

BENJAMIN **FORREST**



SOLUTIONSMITH *PAR EXCELLENCE*

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SUMMARY OF RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Putting People First

Working solo, one can accomplish pretty astonishing things, but even a very focused and determined individual can only accomplish so much alone. Having had the opportunity to work on some amazing teams at both Sprint and Sony, I've learned that only through collaboration with other people can we transcend the sum of our individual talents and abilities. As instructor, designer, facilitator, moderator, and supervisor I've come to appreciate that how you manage relationships is the key to achieving your goals. This only works if you have a real understanding of both your own strengths and limitations as well as those of the people around you. How do strive for that understanding? It didn't come easily and it didn't come overnight. My favorite tools are regular one-on-one meetings, active and empathetic listening, and the consistent use of timely and specific feedback. If I hadn't learned how to employ these tools and put people first in my equations I would not have been able to successfully moderate three global summits with participants from the US, Japanese, and European QA departments and participants; grow a successful team of trainers situated across two locations and responsible for the training hundreds of employees & contractors per year; or play a key role in the successful selection, configuration, rollout, and launch of a suite of development and testing software applications used globally by studios and departments throughout Sony Worldwide Studios.

Solutions Parkour

Parkour noun |pär-'kûr| - *the sport of using the most efficient methods available to quickly and creatively overcome obstacles along a chosen route.* During my time at Sony, as both an individual contributor and as a supervisor, I've successfully applied the spirit of this challenging sport to turn challenges into successes ensuring that projects and teams are consistently moving forward efficiently. Examples of this thinking in action: the creation of a training group where none existed before to address massive contingent staff attrition rates; the facilitation of process standardization across locations to improve communication and collaboration. Facing a roadblock? Ask yourself: can you be fluid, flexible, and quick thinking enough to find a way over, under, around, or alongside to reach a common goal?

Creative & Critical Thinking

While as a trainer, an instructional designer, a supervisor, and even during my early days as a tester or customer support rep, I have strived each day to look at tasks and projects as an exercise in creativity. How can we do things better? Differently? Look at things from another perspective? Is this even the right box that we're trying to think outside of? In this way I've been able to bring fresh ideas to the table with each and every project I've had the privilege of working on. Seeking for a way to train a complex process in a way that would be memorable and fun, I created a card-based game that placed participants in scenarios they would certainly face on the job using limited resources; the game forced users to quickly and iteratively practice elements of the process and provided an environment that allowed users to fail repeatedly, but eventually learn from their mistakes. Finally mastering both the process and their underlying principals enabled participants to succeed.

Proactive Project Management

Thinking creatively is only half the equation and doesn't accomplish much if the result is over budget, late, or doesn't meet the needs of your client, which is why the fundamentals of project management are so important. As a supervisor of learning & development and again as an instructional designer, I have overseen a diverse portfolio of development projects and learned (sometimes the hard way) that without proper and timely initiation, planning, communication, and close out your project can go from bad to worse in the blink of an eye. This is even more critical when working with remote teams, outside contractors, executives, or consultants. Even if your job description isn't project manager, if you want your projects to succeed, a grasp of these fundamentals is essential. A good relationship with your PM can't hurt either. Go on: give 'em a hug.

Technology Spoken Here

There are a lot of acronyms I could write down here that might sound really impressive, but rather than play acronym bingo with you, I'm going to describe my thinking when it comes to technology instead. Early adopter? Yes. I'll gladly take that closed beta invite and gladly give you UI/UX feedback or be part of your IT "Victims Group" so that I can get an understanding of the latest features. Comfortable with command line? Yep. There are many instances where I find myself SSH'ing to a remote machine to tweak or install programs. Willing to futz around with something to figure out how it works rather than wait to be told how to use it? Absolutely. If there isn't a subject matter expert on hand then let's not wait for one to appear. I've done this to build training and documentation for both homegrown web apps as well as enterprise level database applications that had little to no documentation and even less access to SMEs. But can you code? I script comfortably and can visit that special coding place on a rocket ship powered by RedBull and CliffBars, but I wouldn't want to live there. Favorite applications? Life would be a bleak place without Photoshop, Illustrator, AfterEffects, and a sense of humor.

RELEVANT WORK HISTORY

Sr. Instructional Designer, Sony Computer Entertainment of America, San Diego, CA

(April 2010– present)

Supervisor of Learning & Development, Sony Computer Entertainment of America, San Diego, CA

(November 2006– April 2010)

Training Specialist FPQA, Sony Computer Entertainment of America, San Diego, CA

(August 2003 – November 2006)

Training Coordinator, Sony Computer Entertainment of America (Contracted via Nelson Staffing), San Diego, CA

(March 2003 – August 2003)

Game Test Analyst, Sony Computer Entertainment of America (Contracted via Nelson Staffing), San Diego, CA

(June 2002 - March 2003)

Sales & Customer Service Trainer, Sprint PCS, San Diego, CA

(November 2000 – June 2002)

Sales Associate, RadioShack, Victorville, CA

(September 1998– October 2000)

Technical Support Representative & Systems Administrator, Victorville, CA

(September 1997 – July 1998)

Interests

Ludology, pedagogy, blacksmithing, typography, mixology, social psychology, home brewing, pixel art, graphic design, classic arcade restoration, memology, and making/modifying/tinkering & toying.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST