

## The WorldGAMES Story

In 1992, after years of success, I was in a real mess. A good friend encouraged me to attend a training program that was to literally change my life. Up until then training programs to me had been boring or ineffective. Even with the most engaging presenter, I had found that the information just did not stick. I would leave the program with my notes which I then filed unread and, hopefully, a desire to put at least 5 things into action. By next morning I could possibly remember one of them, which I may or may not have used.

My friend told me that this program would be different, and it was! It introduced me to the power of games, what I now know as experiential learning. One fun 15 minute game just blew me away. It showed me clearly why I was in my mess and what I needed to do to change it. Just 15 minutes to solve a problem I had struggled with for more than 2 years!

A day or two later and wham! A second fun, engaging game provided another one of those light-bulb-in-the-head experiences. I subsequently changed my behaviour, my results and, not surprisingly, my beliefs about training.

The program that began my journey was not all fun and games. There were huge chunks of data interspersed with relevant games and exercises. I found that my data retention soared. 10 years on, I can still remember most of the key points, but it was the games that were the difference that made the difference.

I started to think about the purpose of training. In a nutshell, it must be to encourage a change of behaviour. After all, if people are already doing things the most effective way, why would you train them? I already knew that bored people learn very little, very slowly. I knew that good training games and exercises are fun, engaging and encourage learning. What I did not know is whether games, exercises and simulations could be used as the primary building blocks to create highly effective training programs.

WorldGAMES began as an experiment to see if they could.

Very soon two things became obvious. On the positive side, initial results were excellent. The learning processes WorldGAMES created were fun, active and very effective in terms of learning outcomes and retention. The bad news was that there were very few games around that had learning outcomes relevant to the workplace. That was the start of our games designing process, the task of creating games that were fun, simple and safe yet are powerful business metaphors.

The rest, as they say, is history. WorldGAMES now has over 600 games, exercises, simulations, management tools and programs that are all workplace relevant. Participants in our programs are in action for themselves about 95% of the time and they love it.

So, I am sure, will you.

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