



## Live, Online Learning Prompts Education

eLearning course uses online voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) to help professionals become Six Sigma Black Belts.

BY MARK ROBINS, SENIOR EDITOR

**L**ive, synchronous, instructor-lead, interactive, online Six Sigma eCourses, testing and certification is now available in a virtual classroom for worldwide learners. The Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE, Norcross, GA), working with Six Sigma eLearning Inc. (SSEI, Beach Haven, NJ), has expanded its offerings in Six Sigma to include a new certificate program in Six Sigma Black Belt. Participants can join from anywhere in the world at a time convenient to them because the course accommodates three different time zones: the United States, Europe and Asia.

The course spans 10 weeks, and requires application to an on-the-job project and a final exam. It is the delivery methodology's technology, and the

immediate and direct application to the learner's real-world challenges that make the eLearning course innovative.

Before the Internet Age, phone connections were needed for a live eLearning or distance learning program. The services were intermittent and expensive in all countries but the United States. "That is no longer an issue because most countries who participate in the global supply chain are broadband capable," says Larry Aft, IIE's director of continuing education. "Using, the Internet for VoIP is a good way to connect with them. This allows the program to be offered globally. A U.S.-based company can have its global team members participate in the same program. This delivery method impacts the operations of the participants' organizations represented in the training."

◀ An eLearner participates in the IIE/SSEI eCourse through the IET virtual classroom. Source: IIE and SSEI

### APPLICATION AND CONTENT

Interactive eCourse Technology (IET) originated as a Six Sigma define, measure, analyze, design, validate (DMADV) project and developed over 30 months. "Participants report that the IET is a unique contribution to Six Sigma training that improves the learner's experience, particularly when compared to the traditional asynchronous, or prerecorded eLearning," says Mark St. James, SSEI's CEO and president. Compared to traditional classrooms, e-learning has no travel or lodging costs decreased tuition costs, and participants only spend three to four hours per session compared to a full day of work.

IIE requires a direct application and exam as requirements of this program. "Learners begin to apply the tools to an existing company project," St. James says. "The online discussions with other participants, and the mentoring and guidance of the facilitator and IIE resources, help the project application be more on-target. Companies have documented substantial savings using this method before the program is even completed."

The IIE/SSEI eCourse requires eLearners to work with their managers to identify and select a Six Sigma process improvement project that when completed, will improve the effectiveness, efficiency, improve process quality, increase customer satisfaction, develop employee team members and create cost savings for the company.

After selecting the project, the eLearner is required to prepare a Six Sigma project charter, and to act as the project manager to lead the Six Sigma team members to complete a define, measure, analyze, improve, control (DMAIC) process improvement project to successful conclusion. The SSEI

### QUALITY SPECS

▶ The course spans 10 weeks and requires application to an on-the-job project and a final exam.

▶ IET's VoIP feature offers learners and instructors live voice communication in real-time to freely ask and answer questions, exchange ideas, and take and view instant learner polls and quizzes.

▶ Compared to traditional classrooms, e-learning has no travel or lodging costs, decreased tuition costs, and participants only spend three to four hours per session compared to losing a full day of work.

facilitator and Aft conduct an online, live discussion on the selected project to help clarify concepts and help the learner apply them, as well as give feedback on what the learner's project is accomplishing.

The course's content covers most Six Sigma functions. These include:

- Certification overview
- Enterprise-wide deployment
- Business process management
- Project management
- Define phase of DMAIC
- Measure phase of DMAIC
- Analyze phase of DMAIC
- Improve phase of DMAIC
- Control phase of DMAIC
- Lean enterprise
- Design for Six Sigma

IET offers benefits compared to traditional prerecorded eLearning. IET's VoIP feature offers learners and instructors live voice communication in real time to freely ask and answer questions, exchange ideas, and take and view instant learner polls and quizzes. IET also offers Internet-based shared learning activities such as:

- Computer desktop sharing
- Web browsers
- Web sites
- Video clips
- Software applications and programs such as Excel, PowerPoint and Word

These interactive learning activities are shared simultaneously by all learners in real-time and at any global location. "This means if a learner wants to share a spreadsheet directly associated with the project at hand, he or she can pull up that spreadsheet and everyone in the session can see it and discuss it," Aft says. "Learners can take the entire class to a virtual monitoring system to see the before-and-after effects of classroom theory put into action. In a self-paced, eLearning program with no access to a subject matter expert, the learner may complete the program and not be able to apply the learning."

Overall, this live, online instructor-lead training will allow broader access to Six Sigma training within quality-related organizations and throughout the supply chain. It will increase employee competence, readiness and

the ability to implement process improvement projects.

#### TECHNOLOGY CONTACTS

For more information on this online education, contact:  
Institute of Industrial Engineers  
3577 Parkway Ln., Suite 200  
Norcross, GA 30092

(800) 449-0460

E-mail: [cs@iienet.org](mailto:cs@iienet.org)

URL: [www.iieseminars.org](http://www.iieseminars.org)

Six Sigma eLearning Inc.

5103 West Ave.

Beach Haven, NJ 08008

(609) 207-0183

E-mail: [marc@sixsigmalive.net](mailto:marc@sixsigmalive.net)

URL: [www.sixsigmalive.net](http://www.sixsigmalive.net)