

Company

Electric Utility

Solution

Training Program Services

Industry

Power Generation

Size

2,000+ Employees

Location

ERCOT Region

Utility streamlines certification process by converting question database from paper to digital.

Challenge

An ERCOT-based utility was struggling with administering the oral exams used as a final step to qualify as a plant operator.

To complete the qualification process, candidates answer a series of scenario-based questions in front of a panel of experts. The questions are designed to ensure the candidates know how to do the job. Plants maintained their own questions, but human resources (HR) needed to make sure the questions were fair and balanced.

While effective, the process was cumbersome. The question database was managed manually and required HR personnel to pull questions from hundreds of documents provided by the various sites. Facilities would identify and rank their questions as easy, medium, or hard. HR had to pull an equal number of questions from each area to build the test while trying to make sure questions were not repeated.

Solution

When the utility explained the difficulty to **HSI**, our SMEs immediately proposed a tool we were currently using to create classroom exams. **HSI** put together an example test bank with questions categorized and ranked to select using the same method as the utility's – digitally, instead of manually.

The utility purchased the tool and asked **HSI** to build their exam banks.

Implementation

HSI has currently built operator tech exam banks for 26 different facilities totaling almost 10,000 questions. All questions are categorized by the plant they came from and ranked as easy, medium, and hard. The HR team can now create exams in minutes instead of hours.



During the process, **HSI** evaluated the question quality and quantity and provided feedback. The project is still in process as plants continue to provide information. The final goal of a formal question bank with high quality ranked questions has been achieved and is currently in use for most facilities. Question banks for the remaining facilities are expected to be completed next year, along with question banks for additional power plant positions.

The new digital database significantly frees up both the HR and plant management's time in creating exams. It also ensures questions can be easily updated, added, and deleted as needed to keep the exam relevant.

