

Act III – Yet another meeting with the Steering Committee...

Bob Werner: Good morning, everyone. Jim and I discussed the results of our last meeting, and realized that it must be really hard for everyone on the committee to visualize what this CBT would look like.

Jim Huggins: Yes, CBT has come a long way since the last program that you had here – it's much more than just text on a screen. I think my company could put together a prototype so that you can see what the CBT will look like. I've distributed a proposal that shows the low cost for the prototype. What do you think?

Jim Eggleston: A prototype sounds great. The cost is less than our committee has budgeted, so CBT sounds like a good solution.



Act IV – Implementation: The Final Act!

John Eggleston: Jim, the CBT prototype looks great. This is much better than what I had imagined, and I think we are ready to use CBT to train our employees.

Jim Huggins: Thanks, John. I think it would be a great idea to give the employees access to the CBT once they complete the overview class. How should we roll this out?

Bob Werner: John and I will work out the implementation details. I think what we will do is schedule meetings with all the training coordinators; we'll demonstrate the CBT, and then have the coordinators make sure that employees have access to the program from their computers.

Jim Huggins: Do you think we should work with the coordinators ahead of time, to make sure they understand the importance of the CBT? You said before that Hill Industries has always used a classroom approach, so this is pretty new to the coordinators.

John Eggleston: No, it will be fine. Our training coordinators have always done a great job with advising employees, monitoring training plans, and scheduling classes. I'm sure they will give employees access to the CBT, especially if the program has the support of senior management.

Bob Werner: I agree. Let's get moving on this CBT project so our employees can get the training they need!.

Jim Huggins: Making the Case for CBT

A Play in Four Acts

The Cast

Jim Huggins, Instructional Designer
Bob Werner, Training Steering Committee Chairman
John Eggleston, PDO Training Supervisor
The Committee

The Setting

Hill Industries: Multi-national, high-tech industrial producer of factory machinery with more than 15,000 employees. Looking for training solution to help implement and support new Product Development Process to improve productivity of the Product Development Organization (PDO).



Act I – Meeting #1 with the Steering Committee at Hill Industries

Bob Werner: Jim, we were really happy with the idea for the overview class on our new Product Development process. It will really help our folks understand what it means to work in cross-functional teams. However, that leaves a lot of information that we still need to cover. What ideas do you have for training our 15,000 employees on the new PD process?

Jim Huggins: I've done some analysis based on the information you provided to me, and I think the best solution would be a hypermedia, computer-based training program. All employees have a PC on their desk that is connected to a network, so we already have the technical infrastructure for the program.

The CBT will provide information on all phases of the PD process using text and graphics with links among processes, organizations, & subsystems. There will be links that open pop-up boxes for additional details. Users will have ready access to a lot of information. We can easily make changes to the CBT and distribute them over the network.

(LONG PAUSE – SILENCE)

Bob Werner: So...do people go to classes first and then use the CBT? I don't understand how it works.

Committee Member #2: I don't understand either...do you have a class for each process, like we had before?

Jim Huggins: Well...there really aren't any classes, other than the overview. There are just too many people to train. Classroom training would simply take too long and cost too much.

At the last meeting, we discussed the fact that the old classes never seemed to be available when people needed them, and that they took too much time out of people's schedules. The class materials are also expensive and hard to update. CBT would solve many of these problems.

John Eggleston: Jim, you have a good point...but we've always had classroom training here, and at least we know the problems with it. CBT seems like a big leap. Besides, we had some CBT here before and it was pretty bad...no one liked just reading text off the screen. I've seen CBT for computer skills, but that's not what we're dealing with. Can people actually learn about processes from a CBT?

Jim Huggins: Maybe it would help if I put together a paper on the history of CBT, how other companies have used it, and how it can be used effectively for teaching things like your PD processes.

John Eggleston: That would be great, Jim. Let's meet again in a week, after we've had a chance to review the information.

Act II – Meeting #2 with the Steering Committee

Jim Huggins: I hope you all had a chance to look over the paper I wrote. Do you have any questions?

John Eggleston: Jim, the paper was great. I didn't know there were so many studies showing that CBT is a good way to teach processes. It also helped to see that there are so many other companies using CBT.

Bob Werner: We still have some concerns though. I think we should benchmark some of the companies that are using CBT, and also find some that used CBT for engineering training. I talked to my daughter; she works for a software company, and she seemed to think that CBT is okay. If we can get some more info on other companies, I think we should go forward. After all, it's the latest thing in training and we don't want to be left out, right?

Committee Member #2: My biggest concern is how much this is going to cost. The figures you gave us for developing the CBT are pretty staggering.

(Murmurs of agreement around the room)

John Eggleston: You're right – the cost is a showstopper! We need to find a less expensive way to train these people.

Bob Werner: Actually, I had Jim meet with one of our finance managers. We needed some comparisons between the cost for CBT, and the cost of training 15,000 people in classroom courses.

Jim Huggins: According to the figures we came up with, the CBT project will pay for itself within 6 months.

John Eggleston: I'm still not sure about this. We'll look over the numbers and continue this discussion next week.

