

Virtual Newsletter

Issue 12

WELCOME to the

latest edition of the Zee Associates newsletter where we keep you abreast of the latest trends in the training and development industry.

Even if you aren't a football fan you'll have been hard pressed recently to avoid knowing that the World Cup has started!

This has got us thinking about team work and the dangers of singling out one member of the team for special attention. It could lead to resentment and a lack of motivation from the others in the team. This often happens in office teams, too.

Take a look at our Quick Guides on the news and events page of our website for tips on how to deal with these situations.

And if you are embarking on a new recruitment campaign or honing up your interviewing skills before the summer rush, our leading article on Effective Interviewing Skills by Judith Di-Castri will be just the thing to help you.

I hope you find this issue thought provoking and useful. And if you would like to discuss your firm's training and development needs please call us for a free consultation.

Des Whitehorn
Training Principal

Trends in Training—Who's using us

The trend over the last couple of months is very much towards communication skills, as this snapshot shows:

Herbert Smith

- Proofreading
- Taking & Writing Minutes

DMH Stallard

- Keeping Clients Happy
- Handling Difficult Callers

Burges Salmon

- Proofreading
- The Proactive Secretary

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

- Effective Use of Time
- Proofreading

S J Berwin

- Negotiation & Assertiveness Skills for Secretaries
- Creative Problem Solving

Kent Learning Showcase 29 June 2006

A reminder that we will be exhibiting at this year's Learning Showcase to be held at the Ramada Hotel & Resort, Maidstone from 10am to 4pm. It is supported by the CIPD and the Individual Learning Co.

This year we will also be presenting a 45 minute taster session "Monkey Business—Encouraging Problem Solving at Source."

So, if you'd like to visit the Showcase, or attend one of the free taster sessions, contact us and we'll arrange for an information pack to be sent to you. Alternatively for more information, go to www.individuallearning.co.uk

Proofreading Tool

Judith Di-Castri (our proofreading guru) has designed a wonderful tool for proofreaders—the Proofreading Card—and we are giving one away to each delegate on every Proofreading course, plus some of the writing courses covering checking. It contains useful tips and common proofreading

symbols, as well as being an invaluable extra tool to use when proofreading. But you can have one too—just email us with the address you want it sent to, and we'll send you one straight away.

Top Tips for Trainers:

No 9 The series continues this issue with "The pros & cons of room layout" Room layout may not be the first thing you consider when



designing training, but it is an important element since it can help (and hinder!) group dynamics and stifle creativity if it is static.

If you are able to choose your training room, consider its size: too big and your delegates will rattle around and feel inhibited. Too small and they will not be able to "break out" or go off in a huddle for some parts.

Do you need tables and chairs in a board room, lecture or Open U-Shape? Why do you need tables at all? Sometimes removing the tables will give you the freedom to use the whole room, especially for team building or more creative activities.

If you do have tables, make sure there is enough room for breakout activities, and to move around. Encourage people to change places to create different perspectives, break up cliques and re-energise them.

Changing your position, too, energises the room—consider "walking while you talk" and presenting from opposite ends of the room so that the focus changes. Having a freestanding flipchart at either end of the room means you won't have to rush back to your "spot".

Of course, if you have a group that is a bit nervous of the whole "training thing" or if you are working on a topic, say, assertiveness, where physical barriers would be better avoided, then consider getting them to move the tables once they have settled in.

And don't forget too, that the comfy upholstered chairs in a country house training venue can also be a powerful way of getting them to engage in their breakout activities!

What do you think? Email your comments and thoughts to info@zee-associates.co.uk We will publish a selection in our next Newsletter.

Kent Training Provider Register

A big thank you to all those who provided such wonderful feedback about our work: we are now registered on the Kent Training Provider Register.



But it doesn't stop there since we need to update our rating and you can help by adding feedback direct to the register. To leave your feedback and comments, click on the Training Feedback tab at www.individuallearning.co.uk

If you would like to request course literature, discuss any of our services or request an invitation to an event please contact us:

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Effective Interviewing Skills

By Judith Di-Castri



How often do you interview? And how long do you get to make a decision about somebody in an interview?

