

Bob Allen

Offering unique expertise

Bob Allen was a Solutions Architect in the Learning Solutions Practice. Throughout his career at EDS and GM he provided thought leadership, market-oriented solutions, product and service innovation, and frequent cost reduction and client satisfaction developments. His talent for developing practical, innovative training solutions has been demonstrated over the most recent 14 year period at EDS where he was responsible for defining client training requirements, designing solutions, leading proposal teams, and managing implementations. The training solutions he designs provide clients cost-efficient, learning-effective training on business topics for diverse audiences. One of Bob's most well-refined skills is his ability to get the best from teams he leads coupled with leading collaborative efforts among people who are not his direct reports. Bringing about a cultural change in GM's quality improvement program of the 1980s is one of his major turnaround achievements.

Contributing ideas that work

Mr. Allen brings over 30 years of business experience in many different business functions including product engineering, manufacturing process and business workflow design, product service, sales, strategic alliances, and business development, marketing, and training. As a Solutions Architect, Bob helped clients define learning needs, articulate requirements, create future visions of training operations, and design workforce re-skilling solutions. Bob specializes in job performance training, which builds client workforce skills that enable clients to run business operations more efficiently. In this capacity, he brings a wealth of business, learning solutions, and client care experience to training. Most of his training solutions blend training elements in several delivery media to reduce delivery cost, while providing effective skills development and knowledge transfer.

Bob helped General Motors redesign its CAD/CAM training program which trained designers and supervisors how to use new tools and manage new workflows using modern graphics technology. GM's job-oriented CAD/CAM training was a significant departure from their traditional approach which provided training on the technology tools' features and functions.

Bob implemented a job-performance training solution for a bank, which enabled their employees and customers to quickly adopt new business applications and work in more productive ways. In the health care industry, Bob designed a job performance training solution for a Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. By using job task analysis and reusable learning object techniques the training solution was designed to preserve the client's business process documentation investment and EDS' investment in systems documentation while making the training job specific. Hands-on simulations eliminated the need for creation and maintenance of a separate training region within the live application.

Educators have long held the view that soft skills topics are inappropriate for web-based delivery. When a leading personal effectiveness training company approached EDS to migrate a highly acclaimed soft skills training product to the web, Bob guided development of the client's business strategy and created a solution framework. The web-based course EDS created received the American Society for Training and Development's e-learning effectiveness certification, setting a new standard of excellence in soft skills training.

Experience that brings insight

Bob is co-inventor of the Electronic Mentor System, which integrates training into mainstream applications. This enabled concurrent development of systems applications and end user point of need support. In this way user performance support is developed and fully validated, including hands-on exercises, as a part of user acceptance testing. The Electronic Mentor System also provides a feature that gathers lessons

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learned from help desk and user experiences to drive courseware updates between major system enhancements. Online referenceware and training are key elements for sharing new knowledge shortly after it acquired during daily business activities. The Electronic Mentor System provided foundational concepts which EDS' e-learning practice used to create effective learning solutions for its clients.

Bob's training optimization model provides an architectural plan for making an organization's total training requirement visible. The model provides a way to reduce training cost, while making the training organization a quick-response supply chain that produces, or acquires, the training the business wants and needs. The key business concept in the optimization model is: *"It is less important how the training organization chart is drawn or how training responsibilities are divided between business and training organizations, than is re-engineering training into a responsive strategic support unit that makes training a management instrument to drive business performance."* In this context, performance support solutions are developed by small teams of experts from systems, operations, and learning organizations. Bringing these resources together with a sharp focus on the best ways of doing work, the team creates "how to do our work" support content embedded in information systems. Upon deployment, the systems themselves become the everyday guide-way for the workforce to learn the new way of working. This approach quickly makes the new way of working a part the daily routine, resulting in more repeatable processes and more predictable results.

In today's information-rich work place, more rapid up-take of technologies and the more efficient workflows they enable can create a quantum boost to bottomline results. Embedded job performance support is a breakaway competitive advantage for the seller of technology, as well as, those who buy and use technology to run their businesses. In the final analysis, the speed at which a company's workforce learns and applies technology to run the business better than competitors determines market winners and losers. For technology sellers job contextual performance support helps their customers achieve financial benefits in business operations... a seller's competitive advantage that reaches beyond the narrow scope of savings on IT and purchasing budgets.

Throughout his career at EDS, Bob has been a go-to coach for sales people. His insight in manufacturing operations made him a valuable resource for systems integration and outsourcing sales people in his first years at EDS. Later he played the same role in selling training solutions related to information systems. He helped sales people develop prospecting strategies to identify most likely buyers, then, qualify those buyers. As proposal leader Bob helped sales people define customer needs, articulate critical buying criteria, and project financial impacts in current and future environments. Bob's coaching skills helped sales people develop win themes, create relevant presentations to spark interest, and prepare winning proposals.

Education

Mr. Allen holds a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in electrical engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute, Indiana. Rose-Hulman is perennially ranked among the top 5 private engineering schools in the United States. As a student, he was an officer in the Rose-Hulman chapter of Eta Kappa Nu Engineering Honor Society.

Personal background

Mr. Allen lives in Dallas, Texas with his wife, Merrigale.