



## **CASE STUDY:** **Team-Based Approach to Structured On-the- Job Training**

### **The Client**

One of Canada's largest petro-chemical plants.

### **The Situation**

An innovative plan was needed to incorporate on-the-job training for a biennial event at the plant – an event that, if done incorrectly, could result in serious operational and safety issues.

### **The Challenge**

A complete power switch from one source to another is performed for maintenance reasons. The trick to the electrical switching is to take one of the two feeder lines out of service while keeping the internal electrical grid balanced so the plant runs without interruption. The switch is difficult for employees to perform because of its infrequency.

### **The Solution**

The plant's training coordinator identified problems with the way the technical training process was being conducted. Training information often was misplaced, the curriculum was not developed according to any proven method, and some of the trainers did not receive train-the-trainer instruction.

To address these issues, IRI Consultants designed a curriculum architecture that could be used and maintained by internal facilitators without instructional design



backgrounds. The architecture would work to increase the comfort level employees had with their jobs by increasing the effectiveness of the technical training they received. To do so, the organization reengineered several business processes, which led to adopting a Self-Regulated Teams model, a team-based approach that subsequently reduced the levels of management involvement.

IRI course developers created a design built on the principle of Structured On-the-Job Training, coupled with an introductory (pre-) session and a review (post-) session. By using this design, facilitators would be able to practically apply technical training to the real-work experiences of operators. The design was presented to participants in three levels: *Heard It, Seen It, Done It*. In the first level operators would be taught how to do the tasks; in the second level operators would watch someone perform the tasks; and finally in the third level they would actually perform the tasks.

These sessions were critical to helping employees understand not only what to do, but why to do it.

## **The Results**

As a result of the training, comprehensive reference materials were developed, including a participant's manual and job aids. Operator confidence increases because they learned the *what, why, where, and how* of the operating equipment that many employees had not a chance to touch due to the infrequency of the operation.