

CASE STUDY

# How Howard County Used CBT Nuggets to Train 80 IT Employees, Support a 600-Server Migration, and Defend Its Training Budget

INDUSTRY  
**Local Government**

LOCATION  
**Howard County, MD**

DEPARTMENT  
**Department of Technology**

TEAM  
**80 employees across 8 disciplines**



GEORGE HOWARD BUILDING · HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

## SUMMARY

CBT Nuggets gave Howard County's Department of Technology something bootcamps never could: the flexibility to train on their own time, in their own environments, with hands-on labs and practice exams that actually prepared staff for their everyday job.

The results speak for themselves. Elizabeth Nwadiuko, the Technical Services Manager, was able to build a high-performing 80-person team through certification pushes, infrastructure changes, and everything else government IT throws at them.

Keep reading to find out how CBT Nuggets helped them save thousands, manage a 600-server migration, and achieve 100% activity across all licenses.

### THE OUTCOME

## Results at a glance

- ✓ 100% activity across all licenses
- ✓ 600-server migration to HyperV & Azure
- ✓ Two CCNAs earned by network team
- ✓ A+, Network+, Security+ pursued by service desk
- ✓ Increased morale and technical aptitude

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## WHY CBT NUGGETS

## Why Howard County chose CBT Nuggets: cost, retention, and flexibility

Before CBT Nuggets, bootcamps were running the team \$3,000 to \$5,000. Each one pulled a staff member away from their desk for a full week, adding invisible downtime costs to the already-high price tag. But the deeper problem was their effectiveness. Elizabeth knew exactly how they played out, because she'd attended many herself. *"Sometimes you can walk out of there after 5 days and still not have retained anything."*

Howard County's Department of Technology spans **eight distinct technical disciplines under one roof**. The service desk, network team, fiber team, server team, GIS staff, and PMO all have different training needs and different certification tracks. What the department needed was something that could serve a network engineer and a service desk technician equally well, without requiring either of them to leave the building.

Elizabeth evaluated CBT Nuggets alongside other online training platforms and ultimately chose it because of the **variety of content, the depth of the learning experience, and the quality of the materials**. The labs in particular resonated with Elizabeth, both as a manager and as someone who still uses the platform herself. Her staff mentioned the labs and practice exams as features that helped them earn their certifications. Two members of the network team passed their CCNA exams, and service desk staff pursued CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+.

### THREE FEATURES THAT STOOD OUT

#### 01 Certification exam simulations

Timed practice exams that replicate the actual testing environment, so learners go into the exam having already experienced the pressure.

#### 02 Hands-on lab sandboxes

Browser-based environments where learners can apply what they've just watched in a real-world setting, which was particularly valuable for Microsoft and Azure coursework.

#### 03 On-demand, modular content

Short-form lessons that fit into a workday without requiring staff to step away from active responsibilities for days at a time.

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***The network team, the server team, the fiber team — they've all expressed that it has worked to help them pass their certifications.***

Elizabeth Nwadiuko

## THE STAKES

## For government IT, cyber threats can be life-or-death



Long before she became the Technical Services Manager, Elizabeth was hired on as a service desk technician. She worked her way up to the management level over 18 years, and now, that experience shapes the way she thinks about what her team actually needs.

*"Everything I went to college for does not exist anymore. Technology is constantly changing, so you have to have something for these guys to keep up with what's going on, at their own pace."*

She also understands, better than most, the real stakes of keeping a government IT team sharp. Outages and downtime for government systems would mean real costs for their constituents.

That context mattered when she was evaluating training. For Elizabeth, the question was never just cost, but whether the training would actually work. She needed an airtight solution that would keep her team up-to-speed.

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***People don't understand how stressful it is. If there's a Trojan attack or something like that, people's jobs and lives are on the line.***

Elizabeth Nwadiuko

Managing IT risk with budget constraints?

