. Those who want their yards to emulate EPCOT must either toil or spend big. And that is not a one time expenditure; constant improvement is the goal and each must decide when and how much to spend.

That begs my question, "Who's your customer?" How do they know anything they've heard about you is real? That you truly have the skills listed in your CV? That you're the right and perfect fit for that critical position? I propose that credentialing by an independent certification agency goes a long way in satisfying those concerns. For an industry (or society) to prosper, it must trust the credentialing process. And even though the "alphabet soup" can become confusing, the credentials are a valued component of our everyday life. We trust the standardization they purport, relying daily on those with MD, RN, RT, CPA, MBA, MDiv, DVM, etc, after their name.

Obtaining credentials requires resource expenditure. Those who want their yards to emulate EPCOT must either toil or spend big. And that is not a one time expenditure; constant improvement is the goal and each must decide when and how much to spend. I encourage you to invest in your professional CI: invest the time and energy to verify your skills by obtaining your CRA. Assure your customer that you have the skills to improve every aspect of our imaging quality journey. We will improve our industry by this simple yet trusted process. ■