



Questioned Documents Section – 2010

J11 Risk Management in Forensic Document Examination: The Role of Formal Training

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn more regarding research literature on expertise and expert performance, as well as receive an understanding of the application of these research findings to forensic science and specifically the field of forensic document examination. The presentation will review various approaches to expertise and delineate best practices based on research in the study of expertise.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by improving training and education practices in forensic science and in-training specific to forensic document examination. Awareness of practices among traditional and self-promoting professional affiliations will impact the users of forensic document examination and allow greater reliability of the results of analysis.

The identification, characterization, and management of risk is a standard exercise within professions and industries. The forensic science industry historically has employed a dedication to formalized introductory training following academic degree achievement as a reliable foundation for expertise development. This formal training has been widely accepted as an elementary foundational mechanism for managing risk by those who claim expertise in evaluating forensic science evidence. This is not a unique model of introduction into a profession. Abundant research exists related to development of expertise and expert performance and is inherently applicable to the forensic sciences. The recent popularity of forensic science coupled with the lack of industry regulation has led to risky behavior, largely authorized by the broad, encompassing language of Federal Rule 702. In light of expert performance research findings, this presentation discusses the history of training in the forensic document examination profession, the application of findings concerning expert versus novice behavior, and reviews the practice of this expertise by various traditional and self-promoting organizations.

Training, Expertise, Forensic Document Examination