Instructional Design
People Leader

Elizabeth Kvedar, CPTD®

Technical Content Development Manager
Information (other services)

Role Level

People Leader

Key Skills

- Systems Thinking
- Storytelling
- Effective Knowledge Check
- Effective Skills Application
- Evaluation and Aligning Requirements to a Learning Solution

TD Team Size

8 that I manage
(100+ in my organization)

Company Size

200,000+

TD Tenure

27 years

Biggest Challenges

Converting the expertise of SME's into quality learning materials

What is the BEST part of your job?

The best part of my job is transforming the value and purpose of technical information into a narrative that is understandable. With a clear narrative, we can build a learning solution that can explain the who, the what, the where, the when, the why and the how for a technology that will bring value to an enterprise. It's also one of the hardest parts of my job, since the content can be dry and complex.

How did you get into talent development?

I was working in an admin role and editing technical documentation in a general markup language (IBM GML), a precursor to the HTML languages used in the early days of the web. I was asked to help the technical sales training leader. This leader was delivering the content in her annual technical training conference with a lot of large binder manuals and materials that were mailed through the postal service to the sellers around the world. I ended up creating simple web pages where we could post content, and I also created our first distance learning program. It consisted of emailed material and the use of a conference call service; it was not fancy. But it became a way to offer our worldwide technical sales team just-in-time information without travel and without the post office. The department manager offered me a permanent job on the team, and I have been working in different sales training organizations since then.

Advice for people interested in the kind of role you have?

A lot of people know things, but only a few people can communicate their knowledge in an effective way. Being able to transform information into a meaningful narrative that educates and informs is a valuable skill. I've encountered people with a lot of different educational backgrounds who have come through our learning organization at different points in their career. I have seen them use a stint in the learning organization as an opportunity to build up their communication skills while sharing their knowledge with...

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Talent Development

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...others. It can be a great career path for those who can create and deliver information well.materials they are developing. Each week I also will do some sort of creative problem solving to identify potential training solutions for clients and/or developing training materials. Less often, I'll be doing some thought leadership work, either writing blog posts, engaging in a conference, or providing input on a publication.

Tell us what your day or week typically looks like.

In my role as a manager, I usually spend part of my day in meetings with my employees, with stakeholders, and with SME's. Keeping learning programs moving forward on track is like an exercise program, it only works if you're consistent. This is different from when I was an individual contributor, and I would spend a larger chunk of my time creating and editing content. While I don't create as much learning content myself these days, I do like my manager role. I have had more opportunities to mentor others on their content, as well as engage in strategic planning. This is a new skill set, and it fascinates me. Isn't it great when you stumble into a new skill set that totally mesmerizes you? Being a leader means my days are busier than ever, at the end of the week, I still feel that I am learning a lot and growing. Before I was a manager, I would attend the ATD webinars at both the national and local level with the goal of improving my own capabilities, but now that I am leader, I am always looking for resources to take back to my team.

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