

Business-critical ESP training

Ian Badger

Business and Medical English Services

BEUK Conference at IH London

7 June 2014

info@bmes.co.uk

www.bmes.co.uk



Business-critical ESP? Grammar

Hi Ian,

Unfortunately I was not yet able to return to Finland even I left Uruguay. I´m now based in Shanghai for some time.

Hopefully able to meet you some stage, Nice to keep in touch.

BR Pertti

To cover...

What is 'business-critical ESP'?

What creates a business-critical training need?

A 'business-critical' communications training case

Some examples of ESP training delivery and materials

“Business-critical” ESP?

“Business-critical” training should be indispensable.

The recipients of the training (the sponsoring organisation/the learners) need the training – they cannot do without it.

Some drivers for business critical ESP training

Relocation of staff

Integration of teams

Reorganisation involving new responsibilities

Improving employee performance

Cuts to training budgets

When ESP training is 'business-critical'

New technologies = new demands placed on communication skills

Global business and social networks = need to handle wide linguistic and cultural differences

Information only in English = need to learn at all levels within organisations

Knowledge of 'general/exam English' is not enough = need to know the language used in specific working environments in order to get/keep a job

Some 'business-critical' communication needs

Specific listening comprehension problems

Deciphering 'incorrect' language

Native speaker idiomatic language (irons in the fire, the elephant in the room, a storm in a tea cup, chuffed etc)

Business jargon (bug fixes, release mgmt., boxes)

Abbreviations / acronyms (SMEs, SPOCs)

Cultural knowledge

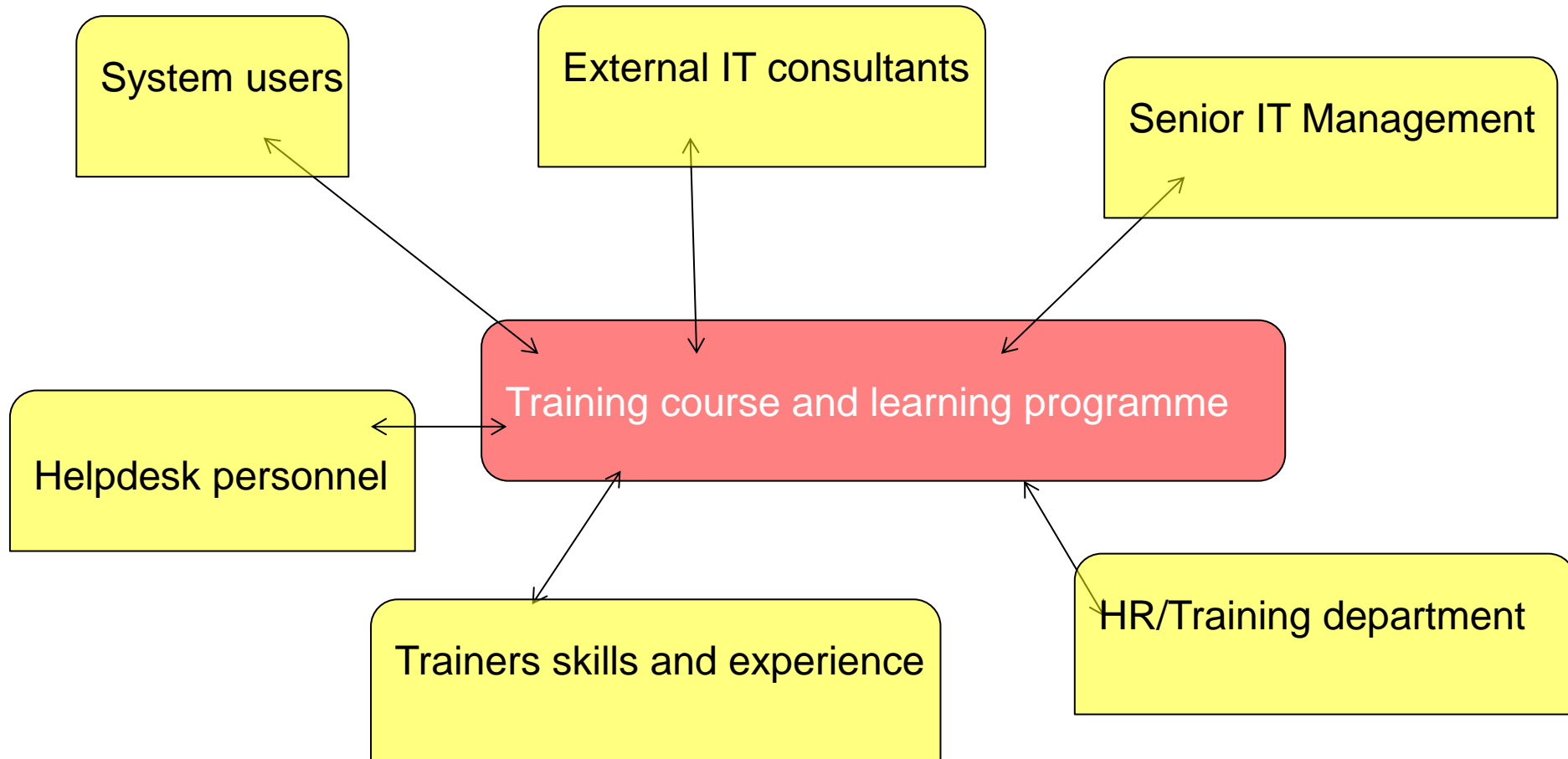
Example of the consultation process for delivering 'business-critical' training

