



New Horizons Mentored Learning Success Case Study

"I cannot speak highly enough about the classes, staff, Mentors and facilities provided by New Horizons. As a Manager, I find Mentored Learning to be the most successful way to efficiently and effectively train my staff. I value the quality of the information provided and the fact that they can use the knowledge learned on their job immediately."

- Debra Howell, Associate Director of Information Technology, Cornell University Facilities Services

Mentored Learning Allows Cornell University to Maintain Productivity During Training

Information Technology staff attains 100% certification success rate with Mentored Learning

Debra Howell, Associate Director of Information Technology for Cornell University, has a very straightforward training policy for her staff - within 18 months of hire, all Systems Administrators must get their Microsoft Certified System Engineer (MCSE) certification and all Desktop Support personnel must get their Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA) certification. Being a highly regarded educational institution, it is not surprising that Cornell would value employee training, however, having staff in training when your job is to keep the entire technology infrastructure up and running is not easy. Making it even harder is the fact that certification training can take a long time to complete. For instance, through traditional instructor-led classroom training, it takes 28 days, or 5 ½ weeks to complete MCSE training if classes are taken back-to-back.

Challenge

When staff is in training most IT departments simply suffer through it by limiting new projects. However, this isn't always possible when an emergency situation arises requiring all hands on deck, such as a virus attack or entire network going down. In that case, staff is usually pulled out of training to deal with the emergency. After the emergency is dealt with, they usually try to pick up where they left off in the training but what if the class they couldn't complete isn't on the training schedule again for weeks or even months? Not only does this delay the ability to take the certification exam, it also makes it harder to retain the knowledge gained before the interruption.

Solution

Fortunately for Debra, New Horizons has developed a revolutionary learning method that allows her to schedule training around her work schedule. This new method, the Mentored Learning Classroom, is a unique approach to learning that unites the strengths of traditional classroom learning and modern e-learning. Basically, the environment provides the learner with one-on-one instructor guidance, access to multi-sensory learning tools, the ability to practice with live hardware and software, customized learning paths and the flexibility to determine when and for how long they attend training. "When I first heard about Mentored Learning, everything about it just seemed easier - easier to sign up, easier to attend - and it seemed like it would be a better learning experience for my staff," said Debra.

Flexible Scheduling:

Mentored Learning's flexible course schedules allow the training schedule to be built around the student's busy schedule so workplace productivity is maintained. If a student needs to leave the classroom to take care of an issue at work - no problem - they can just pick up where they left off when they return to the classroom. "With Mentored Learning, we can attend training when we want to and we can schedule it around other coworkers' schedules to minimize work disruptions," explained Mike Baker, Cornell Systems Administrator who took his MSCE plus Security training through Mentored Learning. Mike was actually able to obtain his certification more quickly using this learning method because he didn't have to wait for the course to be scheduled. He took one class per month to work around the IT department's schedule. "That way, Mike's training didn't affect productivity as much as if he took training all together. Using traditional training methods would have resulted in Mike being out of the office for weeks at a time," commented Debra.

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- Debra Howell, Associate Director of Information Technology, Cornell University Facilities Services

“What I liked most about Mentored Learning was the convenience, I could attend training when I wanted to and could schedule it around other coworkers schedules to minimize work disruptions. I was actually able to get my certification faster through Mentored Learning because I didn’t have to wait for the course to be scheduled.”

Mike Baker, Systems Administrator,
Cornell University

New Horizons Mentored Learning Classroom Benefits:

- Customized learning path
- Flexible scheduling
- Hands-on practice
- One-on-One Instruction & Support
- Multi-sensory learning tools
- Measurable progress & results
- On-demand delivery

One-on-One Guidance:

A Mentor is present in the Mentored Learning Classroom at all times to answer questions, provide demonstrations and lead role-play exercises. Also, assessments are given before the student starts training so the mentor will know where to reinforce areas of existing knowledge and where to focus on topics the learner still needs to learn. The mentor can then create a customized plan accordingly to fill the learner's individual skills gap. A post-assessment ensures that the necessary skills are gained and therefore, the learning goals have been met. Mike found the role of Mentor to be especially helpful, "When I ran into parts of the training I didn't fully understand, I could always ask the Mentor questions. In a traditional classroom environment people may not feel as comfortable asking the instructor questions for fear of interrupting the class."

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Multi-Sensory Learning Tools:

Each learner is assigned their own workstation when they come into a Mentored Learning Classroom. Each workstation contains two computer monitors. On one, the learner can access the course content delivered via video, text and audio. On the other monitor, the learner has access to the production environment to practice skills. The learner controls the pace of the course and the content covered since they can fast-forward through areas, or stop the content and practice a concept hands-on as many times as they need. "The pacing of a class is sometimes an issue for my people," said Debra. "They are very bright and come on the job with quit a bit of experience. Traditional classrooms contain people with differing skills and knowledge, so those with more experience tend to get held up by those with less experience. That learning environment can be a little frustrating for my employees - this isn't an issue with Mentored Learning."

Results

"As a Manager, I have found Mentored Learning to be the most successful way to efficiently and effectively train my staff," concluded Debra. Since Mike took his training through Mentored Learning, all of Debra's employees have chosen to take classes through this learning method and all have achieved certification.

Learn from the Leader

With 25 years experience, 300 training centers in 60 countries and over 2,000 instructors, New Horizons is the world leader in computer training.

Begin Mentored Learning Today

New Horizons will develop a customized and focused learning plan for each student, which will translate into increased efficiencies and improved productivity for any corporation. Talk with your Account Executive or New Horizons training center today to get started, or visit us online at www.newhorizons.com.

