

training TOP10 Hall of Fame

OUTSTANDING TRAINING INITIATIVES

For the third year since the creation of the Training Top 10 Hall of Fame in 2008, *Training* magazine required all Hall of Famers to submit an Outstanding Training Initiative that would be judged by each other and shared with our readers. Aside from ensuring Hall of Famers aren't "resting on their laurels," this provides an opportunity for the Learning & Development community to learn from the "best of the best" and see some innovative solutions for challenges many face today.

Each Hall of Fame Outstanding Training Initiative submission could achieve a maximum of **20 points** in categories including: **level of potential business impact, level of difficulty of challenges faced, project scope, instructional design, innovation of training, and business outcomes achieved.**

The initiatives that achieved the highest scores were submitted by Verizon, EY, and IBM and are detailed below.

Verizon: Emergency Work Assignment (EWA) Training

Verizon developed its Emergency Work Assignment (EWA) Training to prepare more than 13,000 employees in 57 roles in the U.S. Domestic Wireline Business Unit to perform technical installation and maintenance, customer sales, and service center roles in the event of a work stoppage or other contingency.

A total of 57 curricula were developed, with each one having specific learning objectives measurably tied to the skills required for each role. An overarching set of learning objectives guided the development and delivery of each curriculum. These included:

1. Employees are ready for day one of a potential work stoppage or other contingency by being prepared to safely and effectively execute their assigned role.
2. Each learner is knowledgeable of the products and services enjoyed by Verizon customers.

3. Each employee is confident in his or her skills to perform the assignment and provide a great customer experience.
4. All assigned employees are engaged in maintaining readiness.
5. Employees are enriched by learning a new role and are Verizon-proud of their collective accomplishment.

All instructional design and development was conducted in-house using employees and contractors. Development for all 57 curricula began with detailed design documents, which were approved by the designated subject matter experts (SME) and the executive sponsor for each role.

Executives at all levels were involved in all stages of development and delivery. A detailed schedule was maintained so every employee was in contact with a vice president or above during the training. Executives were side-by-side with learners in all virtual and face-to-face sessions, encouraging them and answering questions.

Program Details

Eleven of the curricula were delivered in hands-on, experiential labs to approximately 8,200 learners. Forty-six curricula were facilitated through live, leader-led virtual sessions using Adobe Connect, covering approximately 5,000 learners.

Brief pre-work modules moved base knowledge transfer out of the live learning lab time. Forty-five training labs with live circuits and equipment, and a practice field with 100 telephone poles, were developed to provide real-world learning for technical roles. Scheduling and in-person lab environments used a continuous flow model. Each day, seven days a week for 13 weeks, a new group of learners arrived at a single training center, where they remained onsite for two to seven days. Each day, learners moved to different lab settings.

For sales and service center roles, virtual learning was developed for Adobe Connect delivery using multiple facilitators, breakout rooms, and real-time chat sessions. Up to 100 learners participated at a time in a continuously hands-on, learn-do cycle. A lead

facilitator conducted the learning lab; another monitored chat sessions and responded to questions; and a third handled the mechanics of the session. Courses were broken into two- to four-hour modules conducted over multiple days or weeks, depending on the curriculum.

A three-pronged approach is used to maintain and update learning.

From the time an employee completes training, the Count5 QMindShare tool pushes reinforcement content to the learner's computer and/or mobile devices. Three times per week, three or four nuggets of content and knowledge-check questions are presented to learners. Correct answers are reinforced. Incorrect answers are remediated, and the content is re-queued to the individual learners. Across the 57 curricula, more than 3,100 interactive nuggets have been dripped to learners.

Using Verizon's CrowdAround social media platform, employees share learning, ask questions, connect with classmates, and access relevant resources. Following the completion of the training, one- to two-minute *Making It Real* videos are blogged to create connections between practice in learning labs and seeing tasks performed in a real-world setting. Specially equipped mobile labs later hit the road to provide hands-on practice at employees' regional offices.

Sales and service center learners experienced *Hands on Days*, providing small group practice sessions on relevant systems and tools, keeping them abreast of changes and allowing for scenario practice in live systems.