Case: IT help desk communication involving Indian, Chinese, Polish and Finnish employees

Learner profile and expectations

- ❑ Polish IT expert working on global applications helpdesk
- ❑ Excellent general English – had passed Cambridge Advanced Certificate
- ❑ Opinion of previous English training in terms of its relevance to her current job – ‘useless’
- ❑ Requirements: needs to develop linguistic and cultural understanding of her colleagues (principally in India and China)

Planning an ESP course for IT Helpdesk personnel – involving the stakeholders



What business-critical training is not..

- Providing training that the learner **wants** above what the sponsoring organisation **needs**
- Over-focus on, for example, UK/UK business transactions
- Work on irrelevant case studies and exercises
- Over-focus on learning fun but non-essential language
- Over-confidence on the part of the trainer
- Over-attention to 'correct' grammar when time is limited and the brief is to work on communication skills.

Business-critical ESP materials

must be relevant to real needs

must be motivating, engaging

can still be fun

should be co-produced with stakeholders
whenever possible

Do you understand the questions?

Have you ever had any haematuria?

Have you noticed any dysuria recently?

Do you have any ankle oedema?

Do you suffer from orthopnoea?

Have you ever had a haemoptysis?

Have you ever had a haematemesis?/e/

Does this help?

Have you ever had any **haematuria**?

blood in your urine/water

Have you noticed any **dysuria** recently?

burning/stinging when you pass water/urine

Do you have any **ankle oedema**?

swelling of the/your ankles / ankle swelling

Do you suffer from **orthopnoea**?

breathlessness/shortness of breath when you lie flat

Have you ever had a **haemoptysis**?

coughed up (any) blood

Have you ever had a **haematemesis**?

vomited blood

So, how do we become specialist ESP trainers?

Work and consult with subject specialists

Work alongside skilled ESP practitioners

Attend training courses

Learn from published ESP materials

Research web pages, internal documents, brochures etc

Learn from and use tailor-made resources such as
video/audio recordings

References

Sources used in the talk

Medical materials and Indian video ©BMES

Collins English for Life Listening B2+, 2014, Ian Badger

(Medical administrator/patient discussion)

Some useful websites for researching work-specific language:

www.executiveplanet.com Intercultural guides

www.cips.org The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply.

www.purchasing.com Purchasing Industry

www.supplymanagement.com Supply chain management