

An electronic information letter by BNH Expert Software.

Blended Approach Results in Millions of Dollars in Savings

by J. (Jay) Bahlis, Ph.D., Eng.

*"If you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it."
-Peter Drucker*

Over the past seven years, I have been preaching the four key elements that should be examined when considering technology for the delivery of training, namely: feasibility (would it meet our learning needs), cost (how does it impact our budget and resources), risk (do we have the infrastructure in place to support) as well as outcome (how does it impact organizational goals). To illustrate these principles, several examples based on factual cases will be presented and discussed. And of course, your comments and feedback would be greatly appreciated.

Military College Dilemma

A military college provides a nine-month instructor-led command and staff course to 88 officers per year. The training program is divided approximately into 9 weeks of lectures (including guest speakers), 9 weeks of problem solving exercises (including practice on a simulator), as well as 39 weeks of research and self-study activities. Recent studies recommended extension of the program to 390 officers per year. Maintaining a traditional instructor-led delivery option was no longer viable. In addition to millions of dollars in capital expenditures for a new training facility and a residence to accommodate the drastic increase in the number of trainees, the military could not spare the additional staff (at the L. Col. rank) required to deliver, administer, coach and manage a training program for 390 officers. The challenge was to determine the most effective option that would meet the military's needs.

Solution

* First, the status quo was examined to determine how the funds and resources were being allocated and opportunities for optimizing existing resources. Based on this analysis, it was determined that the school and the residence could support up to 130 trainee officers with minimal investment.

* Next, the content of the training program was examined to determine the feasibility of changing the sequence in which the training material was delivered without compromising the outcome. Since the majority of the problem solving activities involved group exercises that were best delivered in an instructor-led mode, it was critical to determine which lectures were an integral part of the problem solving and simulator activities. Based on this analysis, it was determined that approximately 13 weeks should be delivered in an instructor-led format at the military college. But more importantly, the remaining 44 weeks could be delivered at a distance without compromising the effectiveness of the training program.

* Since the new command and staff course would only require 3 months of instructor-led training, it is now feasible to train 390 officers – 3 groups of 130 – within the existing facilities. As a result, the military can save over \$22 million dollars in up-front investment for a new school and a residence.

* The final phase of the analysis focused on the 44 weeks of lectures, research and self-study activities to determine the most economical blend of delivery options that will meet organizational, learning and learners needs. Both synchronous as well as asynchronous traditional and technology based delivery options were considered. Once the needs of professional and reserve officers were taken into consideration, asynchronous web based training option supported by mentors was recommended, resulting in over \$6 million savings in annual recurring costs (primarily from travel and per diem costs) and a 30% reduction in the number of additional staff – in comparison to a traditional instructor-led approach.

Conclusion

The blended delivery option allowed the college to expand its course offering by 440% to meet the needs of the military, while increasing annual recurring costs by only 175%. The improved course delivery model is contributing to the renewed success of the program.

For information, comments and questions please contact (Jay) Bahlis at (800) 747-4010 x 21 or [✉bahlis@bnhexpertsoft.com](mailto:bahlis@bnhexpertsoft.com) or visit the ADVISOR site at <http://www.bnhexpertsoft.com>.

Click on following link [• http://www.bnhexpertsoft.com/subscribe.htm](http://www.bnhexpertsoft.com/subscribe.htm)
To receive free news and promotion

About BNH

Established 1987, BNH helped hundreds of organizations align learning strategies with business goals. We are result oriented. We offer a wide range of products, services and workshops to assist HR, training and business professionals in managing training budgets, measuring impact on the bottom line as well as identifying ways of reducing costs and improving productivity. Our products include ADVISOR Enterprise – Manage and Optimize Training Budgets and Resources, ADVISOR Online – Media Selection and Return on Investment Tool, ADVISOR P.I. – Needs Assessment Tool to Improve Performance, and Answer Me THIS...! – Create Educational Games. BNH can be reached at (800) 747-4010, (514) 745-4010 and found on the web site at [• http://www.bnhexpertsoft.com](http://www.bnhexpertsoft.com)

Copyright © BNH Expert Software Inc.