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MCSE Training Live Online from Insider Training

by Paula Stone

MCSE Training Online - Overview

I had never done any serious online training before, but I was very interested in the opportunity to test out Insider Training's live online training system. They have a fairly broad catalog of online IT courses to choose from: Microsoft, Linux, Wireless, Development, and Security. I attended Insider Training's (www.insidertraining.com) MCSE training and certification course and my review is short and simple: These guys have done online IT training the way it should be – efficient, fun, productive, and guided by real industry experts.

MCSE Training Online - Course Focus

The Insider Training MCSE 2003 program focuses in on Windows XP Administration, 2003 Server Administration, Active Directory Administration and Design, 2003 Networking Administration and Design, and Windows Security Administration and Design. What I was most impressed with was the quality of the instruction. From day one, our instructor pushed us towards two core goals – 1) Learn the 'real world' aspects of the products inside and out, and 2) Get ready to pass all seven certification exams.



MCSE Training Online - What You Receive

After signing up for the 12-week online course in December, I received a nice headset with microphone, seven Microsoft Press books, and seven Transcender practice test software products. The class hadn't even started yet and I already had a great set of resources to work with. The books and Transcenders alone are worth over \$1200. The Insider Training system is unlike anything that I've seen before. I received the books and Transcenders, the live online class sessions, ongoing mentoring from the instructor outside of class, access to the Insider Training remote lab system for hands-on work, and best of all, every class is automatically recorded for replay.

MCSE Training Online - Course Format

Class sessions were two hours each and the class met twice a week online. I was very pleased that I didn't have to tell my boss I'd be out of the office to go to training. As a consultant it's very hard for me to block out entire days of non-billable hours. All I had to do to attend class was plug my headset into my sound card, install a small piece of client software, and login to the virtual classroom over the Internet. I wasn't sure what this would be like, but it was just great – the presentations were focused, interactive, and technically top-notch. The class size was pretty small (13 students in my class) which made for some great Q & A. The instructor really knew his stuff inside and out which in my mind was the most important piece of the puzzle. We all asked a lot of questions that were definitely beyond the scope of the material and our instructor handled every one of them with deep knowledge and a quick wit. I also greatly enjoyed the fact that I didn't have to lock myself in a room with a stack of books to get the knowledge that I needed or sit in a classroom for 8 hours at a time.

MCSE Training Online - Class Recordings

Unlike regular training classes, all of us had the luxury of being able to miss a class if something important came up. Twice, I was unable to make a live class because of client projects. However, since the class is digitally recorded and published immediately after class ends, I watched the recordings and didn't skip a beat. I plan on completing my certification tests over the next 6 weeks. Some students took their tests during the 12 week program (the only students that I had contact with passed all their exams.) Everyone gets 12 months of access to the class recordings and other online materials.

MCSE Training Online - Conclusions

Being a fairly hardcore tech geek, I've always enjoyed the thought of going to a training class in my pajamas and using the latest technology to learn. However, it had always been a bit of a pipe dream since the online courses that I have attempted have been pretty sad to say the least. Somehow, training companies that attempt online courses think that they can just present material and no matter how dull or lifeless the effort people will buy it. Well, it doesn't work that way folks. My only complaint with my Insider Training class was that since I attended most of the live classes from the office, I still didn't get to go to class in my pajamas. And there weren't any doughnuts. I can deal with that however.

3 out of 3 stars for Insider Training's online live MCSE training and certification course. They also earn our 2005 Editors Choice Award for Best Live Online IT Training Courses. This is a great way to get your MCSE certification. Other live courses offered by Insider Training are: MCSE, MCSE:Security, MCSE:Messaging, MCSE 2003 Update, Vbscript, Active Directory Administration and Design, Exchange Administration and Design, MCDST (Microsoft Certified Desktop Technician), CWNA (Certified Wireless Network Administrator), MCSA, CISSP, Security +, and Linux 101/102 and Linux 201/202 from the Linux Professional Institute.