

What About the Training?

PRINT

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Enterprises spend big bucks on implementing VoIP telephony solutions. A couple of years ago (VoiceCons ago) Bank of America announced their Cisco agenda. Bank of America listen up.



I visit Bank of America's numerous branches in the Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland metro areas for business and personal matters. As I always do- I take note of the phones used. Having met with a Bank Officer, I noticed the Cisco phone on her desk.

How do you like your phone, I asked. "It's okay. Everyone that sees this phone thinks that it looks impressive." So I asked- "is it?"

The bank personnel in this particular branch have been in the branch for more than 6 months- as have the Cisco phones. The employees think they are complicated. "We don't know how to use intercom to call one another." "It's challenging every day." "We can't use headsets and don't know how to use voice mail." "We know how to do call park!" "Our old system displayed each line- now we never know who's on which line."

I walked into a mine field when I asked the initial question. "Can you work on these phones?" I replied "no Maam!" So much for trying to haggle a higher interest rate on a CD. I really wish I knew the answers. I asked if they had their manuals. "No - they are too complicated!" They are probably in the recycling or shred pile is my guess.

Implementers need to understand the mechanics of business telephony. Having a "demo" session does not constitute 'training' and not having follow up training 2 weeks after any initial installation is nuts. The grand plan to save money and rid corporate of old fashioned telecom is okay so long as you step up to the plate and provide what people need to do their jobs. I've been calling another Bank Officer for days at Bank of America- I get her corporate voice mail. Today, I learned she is no longer in Maryland but now in the southwest, since February.

I'm not surprised by any of the comments and as my wife smiled and waited patiently to conduct our real business, I could tell she understood. After all, she is a teacher. Now- we all need to 'listen up' and grasp the basic concept that we must teach the industry to teach users not once with a demo, not twice but as often as it takes or until we find better solutions. IP telephony isn't cheap and an under utilized business tool such as the telephone- can end up costing a company a lot more than user dissonance and buyer remorse.

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