



# *Yours In Training*

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**September 2009**



Hello Subscriber! On behalf of the team at MRWED Training and Assessment, I hope you enjoy this issue of Yours In Training!

If you would like to view this issue online visit <http://www.mrwed.com.au/YITSept09.pdf>

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## 1. What is happening at MRWED?

It has been another exciting month at MRWED.... We celebrated our 9<sup>th</sup> birthday at the start of the month. We returned to Western Australia with courses in Dampier, Broome, Esperance and Perth. We were successful in securing a NSW Productivity Places Program contact for the Diploma of Training and Assessment in 2010 and confirmed a Training of Trainers Workshop for the Goa Institute of Management in India. However, we are most proud of our achievement in the Business Excellence Awards held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September in our region. MRWED won three awards on the night – “Best Knowledge/Creative Business”, “Best Customer Service” (for our client relations team leader Rachael Hall) and the major gong of the evening “Best Macro Business”. We were finalists in 2008 and it was great to progress one step further at the 2009 awards. Many thanks to our supportive customers and hard-working staff.

For more MRWED news check out our news page:

<http://www.mrwed.com.au/news2009/news2009.htm>



## 2. Tips and Tricks

### **Training Tip: Finding the Comfort Zone!**

Trainers will often encounter unmotivated students. Unfortunately, this can lead to classroom management issues ranging from nodding off in class to more overt disruptions like making phone calls and talking to others during the trainer’s presentation. Since motivation is not intrinsic for every student, trainers can be challenged to find ways to motivate them.

The key is in creating a safe and supportive environment. I think it is important to realise that students need to find their comfort zone - that set of boundaries where an individual feels safe. This zone is different for each student and can be affected by a variety of conditions. For example, in some situations there are unreasonable expectations placed on participants by their employers about the speed of competency acquisition. In other circumstances, the institution’s environment or culture can make students feel threatened. Additionally, some students may just be uncomfortable due to a past negative experience in education.

In order to engage, students need to know they are not threatened. For some students this can be achieved by greeting them by name or identifying that calling on them directly might cause anxiety. Others might need reassurance that it is okay to talk to the trainer after the session, should they require extra help.

Being able to provide participants with some time in their comfort zone during training can make classroom management easier. When they do not feel threatened, they are less likely to act inappropriately when challenged and are more likely to be interested in the class.

Remember, risk is where learning happens. Students need to take risks in order to learn, but they are disinclined to take these risks when they feel threatened.

### **Training Game: “Reverse Tag”**

I bet you all remember playing “tag” at school where one person was “it” and they had to chase everyone else until they “tagged” someone, thus transferring the chasing and tagging responsibilities. Well this works the other way. In “Reverse Tag” everyone has a tag (a tagline from the day’s content) and they have to move around the room and find a person who is “it” - the person who matches their tagline. There will be only one person in the room that has the best fit for the tagline. In this way it is a bit like the game show Jeopardy where someone has the answer and someone else the question and you have to connect the two to win.

For example, if you were doing something on generational difference, you could choose to pre-prepare cards which list date ranges that correspond to the different generational groups. On one of the cards though, you would select a single group – e.g. “Generation X”. Then the object of the game is to have someone with the correct date range find the person with the card which says “Generation X”. Stand back and watch the frenzied action until they are found!

However, it doesn’t have to end here. In this example, you could extend the activity by asking people what other date ranges they had printed on their cards and prompt a recall of what generations these pertained to. This could turn into a useful checking for understanding activity or revision before moving onto a related topic. Either way it is a fun little activity to play after lunch as it will stimulate your learners mentally and physically.



### 3. Training Stories

#### **Zappos uses Twitter to drive sales and learning**

Zappos is a US online retailer who use social media both internally and externally with great success. They do it externally to be transparent with consumers and to provide excellent customer service and internally to promote an ongoing dialogue and collaboration between employees. They make particularly prolific use of the micro-blogging, social media tool Twitter, with over 400 employees presently using it. CEO Tony Hsieh leads from the front as the number one user. He uses the blogs to give customers an insight into the company culture and supports them through the sales process. At the same time, he is able to reinforce key messages to employees about company values, vision and expectations through his regular “tweets”.

Zappos provides us with a great case study for the modern learning organisation. They use the collective wisdom from within and tap into prevailing social media to create networks of learning and support, enable creative problem solving and provide opportunities for a kind of collaborative mentoring process. 75% of Zappos business comes from repeat custom. They have therefore keyed into the importance that connectedness plays on both sides of the counter.

If you think twitter is not for you, consider this... it is an inexpensive, mass-communication tool which allows for bite-sizes chunks of information to disseminated quickly to learners all over the world. It also offers a two-way dialogue which helps to make the content more meaningful. When used in combination with other modes of delivery, it can help your learners to quite literally stay connected with what you are teaching, once they leave the classroom. Whilst you only have 140 characters to get your message across, it should be remembered that almost all of the world’s most memorable quotes would fit into this space. As Edward de Bono would say, with simplicity comes focus and the micro-blogging of twitter allows us to drill down this focus, one point at a time! As the old saying goes, “less is more”. (To learn more about twitter visit <http://twitter.com>)

**If you have a successful training practice implemented in your organisation, we would love to hear about it. Email me directly: [mrattcliffe@mrwed.com.au](mailto:mrattcliffe@mrwed.com.au)**

#### 4. Web Roundup!



This month, we highlight another great link from the Discovery Education website. You may be familiar with the Discovery Channel on Australian Pay TV... well this site is managed by their education arm and has a range of useful tid bits for trainers. If you are stuck for ideas for creating fun quizzes or after lunch extension activities – your search is over! Check out the “puzzlemaker” options (<http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>) on the Discovery Education site and create a range of crosswords, fallen phrases, word searches and much more. The good news is, it is totally free!

#### 5. MRWED Quick Links



What would you like to visit?

- [Course Dates](#)
- [MRWED News](#)
- [MRWED Home](#)
- [MRWED Blog](#)

#### Next Issue...

Next month we will look at the pros and cons of trainer diaries, review a site for accessing cartoons to support presentations and check out a “tele-learning” technique used by Cisco Systems. Until then, find your comfort zone to try out twitter and challenge yourself to create a new puzzle for your students. Tag you’re it!

If you have any questions, suggestions or issues to be discussed on the Yours in Training! Ezine then please [email](#) us or call our Client Relations Team on **Freecall 1800 2 TRAIN** (1800 2 87246).

Happy training!

Principal – MRWED

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