

“This is a big improvement and I can’t wait to see the reaction of our instructors who were not happy with the old lecture.”

~ Instructor



I’m blown away by how quickly you got this all done.



~ Instructor

CHALLENGES

Update many of the 70+ courses with instructionally sound training materials that give students a positive learning experience

Realign the curriculum department and redesign the development process to handle ongoing course maintenance

Provide writers and instructors with tools to make their lives easier

APPROACH

Conduct a thorough analysis of the existing situation and suggest areas for process improvement

Work closely with the curriculum department to develop training tools

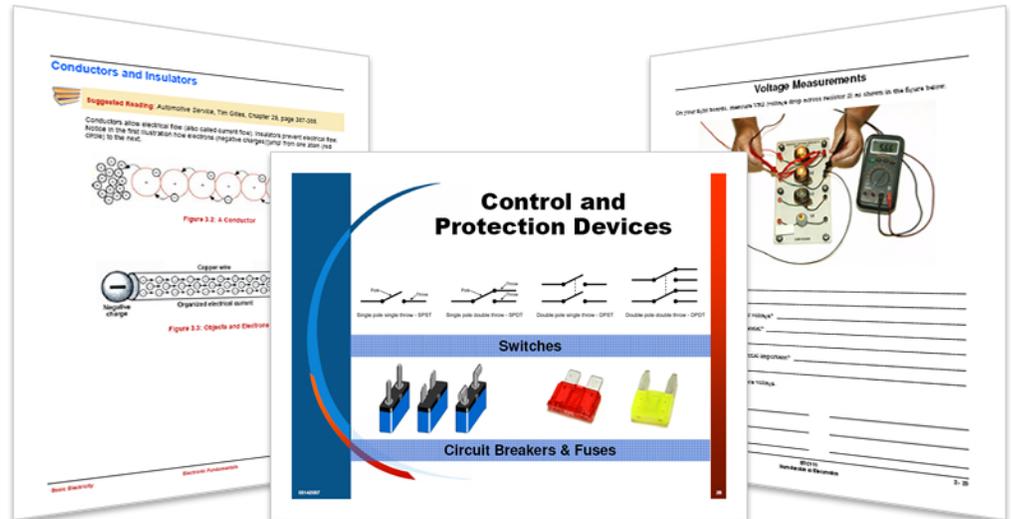
Update two existing courses with the new tools

RESULTS

Identified ways to improve inter-departmental communications and processes

Defined a structured development process to allow for input and cooperation from other internal departments

Developed templates for new, single sourced and instructionally sound learning materials



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION WANTS TO MANAGE THE RESULTS OF RAPID GROWTH

A nationwide provider of technical education that offers courses to automotive, motorcycle and marine technicians experienced substantial growth in a short period of time. The school has:

- Instructors committed to teaching students what they need to know to be successful.
- Writers with a passion for the automotive industry.
- Students striving to become premier technicians.

The curriculum department offered over 70 courses at eight campuses across the country, with seven writers responsible for maintaining these courses. The department members wanted to renovate their course development process because they felt it was too slow to respond to the rapid growth they were experiencing. They knew that if they could provide instructors with updated tools that made their jobs easier, the instructors would accept and use them readily.

The client asked Michaels & Associates to analyze their current processes and make suggestions for realigning their curriculum department, updating their courses and redesigning their development process. They also asked for recommendations about positions to staff, tools to use and experience needed by the staff for different tasks.

“I am totally happy with the improvements you made to what I wrote and with the areas for students to fill out in the student guide. I would not recommend any changes.”

~ Instructor

“I wanted to add my praise for everything you have done here on the Houston campus.

Your assistance in this process, crazy as it has been, has gone a long way to increase our credibility with the instructors.”

~ Curriculum Manager



DETAILED ANALYSIS LED TO AN EYE-OPENING FINDINGS REPORT

Michaels & Associates consultants worked in partnership with the curriculum department to conduct a series of interviews with writers, curriculum management, instructors and campus management. We combined these interviews with classroom observation and student interviews, and we held several off-site meetings to discuss our findings.

At the conclusion of the analysis process, consultants composed a thorough findings report that suggested the following areas for process improvement:

- More consistent and frequent communication between the curriculum department and instructors.
- Greater involvement by instructors in the course development process to provide them with a sense of ownership in the final materials. This would help ensure that the instructors followed the curriculum content and offered a consistent learning experience for students.
- Course redesign using consistent training templates to expedite future updates to the materials.

“Take a look at the electronic grade book reports for [Course name] second teach. The End of Course lab tests are 76.8% and 75.5% this time, up from 61.9% and 69.7% during the pilot. The changes we made really seem to be making a difference.”

~ Curriculum Manager



FEEDBACK AND TEST SCORES VALIDATE THE INVESTMENT

The curriculum department and instructors/SMEs from several campuses worked closely with a team of Michaels & Associates consultants to develop improved processes and rewrite materials for two courses.

Improved processes:

- A curriculum liaison was appointed to build relationships and open communication with campus staff.
- Curriculum management created a clear definition of roles and responsibilities for writers and shared it with instructors to improve the communication gap.
- The team defined and followed a structured development process to allow for instructor/SME input and cooperation from other internal departments.

Course updates:

- The two courses were designed in an instructionally sound manner and put into new training templates. These courses could then act as models for future course updates.
- The team developed student and instructor guides that allow for single source documentation, which would expedite updates.

Developers and instructors raved at the results, and improved student test scores reinforced the praise and validated the investment. Because the school embraced the recommendations and supported the entire change process, it reaped immediate positive results. The technical institution continues to grow in a positive direction based on their new learning organization processes and foundation.