

Analyzing the Workplace

This instructional design case was very interesting from a process analysis perspective. The underlying “nepotistic” component made for a thought provoking review, which led to a number of valid considerations and compelling arguments by several members of our class, including myself. The role of our determined protagonist (Catherine Nelson) was strong and decisive. Her expertise, in my opinion, reflected a fair degree of knowledge and analytical aptitude when it came to conducting a comprehensive front-end analysis of the existing training modules provided by the client. Despite a rigid first meeting with the client’s staff training supervisor (Patricia Morrison), Catherine managed to gain a moderate level of trust and latitude that allowed her to assess the technical requirements and business logistics of the project with a reasonable amount of efficiency and efficacy.

With a firm understanding of the project’s overall objectives and product expectations, Catherine was able to acquire the necessary insight needed to incorporate the preexisting modules into the newly developed interactive website interface per Patricia’s directive. While Catherine’s diligent and proactive work ethic earns a gold star in my book in terms of performance and professionalism as an instructional designer, the abrasive and passive-aggressive actions of our antagonist (Dan Layton), effectively overshadows her accomplishments. It was very apparent at the onset that the team dynamics had the potential of derailing Catherine’s design plans when our man Dan exhibited a level of arrogance and superiority that is characteristic of a well-pampered child. As the son of IMS’s prevailing CEO, Dan is quick to capitalize on his relational affiliation to the man in power. Sadly, this is particularly evident in the way higher authorities such as IMS’s Chief Operating Officer (Carlos Martinez) conveniently dismisses his actions by openly abstaining from correcting Dan’s attitudinal behavior.

Within the overarching context of this case, Carlos plays a pivotal role within this debilitating scenario. His inability to lead the project team due to exhibited acts of cowardice or favoritism is his offense. If Carlos had the proverbial balls to stand up and approach Dan in a manner that is expected of his title and position, I surmise that many of the social issues relating to Dan’s lack of involvement and gruff attitudinal disposition would not have played out the way it did. Carlos

should have made Dan more accountable for his actions, particularly when the project fell behind schedule.

One possible strategy based on professional experience would have all correspondences distributed to all members of the project team via an email distribution list. This would help to ensure that all project related communications between team members is open to peer-based commentary in the form of constructive feedback and update with the purpose of maintaining team efficiency and productivity. I would even go as far as to include Dan's CEO father on the distribution list for good measure. The intent would be to add additional accountability by way of a top-down approach. I suspect that Dan would find difficulty in conducting himself in his customary, unprofessional way when placed in a position that promotes public awareness and scrutiny.

With the use of an asynchronous sounding board model (email), team members will be better equipped at handling interpersonal issues typically associated with team-based project assignments. I feel the use of this digital tool would provide Carlos with an opportunity to be actively involved at every step of the way. This strategic approach would assist him in documenting the project process in way that could prove useful as a conflict management tool. In spite of this fact, I believe that Carlos' apathetic managerial approach could use a little polishing. Considering the outcome of the case, I would suggest having Carlos attend a retraining program focused on team building and interpersonal relationships within the workplace. It definitely would not hurt to have the entire company participate in this positive and beneficial function.

In the unlikely event that neither of these suggestions brings about positive change, my final suggested strategy would involve notifying the Human Resources department. Regardless of Dan's direct relationship with the company's CEO, there are laws that help to protect working individuals like Catherine from issues of inequity within the work environment. I firmly suggest they use it.