



## Biblioteca Virtual

### MY EXPERIENCE WITH EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING

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I was one of these kids who daydreamed throughout her school years. I could not, for the life of me, get the necessary motivation to succeed. Some teachers may have concluded that I was not very bright. It is only in my adult years that I realized how creative I was. Unfortunately, the school system was designed (and still is) for left brained individuals, the ones who are logical, methodical, who rely on data, models and theories leaving the right brained students who have emotional intelligence, who are creative, artistic and innovative the ones who have emotional intelligence, to fend for themselves.

*Experiential training* is an incredible tool to allow course participants to use their creativity to integrate intellectual concepts at the emotional level. With experiential training you do not only learn a model, you live it, feel it, integrate it emotionally right there in the classroom. For example, in a workshop on *Change management*, the trainer can lecture about *change management*; the different phases of change, the reactions the employees will have to change, the steps management will have to take to minimize the repercussions on the organization, etc. At this stage, *change management*, remains a purely intellectual concept. However when a game or a

simulation on the subject of change is played by the participants in an artificial setting the intellectual concepts become integrated at the emotional level. Suddenly, the participants really feel what it is like to experience change, to be suddenly insecure and uncomfortable.... The results are astounding. The participants leave the course with a deeper understanding of the subject and a lasting impression of the concepts being taught.

The most important part of a game or simulation is the debriefing period that follows. The debriefing period is primordial to ensure the transition is made from the exercise to the practicality of every day life.

Games and simulations make training sessions interactive and interesting. However, trainers are sometimes reluctant to use them thinking it will not be perceived as *serious* training. I was one of them until I realized that my reluctance came from my own fear of being perceived as not professional enough. I overcame that reluctance when I realized that the resistance was within me and not with the participants. Experience proved that participants will remember the benefits of a simulation much longer than a theory or a model.

Every year, I attend the North American Simulation and Gaming Association (NASAGA) Conference and always come back energized and eager to try new training techniques. At the conference, creativity flows and the exchange is tremendous. The camaraderie and the joy of sharing with the experts in the field make the conference an unforgettable experience.

The Conference is always held in October either in the United States or in Canada.

If you are a trainer or a person responsible for training and development we can guarantee you will find the conference worthwhile. You will learn by getting involved in games and simulations and will come back with revolutionary tools for your organization.

(Check the NASAGA website at for more information).

#### Recommended websites:

<http://www.thiagi.com/>

<http://www.nasaga.org/>

<http://www.gamesbygrube.com/>

<http://www.edusim.net/trainer.htm>

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/edtec670/edgames/index.html>

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