You may only interview once a year and that means when you do interview it's a new task each time. When interviewing you probably only have a maximum of an hour to make your decision. By answering the questions in the title to this article, you can see that interviewing has its difficulties.

However, if you follow a structured approach to your preparation, and plan the interview so the candidate is doing the most talking you will have a better chance of making a good and fair decision. These aspects, and others, plus some practice, are covered on our Effective Interviewing Skills course. Just to give you a taster though, here are a couple of things to consider when preparing and conducting the interview.

Preparation for the interview

Make sure you know the job you are recruiting for. Study the Job Description looking at the main tasks the candidate will have to undertake. From this, you can think about the

ideal candidate you require. Jot down what skills, knowledge and experience they will need. Think about the qualifications and standard of education they will require. You know who they will be working for so are there any special behavioural skills that would be useful and help the relationship run more smoothly? Compare what you need with their CV.

Once you have done this, write down the questions you will ask to find out about them, their previous jobs, their skills etc. There will be some general questions that you ask all candidates and for each candidate a few specific ones relating to their CV and experience.

And don't forget the administration that you need to carry out: book a room, inform reception about arrival times of candidates, arrange refreshments and so on.

Conducting the interview

We use the mnemonic, **WASP**, to structure the interview. This ensures that you carry out every stage of the interview and in the correct order. Also, by using the **WASP** structure it will help you to do less of the talking and find out more about the candidate. So **welcome** the candidate. Make them feel at ease so you can get the best out of them. **Acquire** as much information as possible about them using your prepared questions and referring to the Job Description and their CV. **Supply** them with information about the job, the company, who they will work for, and the terms and conditions of the job. **Part** telling them what will happen next and by when. It is key to give them an idea of when a decision will be made and stick to it. You probably know yourself there is nothing worse than not hearing anything.

And there's more, much more! To find out exactly what and to help you or your staff become a more professional interviewer, talk to us about your training needs and ask us how we can meet them with this course. This will also help us tailor it to meet the specific needs of the trainees and to adopt any working practices that your company may have.

Speaker's Corner

As more and more firms are introducing "away days" or "bonding" sessions we are increasingly being asked to speak or to facilitate sessions. Sometimes the technical and fee earning staff will go off to do some "technical" sessions and we work with the admin and support staff on topics such as "building the ideal boss" or "creating a motivating environment". So if you are looking for motivational and inspirational speakers for your away days, give us a call!

Brainteaser (7)

This issue's poser helps improve your proofreading skills: how many F's can you find in the following two paragraphs? (Answer at the foot of this page.)

Farmer Jones of Taunton had on his farm five foals, eight fine cows and four fowl. Of these, the fowl were frightened of the cows and of the foals. Farmer Jones found his farm work fulfilling, and out of his daily tasks, he preferred the feeding of the foals. He obviously enjoyed his vocation.

When not farming, he enjoyed fly fishing for trout on the River Frome. He went to the South of France for his vacation, with his wife and five children.

Watch this space!

We have developed and will soon be launching a **NEW** programme on successful networking. Developed by Judith Di-Castri it will show you how to start a conversation, use your communication skills to the full and even how to escape the boring! Further details soon.

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Diary Dates ...



The Kent Learning Showcase and Exhibition on 29th June 2006 from 10am to 4pm at The Ramada Hotel & Resort, Maidstone.

Our Short Seminar: "Monkey Business—Encouraging Problem Solving at Source" 11.30am—12.15 pm, Ramada Hotel & Resort, Maidstone

Next issue

The leading article will be "Encouraging Creativity", by Des Whitehorn.

No 10 in our series of top tips for trainers. Next issue: "Creative Powerpoint Presentations" - a look at how to make your presentations stand out!

Don't Forget...

If you have a colleague who would like to receive our newsletters, send their email address to us at info@zee-associates.co.uk

If you missed the previous issues of our newsletter, they can be viewed on the News and Events pages at www.zee-associates.co.uk

BRAINTEASER (7) ANSWER: There are 34 fs. If you didn't get them all first time round, try again! (If you still can't find them, email us and we'll send you the answers.)