1. Briefly describe at least two training activities that are offered at your organization. Is it organizational training or project specific training? Do you believe these training activities are effective in teaching employees new skills? Why or why not?
2. Comparing employees’ education and experience can help justify salary levels.  Give two examples of informal or formal training methods that could improve an employee’s experience level.

One training activity that is offered at my organization is a program called ESP (Employee Scholar Program). ESP is a program where the organization will pay for a master’s degree in a related field to your work such as engineering, computer science, or MBA’s. This program is what motivated me to join Johns Hopkins and pursue my M.S. in computer science, and was a big driver why I joined my organization. This is clearly organizational level training, as it helps to develop the engineering staff with skills required to support new business. I believe this is a very effective way to train employees in new skills, because while the program is expensive and takes a long time to complete, the employees who graduate the program learn a great deal from their respective schools and can bring those tools back to the company.

Another training activity that is offered by my organization is ETU (Engineering Technical University). ETU is a local training center which trains employees on organizational specific curriculums, with generalized courses on things like company history and basic principles of the products we work on to advanced deep-dives on in-house software products. Depending on the course taken, this can be either organizational or project specific training. Sometimes the course is essentially required to work on a project, and this would constitute project specific training. Other times the course is helpful for general knowledge and would fall under organizational training. There are times where this training can be extraordinarily helpful for employees, and there are some scenarios where this training may be less helpful. Some drawbacks of ETU are that courses are only offered periodically, and may not line up with project or program objectives, and sometimes engineers in the organization are ineffective at teaching. However, if those two criteria are not met, then ETU is typically helpful in teaching employees new skills.

One example of an informal training method that occurs often at my organization is peer-to-peer tutorials on processes and services that pertain directly to the group. This is called the “tribal knowledge” by some critics within the company (because it closely resembles the way that information was passed before humans invented written word), however is a generally effective way to train a single employee in a workflow or task. Another example of training methods is the conferences that employees attend for various topics. This can give employees good insight into different things happening in industry and allow them the chance to collaborate with people they would otherwise not have.