Results

Knowledge assessments and skill ratings rank 81 percent of the participants with high or competent performance levels. Some 89 percent of employees reported, "I feel prepared for my Emergency Work Assignment position." Post-training reinforcement participation ranges upward of 87 percent.

EY: Tax 1 Blended Program

EY's Tax practice relies primarily on an instructor-led (ILT), classroom-based model to deliver continuing education to its staff. However, recognizing the benefits that a blended learning approach affords and to manage the increased content in the classroom, EY desired to transform one completely ILT course to a blended learning approach. The program needed to be redesigned to address the increasing sophistication of tax preparation software, the growing need for efficient delivery of services, and the need to make the learning accessible to Tax professionals when needed rather than when scheduled.

Targeting the approximately 700 first-year Tax professionals located in the U.S., the new Tax 1 blended learning program consists of several learning modalities, including e-learning, virtual classroom, classroom-based job simulations, and just-in-time resources.

The Tax 1 initiative was led by the director of Americas EYU-Tax and Xerox Learning Services with input and guidance from several client-serving professionals in the Americas Tax Practice.

Members of EY's Visiting Professor Network, approximately 30 professors from universities across the country, paired with EY Tax

professionals at the manager through partner level to facilitate the live classroom simulations and the virtual classrooms. In addition, a member of Tax Leadership spoke at every classroom event.

To introduce the use of virtual classrooms, EY created a two-minute video using VideoScribe "drawing hand" animation software to explain that virtual classrooms differ from EY's traditional Webinar presentations. A link to that video was included in all communications related to the virtual classroom.

Program Details

Participants take the e-learning courses at their convenience. Upon completion of the self-paced e-learning courses, learners participate in 90-minute virtual classroom courses. They then attend an event comprising multiple instructor-led classes running in parallel where there is now time for expanded and enhanced classroom simulations, as well as social learning through networking.

Modules, such as the one on Partnership taxation basics, were removed from the instructor-led program and converted to a combination of e-learning and virtual classroom training. The e-learning courses were developed in Lectora, with Code Baby avatars and Camtasia video elements to create an engaging, modern learner experience. For example, the "Teach Element" is a three- to five-minute video segment with the instructor's discussion of the applicable rules interlaced with slides and whiteboard illustrations.

EY used virtual classroom courses to preserve the case study element of the learner experience. The virtual classroom courses are delivered using WebEx Training Center. The Partnership virtual classroom is 90 minutes long, with 30 minutes reserved for the topics covered in each of the three e-learning courses.

In each of those 30-minute segments, the first 10 minutes is reserved for polling the participants to test their understanding of key topics in the related e-learning course. If the poll indicates some confusion among the participants, the instructor quickly remediates and clarifies the rules.

After the polling questions, participants are placed into virtual breakouts of five to six people, to collaborate using documents containing case study facts or areas in which they may record their solution to the case study using text or drawing tools. Finally, participants are reconvened into one group for a walkthrough of the technical aspects of what was just covered.

After completing the e-learning and virtual classroom segments, participants attend a live, instructor-led class where they complete a partnership and an individual income tax return using standard firm technology and processes. An EYU-Tube video library, currently being piloted to select members of the Staff 1 audience, reinforces learning through performance support at the point of need.

Results

- Some 74 percent of participant responses to surveys distributed six months after the training indicate participants are using Tax 1 skills and knowledge on the job.
- At the end of the program, learners demonstrated a 5 percent improvement in their ability to apply the provisions of the technical material. Participants' effectiveness rating for the new pre-work

showed an 11 percent increase from a prior year average rating of 3.77 to a new rating of 4.20. Some cohort responses improved 13 percent to an average rating of 4.36.

- Managers indicated staff performance on partnership and individual compliance after the training was high.
- Turnover for the target employee group decreased from the previous year.

As a result of these efforts, participation in the polling questions and breakouts became more consistent, and learning satisfaction scores and participants' perception of learning effectiveness increased.

IBM: Global Sales School Redesign and Business Impact Study

IBM continually transforms itself to remain an information technology industry leader. Today, IBM is focused on Cloud, Big Data and Analytics, Mobile, Social Business, and Security. In these growth areas, IBMers are working with customers around the world to apply the company's business consulting, technology, and R&D expertise to enable systems of engagement that deliver dynamic insights for businesses and governments worldwide.

