

It is TAP® for CAPS

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The Training Development Manager for one of the UK's most experienced suppliers of integrated local government solutions explains how she has improved the effectiveness and consistency of their customer training through participation in the Trainer Assessment Programme.



Jan Singleton, CAPS Training Development Manager

CAPS Solutions is one of the UK's most experienced suppliers of integrated local government solutions. Its UNI-form suite of GIS-enabled administrative software meets all the land and property-related information needs of local authorities including the support of national e-Government initiatives. CAPS views effective training as vital to ensuring that its customers gain maximum benefit from their system implementation.

Prior to 2004, CAPS Solutions' approach to training customers in the configuration and use of their UNI-form software was based on highly skilled consultants delivering onsite sessions with a consultative slant. With the growing complexity of the product set, CAPS identified that its training needed to become more structured and effective. As well as reviewing the design of the course materials, CAPS introduced the Trainer Assessment Programme (TAP®) across its consultant group in 2004 and adopted the TAP® Certificate in Training Delivery Skills as a minimum standard for its external trainers.

The TAP® initiative was enthusiastically supported by consultants and managers across the company. The first two attendees returned from their Delivery Skills Refresher (DSR) course inspired with ideas to improve their delivery structure and encourage participation amongst their delegates. Subsequently ten other consultant/trainers attended the Training Delivery Skills (TDS) 5 day course or the 3 day DSR and all passed their assessments to achieve the TAP Certificate in Training Delivery Skills. "I know that at least one of our qualified trainers scored the coveted 100% although modesty may have prevented others mentioning this on their return" commented Jan Singleton, CAPS Training Development Manager.

The twelve qualified trainers started out with a mixture of training experience and attitude but all returned from the course enthused and eager to put their new skills into action. Their feedback included comments such as :-

"The course really built my confidence"

"Learning about questioning techniques was a revelation"

"I used the new skills the day after the course and they worked brilliantly"

Since the programme began, the effectiveness and consistency of CAPS training has improved and the purpose and importance of training as distinct to consultancy services has become clearer within the company. Individuals have grown in confidence now that they are equipped with the techniques for effective teaching and their success and enthusiasm has inspired others to sign up for the programme.

Jan Singleton is delighted with the consultants' response to The Training Foundation courses. "I was particularly pleased to see how enthused the consultants were on their return and how quickly they implemented what they had learnt".

Jan went on to say "Our delegates learn more effectively when they are involved actively in their course so the programme has certainly benefited customers. Our staff are more confident and the importance of effective training is acknowledged more widely within the company."

Other CAPS personnel are booked on TAP® courses in 2005 and several individuals are planning to pursue the more advanced qualifications leading to the TAP® Diploma in Learning Facilitation Skills.

Training Delivery Skills or Delivery Skills Refresher courses leading to the TAP® Certificate in Training Delivery Skills also form part of the formal company induction programme for new starters joining the Consultant/Trainer team.

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