



Karen Cole wondered if this would be her big break! Here she was, in her second year of a master's program in instructional technology, with no job prospects in sight, and all of a sudden, a big project fell into her lap...

### Mid-September, Cole's Journal Entry

Although I'm graduating soon, I really want to stay in the Central State University area. My husband has a good job. I always hoped I would be able to find work close to the university. If not, I don't know if Steve will be willing to move. Should I go back to my old job teaching preschool? Maybe I won't have to worry about these things much longer. I've got a great chance to prove my skills with this big project. And it's on campus too! I know it's just a demonstration project for the interactive technology center, but CSU has just received funding to hire a full-time director for the center. Maybe it will be me!

Right now, the center is a "self-serve" lab full of high-powered computers. In fact, I'm very familiar with the machines and software housed there. I've served as a lab assistant in the center for my entire master's program. I'm supposed to help faculty use the computers and software for course development, but realistically, the center is rarely used. Sometimes a faculty member stops by to develop a conference presentation, but the interactive multimedia capabilities in the center are basically untouched by the faculty. For the most part, the capabilities of the computer systems are explored only by the lab staff on duty. After all, it gets pretty boring just sitting around waiting for faculty to show up. In fact, it was during one of these exploratory sessions that I got this project. Vice President Lucas was touring the facility with some guests while I was playing around with the equipment. The next thing I knew, V-P Lucas had hired me to develop an interactive program for the campus Admissions office.

### Mid-September, From the Desk of Vice President Lucas

*Boy, I hope Karen gets on this project soon. When I took Mr. and Mrs. Bowman through the interactive multimedia center, I was really glad that Karen was there. These folks are the major funders of the center. And it was a little embarrassing that the room full of expensive equipment was not being used except by Karen. After all, the Bowmans donated the money for all of those computers! The things Karen was doing must have impressed them! They were quite jolly as we were leaving the center. But when they asked when they'd be able to see some products that had been developed there, I thought I'd better work quick. And that's when I came up with the idea for Admissions.*

### Mid-September, Cole's Journal Entry

Admissions wants to take the new program on the road for recruiting purposes. It's supposed to showcase each program area in the entire college. Although it's mid-September already, they want it by the end of December so they can use it for their major recruiting drive. No problem! This is my big chance to show my stuff! And if it is successful...

### Early October, Cole's Journal Entry

Today is the day! Vice President Lucas put together an advisory committee of faculty and high-level administrators to work with me on this project. I've been charged with creating an interactive program that showcases the programs of the college. Everyone wants it to be sensational! In fact, the Development Office is talking about using the program to show to potential donors. And the Visitors' Center has already requested a copy. Today I meet with my advisory group for the first time. Dr. Lucas asked me to make a short presentation to the group about multimedia. But I'm not worried! I already have a presentation available—one that I gave in my computer class last semester. It worked well then (I got an "A") so there's no reason to believe it won't work for this group. After all, it's already been tried out!

### Later in October, From the Desk of Vice President Lucas

*After the meeting, several advisory committee members commented on the "low level" of Karen's presentation. I wonder what they meant by that? It seemed fine to me. I hope they get over these feelings soon! I don't have time to attend these meetings myself. After all, Karen is in charge of developing this thing.*

## November, Cole's Journal Entry

What am I going to do with this project? We meet once a week, and I always take notes about what they want. I keep working right along, but the committee is always changing its mind. They seem so concerned about minute details! I try to please them but one week when we meet, they want this; the next week they want that! Several of them have started stopping by the center to see how it's going. As soon as I make the changes one person suggests, someone wants another one! It's hard to please 12 different people. I wish V-P Lucas would show up for some of these meetings. I need to tell him that I may not make the December deadline!

## Late January, Vice President Lucas's Journal Entry

*Boy, the Admissions people are really upset! Karen doesn't have that multimedia program ready for them to show to high school students during their recruiting drive. I'd forgotten about it, to be honest. I got so busy with other things, and since I hadn't heard from Karen, I thought things were moving along just fine. After all, she has a team of faculty and administrators advising her. Oh, I heard old Joe grumbling about what a sloppy job she was doing, but it's awfully hard to please Joel I know! I've known him for a long time. I'll have to get over to see Karen sometime. We just have to have something to show Mr. and Mrs. Bowman next time they are on campus.*

## Early May, Cole's Journal Entry

Well, I've finally got something that works! I worked all day and night, for weeks it seems, but I've got a product to show off for Parents' Day. And maybe it doesn't have *everything* that everyone wants in it, but it looks pretty good! And it's already installed in four kiosks in the Visitors' Center, ready for Parents' Day.

## Later in May, From the Desk of Vice President Lucas

*Wow! Do I have a mess on my hands! It was Parents' Day. People were all over campus. And lots of folks stopped by our interactive kiosks in the Visitors' Center. But what a nightmare. The programs were crashing left and right! Of course by the time Mr. and Mrs. Bowman showed up with their friends, all four of the demonstrations were already down! What*

*went wrong? It worked fine when Karen demonstrated it for me. What do we do now? How can we save face?*

You have been hired as a consultant by Dr. Lucas. You are to identify what went wrong and outline a plan to save face. Consider the following questions:

### Invoking ID practice via the Karen Cole case

1. Identify initial problems with the project in terms of the ID process.
2. Describe strategies for managing ID projects effectively.
3. Suggest ways that an ID project manager might successfully interact with an advisory committee.
4. Describe how Cole could have evaluated the project during various stages of development.
5. Discuss ways to salvage a project that has severe problems such as the ones Cole faces at the end of this case.