

Next meeting

Date/Time:

Tuesday, January 11
7:00 pm

Topic:

The art of explaining science! Dr. Bob Krull of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute will speak about science, explanation, and instruction.

Location:

Burgundy Room, North York Memorial Community Hall, North York Civic Centre, 5110 Yonge St., North York

Next Month's Topic:

Join us on Tuesday, February 8 for our annual Wine and Cheese party. You'll learn about Frame, Flash, and RoboHelp HTML in our Tools Cafe.

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Get ready to ride the e-learning train

by Dan Boylan, Member

At the December STC meeting, Michelle Hutchinson, the energetic president of PeopleFirst Interactive and Hutchinson Communications, talked to us about e-learning, knowledge management, and the future of information.

The future is bright. E-learning, still in its infancy, is already being compared to where e-commerce was a few years ago. Technical communicators are ready to become an integral part of the e-learning revolution.

We will soon be able to develop and publish learning content. We will contribute to learning portals and knowledge bases as knowledge transfer specialists, and we will author best practices, knowledge and process maps. We may even become subject matter experts in "ask the expert" discussions, and developers of corporate taxonomies, aggregating and classifying enterprise information.

What is knowledge management? Consistently acquiring, creating, codifying, and disseminating knowledge across an organization might work as a definition. It might also define the work many technical communicators do every day.

By creating a culture that promotes and rewards knowledge sharing, we are able to produce better documents, enabling users better access to information. Michelle feels that the Internet

is a great enabler, providing access to networks and databases that were previously unattainable. Expanded access to knowledge will promote knowledge sharing. Knowledge bartering may become the commerce of the future.

E-training is the fastest growing segment of the marketplace. Trainers will hock their wares globally while expanding the variety of learning options and services. Learners, on the other hand, will take advantage of more cost-effective, quality modes of learning.

E-learning will be available anytime and anywhere. The learner will proceed at his or her own pace, or participate in an interactive "classroom" setting. Hyperlinks enable non-linear thinking, which will focus on discovery and exploration. Pioneers in this latest phenomenon will be part of the new paradigm of learning.

I am excited by the possibilities of e-learning and look forward to the challenge we all will face in the changing roles of tomorrow. To paraphrase that well-known rock band, Timbukthree, "Our future's so bright we'll have to wear shades."

Michelle Hutchinson's full presentation can be found at <www.peoplefirstinteractive.com/presentation>.



Happy New Millenium



communication
TIMES

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We welcome your submissions to us via e-mail at newsletter@stctoronto.org or diskette. We reserve the right to edit copy. The deadline for submissions is the monthly meeting. Articles may be reprinted, if the Toronto Chapter and the author are acknowledged.

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The art of explaining science

by Pamela Kostur, Program Co-manager

Have you ever pondered the physics of skiing? Dr. Robert Krull has, and on Jan. 11 he'll be speaking about science, explanation, and instruction at the first Toronto STC meeting of Y2K!

Turning scientific theories and data into lay explanations and instructions requires a two-step translation process. Bob will explain how first, scientific concepts need to be transformed into explanations that lay people can understand. Second, he'll explain how lay explanations need to be transformed into

actions that people can apply in their physical environments. Maybe we'll even be able to convince Bob to demonstrate his theories with a dance step or two.

Bob Krull is a member of the Graduate Faculty in the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. His focus is research design, online interfaces, and performance support, as well as documentation for physical skills. Bob is also involved in RPI's distance learning program.

Membership Report

by Laurie Pearce, Membership Manager

As of November 1999, our membership stands at 620.

Please welcome our newest members:

Sandra Alleyne-Batson

Nicolette Blase

Neal Bonnor

Joanna Collins

Candace Davis

Bridget Deciantis

Tarek Fatah

John Fraser

George Free

Sara Hatherly

Martin Haurilak

J. P. Hornick

Helen Knight

Marylou Morra

Carolyn Pulis

David Sage

Linda Schmoll

Helen Vuletin

Transferring in from other chapters are:

Darla Kennington

Anniki Persaud

Reinstating are:

Bruce Madole

Judy Newell

Ronnie Seagren

Jennifer Smith

Transferring out are:

Eric Hamilton (to B.C.)

Mary Maguire (to the U.S.)

Ellen Morito (to Nova Scotia)

Membership Reminder

By now you should have received your membership renewal for 2000. Please take a few moments to fill in the renewal and return it. Just a reminder — don't put off renewing. Every year many members end up having to reinstate their membership because they didn't realize their membership had lapsed. If in doubt about your membership status, contact me at membership@torontostc.org.

