

Quarterly Newsletter

Instructor Connections

Winter 2008

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Back to Basics

Most likely it has been a while since you reviewed the structure of a lesson plan or provided a formalized step-by-step template of how a training module will unfold for a class. Once you have reached subject matter expert (SME) status, you have enough experience to estimate time usage for curriculum and related activities. You adapt your own classroom "style" of presentation and the formalities of the training process become rote.

TDS works with numerous SMEs in a large variety of curriculum areas resulting in a wide variety of presentation and structured approaches to training. In fact, TDS appreciates and promotes the uniqueness and variety of the subject matter experts we utilize. However, TDS' goal is to have effective, engaged and excited subject matter experts working with clients.

Since there is no cookie-cutter approach to ensure that there is measurable consistency each and every time training is provided, we suggest that SMEs utilize the checklist below to ensure that all training opportunities meet our client's expectations:

- How will the course objectives be clearly communicated?*
- Is the curriculum organized to assure that it will be presented in a clear, logical manner, and customized for the audience?*
- Are the audio-visuals simple, clear and easy to follow?*
- Do I have relevant exercises and examples that will be used to support the curriculum?*
- Have I organized my time to assure that the pace of the course will be sufficient for the students to learn the content?*
- Are my handouts and reference materials professional in appearance; do they support the curriculum?*

Customer Service Academy

Employers frequently tell us that one of the biggest challenges they face these days is finding employees with quality communication and interpersonal skills. The Customer Service Academy (CSA) is an award-winning training program designed to train employees in the critical skills needed for success in business and the public sector.

Businesses with superior customer service flourish, and the CSA provides hands-on training to enhance the ability to gain and retain both quality employees and satisfied customers. The program delivers quality, energetic training by certified CSA trainers to equip employees with the skills they need to work effectively. Trainings are cost-effective, flexible and delivered on-site or at our offices in Pleasanton. Comprised of 7 modules, the training covers critical topics such as workplace communication, team-building and problem-solving.

TDS, in partnership with the Workplace Learning Resource Center, will be offering the CSA program starting in March. Trainings will be every Thursday from 8:30-12:00 in Pleasanton. Participants are encouraged to register for the entire series, however sign-ups for individual modules are also welcome. If you know someone who may be interested in attending the CSA, contact Chris Paczocha for details.

News you Need to Know

- ✓ **Need Training?** – Check out a new TDS online tool to assist businesses and organizations to assess their training needs. Feel free to give it a try so that you know how it works. Then refer potential clients to the website to do a six question assessment of their existing training to learn how to improve their present efforts. You can also utilize the assessment to review key points that may apply to existing clients in order to identify further training opportunities. Simply go to www.tdsolutions.org and click on the “Need Training?” button.
- ✓ **Professionalism** – Instructors can make an important impression with printed material and hand-outs during training sessions. Review hand-outs before you use them – check closely for correct spelling, proper formatting, clear directions, updated information, organized topics and color diagrams. It’s the small things that make the difference in the materials you choose. We can assist you in creating and proofing your documents. Feel free to contact TDS for input or if you would like production assistance. Call Chris or Naida with your questions or requests.
- ✓ **OSHA Training Institute** - The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently named the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District one of eight new OSHA Training Institute Education Centers. The District becomes the only OSHA Training Institute Education Center in northern California, with classes starting May 6-9, 2008, at the District office in Pleasanton. A catalog of classes and registration information will be available online by March 15th on the District’s website at www.clpccd.org. Let us know of organizations that might benefit from a local resource for these classes. Call Chris Paczocha to get on the email list for notification.

SME Profile: Doug Owen



For over twenty-five years, Doug Owen has worked as a part-time instructor at Chabot College teaching courses in electronics. Currently Doug is working with Training and Development Solutions providing Maintenance Mechanic and Electrical Apprenticeship Programs for TDS’ manufacturing clients.

Since 1995, Doug has taught a variety of classes for TDS, ranging from providing basic computer courses to training local manufacturing companies in electrical and maintenance skills. Some of the clients Doug has worked with include the Federal Department of Corrections and the Federal Corrections Institute, Quaker Oats’ Gatorade Division and Ghirardelli Chocolate.

For the past eighteen years Doug was a Research Specialist at the National Center for Electron Microscopy, Material Sciences Division, with Lawrence Berkeley Labs. His responsibilities included basic materials research, operation, construction and maintenance of state-of-the-art instruments and equipment. Recently retired, Doug is enjoying his free time by participating in recreational activities and working with TDS.

Workplace Learning Resource Center – Update

A pilot of the WorkKeys Career Readiness Certificate program will be launched in March. This nationally recognized program assesses participants in 3 critical workplace skills areas: *Reading for Information*, *Locating for Information* and *Applied Math*. Based on assessment scores, participants receive a bronze, silver or gold certificate indicating their competency levels. The Center will be working with local businesses and industries to promote acceptance of the certificate as well as to assist employers with large scale hiring plans using WorkKeys as a screening tool.

To compliment the WorkKeys program, the Center will also launch KeyTrain. KeyTrain is a pre-assessment, test preparation and remediation application that assists participants in preparing and succeeding in their pursuit of the Career Readiness Certificate.

In response to the changing demographics of the workplace, the Center will be offering Spanish-in-the-Workplace training to managers and supervisors to better improve their communication and customer service skills with non-native English speakers. The training is industry-specific and can be customized to meet a specific business’ needs.

For questions or further information, contact Judi Watkins at 925.485.5508.

Contact Info for TDS

Shari Friedel (925) 485-5219 sfriedel@clpccd.org
Naida Connery (925) 485-5279 nconnery@clpccd.org

MariAnn Fisher (925) 485-5239 mfisher@clpccd.org
Chris Paczocha (925) 485-5202 cpaczocha@clpccd.org