

a sideways LOOK

News from Elevation Learning

In this issue

Don't put your career on hold

100% success rate for
CMCE course

New training partnership
with Altius Consulting

Want to develop your skills but
can't spare the time? Welcome
to our new, bite-sized High
Intensity Training!

Industry update - The Annual
Consultants Forum

Client Update:
Helping BT Telconsult
expand and re-position

Joke Corner

How many consultants does it
take to change a lightbulb?

Give us £1,500 and I'll tell you!
Boom boom!

If you would like to contribute
a joke please email:
jokes@elevationlearning.co.uk

Don't put your career on hold

Welcome to our second edition of 'A Sideways Look' - Elevation Learning's newsletter that aims to bring clients and contacts up to date with our latest business news and client work, and also the most recent opportunities for industry networking and learning.

We had the pleasure to meet up with many of you at our Summer School back in July. 2008's theme was 'Expanding your consulting horizons'. A wide range of consulting professionals came together to examine a range of tools and techniques designed to help attendees bring additional value to their practice and clients. There was a growth in the number of IT consultants in attendance, unsurprising when you see that IT consulting is the strongest sector at present, with the largest number of client projects being commissioned and ongoing job opportunities - see our piece on the Annual Consultants' Forum for more information.

The Summer School was timely because "don't put your consultancy career on hold", was the recent message from industry expert and business editor Mick James. In the latest issue of Consulting Times, Mick writes that although the boom years of consultancy recruitment are over, many companies such as Accenture and PwC are recording healthy profits - and their recruitment of people with the right mix of academic and industry skills, experience and flexibility is still high. Clients still need major change projects to go through despite the economic downturn - and require the right people to do it.

In a nutshell: there has never been a better time to broaden your skill set than now. If you'd appreciate our expert advice on what direction your learning and performance should take, give us a call on +44 (0)20 8642 9568. We'd be delighted to help. Meanwhile, happy reading!

Calvert Markham
Managing Director, Elevation Learning

100% success rate for CMCE course



Many of you will have heard of the Certificate in Management Consulting Essentials (CMCE), run by the Institute of Business Consultancy (IBC). The Certificate is a valuable first qualification in management consultancy, helping candidates to consolidate their consulting skills with the added confidence that public recognition provides.

Elevation Learning has taken almost 50 consultants through the qualification, and is delighted to announce that we have achieved a 100% pass rate! Well done to everyone involved.

Elevation Learning consultant Anthony Rees, who is one of our coaches for this qualification, said: “The Certificate is a great way for consultants to prove their professionalism and knowledge to current or future employers, and is helping to raise the standard of consulting in the industry.”

Completing the certificate is particularly worthwhile not only for those in consulting practices, but also for those in other organisations who want public endorsement of their skills - for example, internal consultants.

It's easy to start: kick off with our Core Consultancy Skills course which covers the syllabus required, and then complete the remaining 3,000 word dissertation on all aspects of consultancy with the help of one of our specially trained mentors. Call +44 (0)20 8642 9568 and speak to Diane Davies for more information.

Late news just in...! Four new courses by Elevation Learning have just been endorsed by the IBC and will also contribute to consultants undertaking Continuing Professional Development (CPD). These are Facilitation Skills, Writing Skills, Presentation Skills and Consultancy Sales Process.

See the IBC web site at www.ibconsulting.org.uk for more information.

New training partnership with Altius Consulting

Elevation Learning is delighted to announce its newest training partnership, formed with established Business Intelligence (BI) and Performance Management (PM) specialists Altius Consulting.

Altius has a 15-year track record of delivering excellent information systems solutions to clients such as Abbey, BP and the Home Office. It was founded in the early 1990's, after a demand was identified in the marketplace for a consultancy specialising in BI, which would work with clients through the whole project development lifecycle.

The company has been very successful in this area, winning a number of global contracts, and is now keen to extend its reach. Elevation Learning Account Director Patrick Chapman said: “Altius has been quick to recognise that organisations are now demanding a broader range of skills and flexibility from their professional consultants - and to continue their growth record Altius needs to develop further their client facing teams' skills.”

Elevation Learning came on board earlier this year to help - holding a series of one-day training courses in key areas of consultancy skills such as presenting, writing, time management and communication skills. We reached every client-facing consultant in the business and provided some much needed insight into how to better engage with clients and manage time on projects.

Patrick continues: “The reaction from the attendees was so positive that Elevation Learning has now formed a formal training partnership with Altius, and as their business grows, we aim to closely monitor their consultants' development so we can extend their learning and performance accordingly.”

Michael Vinson, Altius Training Manager, said: "The marketplace demands a broader set of skills from our consultants, and as a well-established provider, we are keen to be pro-active in this area. The Elevation Learning team have many years' experience between them and know the industry inside out, and I'm confident their help will enable us to continue to delight our clients and exceed our growth ambitions."