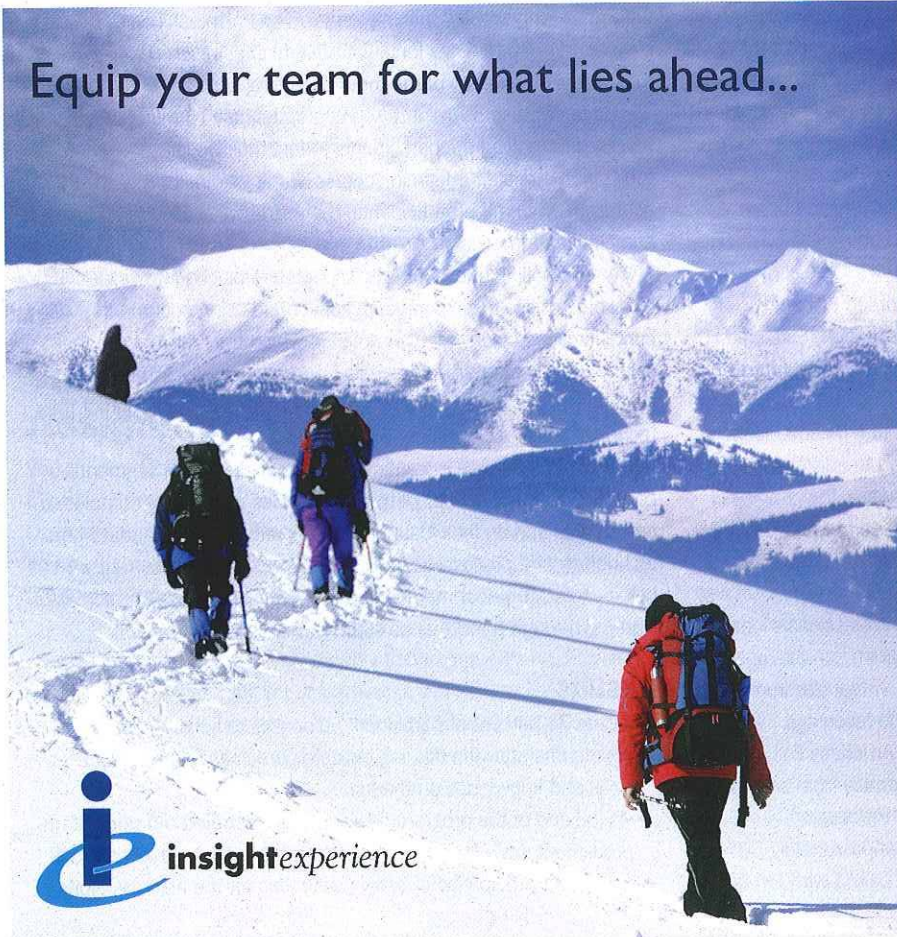
Like the company's business strategy, IBM's Global Sales School

(GSS) must evolve to remain essential. Recently, GSS was one of three programs selected by IBM's CEO and the company's senior vice president of Human Resources to drive a corporate-wide initiative to elevate client experiences. IBM Learning designed the revamped program and experience—which graduates thousands of sellers per year—and conducted a business impact study in conjunction with sales and business leaders throughout the company.

Program Details

GSS prepares sellers new to IBM with the skills needed to differentiate IBM and win in the marketplace. GSS includes work-based and performance-based learning, practice calls, and real-life sales challenges and deliverables, all focused on delivering differentiated client experiences.

GSS focuses on learning-by-doing. Sellers immediately dive into practicing sales skills and using IBM tools required for success. Sellers team and collaborate on writing proposals, developing solutions, prospecting and identifying opportunities, negotiating and closing deals, and contributing to account and territory planning. A library of 50-plus Experience Accelerators involves sellers in real sales situations before they encounter them on their own. More than half of each face-to-face lab is devoted to practicing sales meetings. Sellers hold mock client meetings with experienced IBM sellers trained as sales advisors (SAs) who play the client role.



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