

Some Facts About FORUM SMEs

4 Heads, 60 Arms

Since 2006, an average of 60 employees each year—or nearly 20% of FORUM’s workforce—have supplied our four-person Training team with over 2,000 hours of content design, skill development, and class delivery expertise.

It Works

SMEs in our Retail Branch network have improved a teller’s time to proficiency by 70%.

We Print Our Own \$\$\$

SMEs get their own special Silent Auction each year and we print all the money they need for it. It’s all legal...really!



Andy Janning
Assistant VP—Training and Quality Service

P.O. Box 50738
Indianapolis, IN 46250
317.558.6447
andyj@forumcu.com



It Takes A Village: The Power of SMEs



We all know “it takes a village” to build a culture and shape employee performance.

Here’s the story of how one credit union has created a “village” of SMEs to improve employee performance, reduce expenses, and expand the efficacy of its workforce development efforts 15-fold.

Using the Power of Subject Matter Experts

The Fundamentals

“Only the short-sighted are short-staffed,” a mentor of mine once



told me. This has never been more true than in the Training industry.

Our team has a very simple mission statement: **“our goal is to help you exceed yours.”** Although we may never have the number of trainers on staff that we’d like, there are literally hundreds of experts all over our company ready to help us shape skills, change behavior, and get results for our internal clients, our members, our company, and our community.

While SMEs have been the lifeblood of our training and development efforts since 1998, we’ve redoubled our efforts in the last two years to recruit, retain, and recognize our internal “village.”

We have to tap into the hundreds of years of collective sales, service, leadership, and industry-specific skill on our payroll, because that is usually the most easily accessible and most transformative force in another employee’s life.

Not only does this keep the SMEs energized, it also keeps our Training team fresh and engaged.

Building The Village

Humility, Nobility, And Mutual Respect

Our Training team can’t help our clients hit their goals if we think we know everything. We actively recruit those employees whose performance can serve as a model for others, then partner with them with a simple purpose...

Change A World

We let the SMEs know that their knowledge, skills, and attitude can change another employee’s world. Many times, the world of these prospective SMEs has been changed by another SME along the way, and they want to “pay it forward.”

Mini-Me, But In A Good Way

We tell all SMEs that our goal is not to transform them into a trainer, but instead transfer their expertise to others. That takes the pressure off of them to feel like they suddenly need to master ID or facilitation skills or the nuances of performance consulting.

It Ain’t A Village Without A Border

We’re very protective of the time a SME spends on WLP efforts. We place very specific limits on the time they spend in the ID process, including establishing a rotating schedule for SMEs who help facilitate and coach during any synchronous training program.

Building The Village

SMEs Stick Around

We estimate that the turnover in our SME pool is 50% lower than that of the non-SMEs.

Consistent Coaching

Each trainer works closely with their pool of SMEs to make sure their content is accurate and that they’re consistently modeling the skills we’ve asked them to shape in others.

About That “Printing Our Own \$\$\$ Thing...”

During the year, each SME earns “SME Bucks” for designing, developing, and/or delivering class content. In January, we have a huge **SME Appreciation Breakfast and Silent Auction** that features over \$1000 in food and merchandise; iPods, overnight stays in 5-star hotels, days at the spa, and free airplane rides are just some of the items generously donated by local businesses for bidding, and a full hot breakfast is provided for free from a local catering company.

Nearly all of our 60 SMEs attend, as do members of our senior executive team. FORUM’s total expense is less than \$200 for the whole event.

It’s a time to look back on results they helped deliver ,and forward to a year full of goals and accomplishments that they will help make a reality.