Want to develop your skills but can't spare the time? Welcome to our new, bite-sized High Intensity Training!

Recently, many of you have talked to us about your desire to develop your expertise, but a difficulty in balancing this with spending too much time away from your client. Well, fear not, because Elevation Learning has developed a programme of training courses especially to meet this need - welcome to our High Intensity Training Seminars (HITS)! HITS focus on closing a skills gap or enhancing performance in specific areas during a short period of time. These seminars are held in central locations and run for only 3 hours, but we guarantee that you will come out with a fresh approach and new techniques that you can apply immediately in the workplace.

HITS address topics under three key themes - Personal Impact, Working with People and Overcoming Issues.

So what are the topics? In the 'Personal Impact' zone you will be able to learn about Winning Business, how to become a 'Credible Consultant' plus how to Develop Personal Effectiveness. In 'Engaging with People' you will learn how to wow with your Negotiation and Influencing Skills plus how to Run Better Workshops, and in 'Overcoming Issues' you can up skill in important areas such as Data Collection and learn how to use diversity to Gain Competitive Advantage.

In the current market place, it is more important to demonstrate the business value you bring to an organisation before, during and after a project than ever before and to ensure you have the right skills and flexibility that customers demand. For more information about each Seminar visit www.elevationlearning.co.uk or to reserve your place please contact Diane Davies on +44 (0) 20 8642 9568 or email us at info@elevationlearning.co.uk

Industry Update - The Annual Consultants' Forum



The theme for this year's Annual Consultants' Forum was 'Creating Business value through IT Consulting'. The recent 'Consulting Industry Report 2008' showed IT consulting as the most resilient and important line of business going forward in the next few years of unpredictable growth and business opportunity, and the hall at One St George Street was packed out with technology and management consultants keen to get tips on how to make the most of the opportunity. Speakers included Fiona Czerniawska, author of the report, Paul Collins of mergers and acquisitions firm Equiteq, as well as buyers such as Corporate Express UK and the British Museum. The audience was told that other key growth areas for consulting projects was in the areas of environmental issues and corporate social responsibility, and another hot issue was the emerging role of the procurement team - and what their rules and regulations mean for large and small consultants trying to sell to them.

For more information please visit www.pmp.com

Client update: Helping BT Telconsult expand and re-position



BT Telconsult is the consulting arm of the telco giant BT, originally set up thirty years ago to respond to customers, suppliers and SMEs who wanted to link in to BT's technical thought leadership and best practice.

It has a client base made up of the world's largest telephone networks and telcos, and in the early noughties decided it wanted to reposition itself as a formal consultancy practice to tap into the new wave of enthusiasm for global consulting.

Andrew Batten, Head of Strategy Transformation Practice, said: "Since we began back in 1999 we have been very successful in winning new business, despite having no formal business development plan and a fairly reactive approach to sales. But as the consulting boom hit, we began to think: what could we achieve if we did have a growth and sales strategy in place? What could we turnover if we re-positioned ourselves as a formal consulting firm? The sky was the limit."

The team set about doing this, but quickly realised that to extend their reach and achieve the growth they wanted, they were going to have to consolidate their capabilities and broaden their skill set.

Their strength had always been deep technical expertise, but business growth had been so fast that much of the knowledge was in individuals' heads and laptops rather than in one place. The team decided they needed to document their collective expertise, and wanted to create 'a bible' that would act as a foundation for their work going forward. Enter Elevation Learning and Calvert Markham.

"Calvert helped us develop the 'Delivery Guide'," explains Andrew. "It was basically a 'how to' guide to delivering our consulting, which encompassed all our technical knowledge gained over the years. It includes processes, tools, and a standardised approach to doing things. It has been a great exercise for us, and is a very valuable tool, for both experienced staff and new recruits. It makes project delivery much easier, which means we are able to serve clients more effectively."

To bring the guide to life Calvert and team designed a development course that blended its key information with Elevation Learning's well-known Standard Consulting Skills training course. All BT Telconsult consultants were required to attend the course and it was very successful.

"The course was a real light bulb moment for many of us," smiles Andrew. "Having all our knowledge and processes clearly presented in one place has been revelatory. We're able to deliver to clients faster, spot new business opportunities and engage at a higher level. Plus, feedback from customers shows that they also appreciate the 'new and improved' us!"

There are plans for the guide to go 'multi media' and to become available in a number of different formats. Meanwhile, the company is growing steadily. Andrew said: "We're now working to achieve our next goal, which is to broaden our skill set by recruiting experienced business consultants from Big Four firms. The plan is to offer clients a more end-to-end solution and we've already attracted some high calibre names. We have an ambitious new five-year business plan and we really do feel on the cusp of great achievement. It's exciting times here!"