



# RON SMITH & ASSOCIATES, INC.



## Expert Witness Testimony Techniques for Laboratory Analysts

### Course Description

Contrary to the public's perception, the majority of crime laboratories and forensic units do not have a formal and comprehensive expert witness testimony training program. This leaves the newly trained forensic scientist in the precarious position of learning to testify by attending the "School of Hard Knocks". Compound this lack of standardized training with the challenges to the forensic sciences since the "Daubert" decision and the recent National Academy of Sciences report, the courtroom environment becomes a potential mine field for the unprepared expert witness.

This two (2) day interactive course will focus on one basic premise, and that is: Jurors do not vote on the truth! They can only vote on their perception of the truth as they see it that day in court. It certainly is not our job as expert witnesses to convict, but it is incumbent upon us to testify in a manner which is believable and understandable, regardless of the verdict.

It is up to you, as an unbiased forensic expert witness, to instill within them what is termed "forensic trust". Trust of the forensic discipline you practice and trust in you as the practitioner. This course is designed to teach the student the methodology necessary to foster that level of trust, regardless of the challenges presented by legal counsel. It is a fun, interactive and highly energetic opportunity to significantly improve your testimony skills. Those faint of heart need not attend!

### Target Audience

If you are an analyst, examiner or scientist working in a crime laboratory or a local agency forensic unit you will have to give testimony about the evidence you have examined or analyzed. Testifying with confidence to your findings in court is a skill that requires preparation and training before you enter the courtroom. This course focuses on techniques that will prepare you to communicate effectively in court, before a jury while reducing your stress at the same time. Courtroom Testimony Techniques for Laboratory Analysts is applicable to all forensic disciplines found in a forensic laboratory.

### Should be Able to Perform

This course is designed to teach the student the methodology necessary to foster a level of "Forensic Trust," regardless of the challenges presented by legal counsel.

### Must Bring to Class

Dress is business casual as the course will be conducted in a professional environment and facility.



**Class Instructor:**  
**John Black, CSCSA**



Tuition: \$400.00  
2 Days

# Prerequisites

This course is intended for experienced forensic professionals. Participants should meet the following prerequisites:

- Formal education or training in a forensic discipline
- Current or prior professional practice as a forensic practitioner or forensic consultant
- Prior experience providing expert witness testimony in depositions, hearings, or trials
- Familiarity with forensic reporting, case documentation, and courtroom procedures

Completion of a foundational expert witness or courtroom testimony course is strongly recommended. This course is not intended for entry-level forensic professionals or those without prior courtroom exposure.

## Daily Schedule

DAY 1		DAY 2	
9:00 – 9:30	Introduction to Speaker/Objectives/Expectations	9:00 – 9:15	Day 1 – Review
9:30 – 11:00	What is the role of an expert witness in a trial?	9:15 – 9:45	Error Rates and what they really mean.
11:00 – 11:20	Break	9:45 – 10:15	Sampling Decisions made in casework and the potential problems that could arise.
11:20 – 12:30	Rights and obligations of an expert witness while testifying.	10:15 – 11:00	Contamination of evidence and its potential effect on results.
12:30-1:30	Lunch	11:00 - 11:20	Break
1:30 – 3:00	The Defense Bar. What are they and what do they know?	11:20 – 12:00	Rules of Evidence
3:00 – 3:40	PSAC Standards: Potential Cross Examination Topics	12:00 – 12:30	Direct Examination
3:40 – 4:00	Break	12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
4:00 – 4:45	Proficiency Testing: Potential Cross Examination Topics	1:30 – 1:45	What is it that juries really want and expect from you as a forensic expert witness?
4:45 – 5:15	ISO/IEC 17025/17020: Potential Cross Examination Topics	1:45 – 2:15	What is it that turns a jury off and causes them to lose trust in you?
5:15 – 5:45	Quality Management Systems: Potential Cross Examination Topics	2:15 – 2:30	Pre-trial Preparations
5:45 – 6:00	Introduction to Day 2	2:30 – 3:40	Cross Examination. It's a good thing!
		3:40 – 4:00	Break
		4:00 – 5:30	Student submitted cross examination questions review.
		5:30 – 5:40	Course wrap-up and final comments
		5:40 – 6:15	Student Survey and Final Examination.

## Online Class Registration

Visit us at: [www.RonSmithandAssociates.com](http://www.RonSmithandAssociates.com) and register today!