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SERVER MIGRATION

## When training proved critical: A 600-server migration

Howard County is a Microsoft shop. Over the course of several years, the Department of Technology undertook a major infrastructure overhaul, migrating approximately 600 physical servers to HyperV virtual environments. Most of the department's server infrastructure is now virtualized, with the team increasingly working in Microsoft Azure.

<p><b>~600</b></p> <p>Physical servers migrated to HyperV virtual environments</p> 	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Distinct technical disciplines under one department</p> 	<p><b>20 / 80</b></p> <p>Licenses actively rotated across the full team</p> 
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That transition required real working knowledge of virtual server maintenance and cloud platforms. The Azure and Microsoft content on the platform gave the server team a structured path through an unfamiliar environment. The lab sandboxes let them practice configurations without touching production systems. By leveraging CBT Nuggets, the team quickly built the foundation they needed to move confidently. Now, they successfully maintain hundreds of HyperV servers, and continue to find ways to innovate their infrastructure with newly acquired skills.

For Elizabeth, this migration was representative of what a good training platform actually looks like in practice: not a one-time event, but a resource the team could return to as the work evolved.

*I love that you give us a sandbox so we can practice what we were just taught in the class. The worst thing is to fail in front of your leadership. Why not fail in your cubicle or your test environment, and then go back and fix it?*

Elizabeth Nwadiuko

**Got a migration, refresh cycle, or compliance deadline coming up? Let's talk about how to get your team ready.**

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OPERATIONS PLAYBOOK

## Training for budget justification

Howard County operates in a constrained fiscal environment, and Elizabeth is candid about the pressure that creates. Budget lines that aren't utilized get cut. To protect the training investment, she built a simple monthly engagement program.

Each month (with the help of her sales rep) she sends a department-wide email with a link to CBT Nuggets, highlights new courses, and runs a friendly competition: the team member who logs the most training hours that month wins CBT Nuggets swag. It's voluntary, low pressure, and keeps the platform active across the team even outside of active certification pushes.

She also manages license allocation directly through the admin dashboard, reassigning seats from inactive users to staff who are actively studying. It's a lean system that keeps all 20 licenses working efficiently across the full 80-person department. Every month, training activity is reported to department leadership, showing 100% engagement with each license, and certifications earned are recognized at team meetings. When budget reviews come around, the case is already made.

***I include our leadership, so they know that we're engaging with the training. When the budget comes and they see CBT Nuggets, they say: "Oh yeah. We keep that."***

Elizabeth Nwadiuko



**100%**

License engagement reported to leadership



**2 yrs**

Consecutive budget approvals based on usage data



KEY OUTCOMES

## Real-world results across every discipline

- 
**CCNA certifications** earned by two network team members (so far)
- 
**CompTIA A+, Network+, Security+** pursued across the service desk team
- 
**Server team trained** on Microsoft Azure and HyperV virtualization to manage a 600-server migration
- 
**20 licenses** actively rotated across an 80-person department
- 
**100% engagement** reached over all 20 licenses
- 
**Budget approved two consecutive years** based on measurable usage reporting

## Training that keeps pace with your work

IT teams in fiscally tight environments (like government agencies) are in a constant struggle to justify their training budget. Meanwhile, cyber-threats just keep ramping up. An untrained team is a liability waiting to happen, and compared to the cost of a \$2.3 million ransomware incident, keeping your team current on the latest technologies makes perfect financial sense.

Elizabeth Nwadiuko solved these two problems using one IT training platform. With 20 licenses rotating across 80 staff, monthly usage reports to leadership, and a team that walked into certification exams prepared, she built an airtight case for the budget and a measurably more capable team. That's why each year, when the budget line comes up, the answer is the same: **"Oh yeah. We keep that."**




**\$2.3M**


Average ransomware recovery cost for U.S. government entities, per incident.

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**If you're managing an IT team with a constrained budget — and need to justify every license to leadership — you're the kind of team we built this for.**

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