

## **Reno Trainers Session**

### **Telling isn't teaching; Hearing isn't learning!**

“I cannot teach anyone anything.

I can only provide an environment in which he can learn.”

This is a quote from Carl Rogers in 1965. Carl Rogers was one of the country's foremost experts on clinical and educational psychology in the sixties, seventies and eighties.

As an instructional designer, I need to keep in mind that the person sitting in the classroom will not learn if they do not engage their minds.

As the Leadership trainers may have noticed, the revised Lodge Officer Orientation class contains more interactive exercises, where the class participants have discussions within their small groups and then feedback together with the entire class.

The new Administrator class that is being taught is filled with interactive exercise, that help the participants relate the information they are receiving to their daily lives. And as we speak that class is participating in an exercise that keeps the class members involved and helps them learn.

The focus groups we led this week have contained a great deal of activity on the parts of the participants. I'd like to talk about keeping the participants' minds engaged in the class.

But first, let's do a little exercise. Can I get 4 volunteers?

### **BLIND INSTRUCTIONS**

Give each member of the group an 8 1/2" square piece of paper, the facilitator needs one too. Have them close their eyes. The facilitator issues the instructions and follows them as well.

No questions are allowed. I only have a few minutes, I have to get back to the Administrator class, so I'll only say these instructions one time, I'll try to say them slowly and clearly so you can follow. Keep your eyes closed. Please, no talking so that other people can hear the instructions.

Instructions:

Fold the paper in half.  
Rip off the right hand corner  
Fold the paper in half  
Rip off the left hand corner  
Fold the paper in half  
Rip off the top corner

The group can now open their eyes and find that there are many different shapes of paper. The debrief covers the need for two-way communication and that the different perceptions of the people caused the many different designs.

All right, I didn't notice anyone nodding off during that little exercise, most of you seemed to be paying attention.

Tell me some of the things you saw taking place.  
Did everyone follow the instructions?  
Did everyone come up with the same results?  
Why? Why Not?

What conclusions can you draw from this exercise?

Now, I could have stood here and told you all about adult learning theory, about different learning styles, about the seven (or eight) intelligences, but you probably would not have learned very much that way, only the highlights, and even then you would probably not remember it the way I told it. There would be gaps, and your mind would fill those in the best way it could.

But by doing this simple exercise, I got across these points.

- ❑ People learn differently
- ❑ People will try to do what they think you are telling them
- ❑ People don't always understand what you want them to do
- ❑ If people don't understand what you tell them, they can make up their own information
- ❑ Without interaction and feedback some people may give up if they don't understand

And... People don't sleep during interactive exercises.