Running head: INTERVIEW WITH BONNIE SHELLNUT, PH.D.

Interviewing and IT Professional

Interview with Dr. Bonnie Shellnut

Carlson Marketing Group, Troy, Michigan

Tim Boileau

Wayne State University

IT 7100

August 12, 2004

Tim Boileau met with Dr. Bonnie Shellnut for a one hour interview on August 5, 2004. Dr. Shellnut is a Senior Training Manager with Carlson Marketing Group in Troy, Michigan. Dr. Shellnut earned her Ph.D. in Instructional Technology from Wayne State University, and is a human performance technologist. Prior to earning her doctorate, Dr. Shellnut worked in K-12 education as a teacher in English literature and composition.

Senior Training Managers at Carlson have responsibility for supervision of a business unit. In her role at Carlson, Dr. Shellnut has responsibility for ensuring the delivery of training and certification test development for Ford Motor Company Retailer Education and Training (RE&T). The audience for RE&T training is approximately 95,000 to 100,000 sales, service, and parts employees in 5,000 dealerships across the United States. Courses are delivered synchronously using compressed video broadcast. Participants have a "one-touch" pad that they use to respond to questions, and may also dial in to give live audio feedback. Asynchronous training is provided via Web-based training courses. Assessment for both synchronous and asynchronous courses is conducted by way of an automated testing system, designed by Dr. Shellnut's team. Dr. Shellnut has developed a thirty-nine page reference of test-writing guidelines for use by subject matter experts within Ford Motor Company. Test questions are criterion referenced and randomized according to objectives.

Some of the responsibilities attended to by Dr. Shellnut on a near-daily basis include review of proposals developed by her team, design review and content validation for course updates, staff meetings and staff development, and authoring white papers.

Team members join Dr. Shellnut's group from a variety of background and with varied experience and educational levels. While there is not defined career path per se, which everyone follows, there is a progression of positions with increasing responsibility and accountability associated with each. Position titles include: Training Coordinator, Training Specialist, Senior Training Specialist, Training Manager and Senior Training Manager.

All of the training and performance services provided by Dr. Shellnut's team are for external clients, which Dr. Shellnut views as a plus. The downside is that in many instances, clients are product focused on a particular training intervention without fully investigating the contributory causes to the performance issue in a front-end analysis. Intra-organizational silos at times create barriers to development of efficiencies and best practices between the different practice groups. Large-scale projects that have been most successful are generally due to putting cross-functional teams in place to cut across the different silos.

In terms of skills, education and experience, Dr. Shellnut looks for employee candidates who have a willingness to learn and are able to adapt to changing situations. Preference is given candidates that have an understanding of the basic concepts of human performance technology. Examples of previous work could come from teaching, writing or other discipline areas that require strong communications. Finally, Dr. Shellnut looks for people who have an interest in educational theory. Industry salary ranges for instructional technologists in Dr. Shellnut's organization and comparable companies cover a broad range with $50,000 at the low end, and up to $125,000 per year at the

senior level. Salary is typically based on experience and proven performance in deliverables.

Dr. Shellnut offered some advice for would be job seekers in some of the questions they should ask during an interview. How will performance be evaluated? What are the career opportunities with this firm? What types of assignments should be expected? How much client interaction is expected with the position? Depending on the applicant's interests, they could become a training designer, a buyer of training, or an expert in testing and certification. In a small company or department, the individual may end up doing a little bit of everything.