



### What's your time worth?

Recent statistics show that the average salary of town hall staff is £21,588 and the old adage that time is money has never been truer than in today's economic climate.

Against this background finding ways to carry out essential activities more effectively and with fewer resources is more important than ever and getting it right can yield good returns.

This is the situation at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, who is taking a new approach to its forthcoming Information Security training.

It is a statutory requirement that all employees who use IT must sign up to the council's IT policy. To do this Blaenau Gwent staff previously had to read the IT Policy booklet and sign a form declaring they would abide by the policy. Managers had to ensure that their team members had signed the form and chase those who hadn't signed the policy. And, with 1500 people involved, this was time consuming and tedious.

So Simon Green, Blaenau Gwent's L&D Advisor, got together with his IS colleagues and developed an e-learning module to replace the IT policy booklet. Featuring 18 screens and video clips to create realistic scenarios, the e-learning is an engaging and interactive replacement.

Simon says "Our Learning Pool subscription was invaluable because we didn't have to start from scratch. We looked at courses already there in the catalogue and then topped and tailed one, using the Authoring tool, and away we went. We literally produced the e-learning in just a few hours and we saved ourselves a lot of time by repurposing an existing course."

The course is delivered via Blaenau Gwent's DLE which evidences the learning taking place, thereby removing the need for a paper trail and, at the same time, making the IT policy infinitely more accessible than before. The course also makes use of other Web 2.0 features of the DLE by including an FAQ section and a discussion forum, plus other downloadable reference documents. Each employee indicates their agreement to abide by the policy by simply ticking the appropriate check box, which, thanks to the DLE's functionality, enables the managers to see who has and hasn't "signed up".

The e-learning will be rolled out shortly and staff who don't complete the course by a designated deadline will have their IT access removed. Incentive indeed!

So what do colleagues think of the changes? "It's early days yet but we've had very positive feedback on the e-learning module so far. Managers like it because they no longer have to chase up and keep records of who's signed the form. And IS colleagues like it because whenever there's an update or change required to the IT policy we can make that happen in minutes and at no cost. We don't have to worry about reprinting booklets either so it's time and money saved all round."