

# THIAGI GAMELETTER: December 2008

*SERIOUSLY FUN ACTIVITIES FOR TRAINERS, FACILITATORS, PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS, AND MANAGERS.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Masthead

*Our mission statement, copyright notice, and cast of characters.*

### Tool Kit

Graphics Games

*Interact with pictures.*

### Guest Gamer

Interview with Nick Smith

*The future is games.*

### Rope Game

BLIND SQUARE by Nick Smith

*Give them enough rope.*

### Improv Game

PLAYING WITH STATUS by Kat Koppett

*Raise or lower your status—nonverbally.*

### Jolt

SAY IT IN SEQUENCE

*Forget it.*

### Jolt Principles

Finding Jolts from Books

*Read a good book lately?*

Brian's Words

Self-Distraction by Brian Remer

*It's not about you.*

Check It Out

Creativity and Play

*Create more, play more.*

Single Item Survey

Trick Questions

*Respond playfully.*

*Masthead*

## **THIAGI GAMELETTER:**

***SERIOUSLY FUN ACTIVITIES FOR TRAINERS, FACILITATORS, PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS, AND MANAGERS.***

### ***Mission***

To increase and improve the use of interactive, experiential strategies to improve human performance in an effective, efficient, and enjoyable way.

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## ***Feedback Request***

Thiagi believes in practicing what he preaches. This is an interactive newsletter, so interact already! Send us your feedback, sarcastic remarks, and gratuitous advice through email to [thiagi@thiagi.com](mailto:thiagi@thiagi.com) . Thanks!

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Tool Kit*

## Graphics Games

Photographs, paintings, drawings, diagrams, charts, or cartoons are essential elements of graphics games. Some of these games require participants to create a graphic; others require participants to review a graphic, analyze its elements, discover relationships, and discuss their findings. Training objectives for these games are not limited to graphics; they can be related to different types of skills and concepts.

### ***A Sample Graphics Game: PHOTO ANALYSIS***

You are attending a workshop on critical thinking. Sue Malone is your facilitator and she begins the session by distributing a one-page handout to everyone in the room. The handout has a simple set of instructions:

*Carefully study the photograph below. On a separate sheet of paper, write down a list of things that you see in the photograph.*

The handout contains a crowded street scene from a foreign country. You decide that it is probably from Thailand or Cambodia and start making a list of items such as "A girl is standing in front of a street vendor who has several colorful birds in a cage".

After about 2 minutes, Sue asks everyone to stop writing and count the number of different items in the list. You have 18 items in your list. Sue explains that while everyone received the same photograph, there were two slightly different sets of instructions: Half of the handouts asked participants to make a list of things while the other half asked for a list of *interesting* things in the photograph.

Sue asks participants with the five longest lists to check which set of instructions they received. Everyone in this group (which included you) was merely asked for a "list of things". Next, Sue asks participants with the five shortest lists to check their set of instructions. Except for one of them, this group had instructions that asked for "list of interesting things".

Sue conducts a discussion that leads to the conclusion that any type of judgment (such as looking for interesting things) narrows what you notice in a situation. The learning point of the activity is *if we really want to pay attention to all details we need to keep an open mind.*

## ***Uses and Limitations of Graphics Games***

The word *graphics* denotes the display of information in a visual form. In general, the word refers to nonverbal modes of information in contrast to information conveyed through text (written language). Illustrations and photographs are in *analogic* form. They are also referred to as *nonverbal* or *iconic* forms. Pure text is the *digital* form. An important type of information display is the mixed mode that combines both text and nonverbal forms. Mixed graphics that are frequently used in training include bar graphs, Venn diagrams, pie charts, organization charts, tables and matrixes, fishbone diagrams, process maps, and mind maps.

Since most people think visually, the use of graphics in training helps us to clearly communicate concepts, principles, and processes. Graphic information is also easier to recall. Requiring participants to use graphics for processing information (for example, using mindmaps for taking notes) and for responding to questions (for example, organizing information in the form of a table) utilizes our visual thinking abilities.

Technology has made it easier for trainers and participants to make effective use of graphics. We can use computer software programs for creating graphics, mapping processes and ideas, presenting arguments, and summarizing data in charts and graphs. We can also search the Internet to locate all types of images, clip art, and stock photos. We can take photographs with easy-to-use digital cameras and camcorders. We can store the photographs and video clips in our computers and edit them to suit our training needs.

Just because we use graphics instead of text, there is no guarantee that everyone around the world can clearly understand our message. Here are some limitations of using graphics in training.

- Visual literacy (the ability to read graphics) is a learned skill. Participants from different cultures and different language groups interpret graphic conventions (such as working from left to right or from the front to the back), techniques (such as zooming in and zooming out), and symbols (such as arrows and dotted lines) differently. We may have to train our participants on how to read our graphics (such as flowcharts) before we use them extensively.
- Participants may feel that they cannot draw and the requirement of using graphics may make them apprehensive about embarrassing themselves in front of their

teammates.

- Participants may also think that drawing pictures is a trivial and childish task.

### ***More Examples***

Here are brief descriptions of different graphics activities, ranging from short exercises to total systems.

#### **COAT OF ARMS**

This values clarification activity serves as an effective icebreaker. Each participant receives a sheet of paper with the outline of a shield divided into four quadrants and a scroll underneath the shield. Participants spend 5 minutes drawing pictures and symbols in the quadrants to reflect their values. They also write a suitable motto on the scroll. When completed, participants walk around the room silently displaying their coats of arms. Later, they organize themselves into teams of five and take turns describing what the images on their shield represent.

#### **CONTAINERS**

This activity works as an effective closer. At the end of the training sessions, the facilitator gives each participant a set of different graphic organizer templates. Participants pair up and select three different graphic organizers and use them to arrange suitable elements of content. All participants display the final products on a wall for a gallery-walk type review.

#### **Graphic Guides**

For more than 25 years, The Grove Consultants International ( <http://grove.com/site/index.html> ) has been spreading its visual planning and organizational change approach around the world. Among other products and services, Grove sells a set of large-size visual wall templates called *Graphic Guides* that helps facilitators guide a group through a collaborative planning process. This set includes *Meeting Startup Guide* (to frame the meeting), *Graphic History* (to summarize the history of the organization or the team), *Context Map* (to scan the environment), *SPOT Matrix* (to identify internal strengths, problems, opportunities, and threats), *Cover Story* (to envision the future), *Five Bold Steps* (to summarize key vision themes), and *Graphic Game Plan* (to expand on a key step).

## QUICK DRAW

I learned this improv game from my friend Alain Rostain and have used it effectively with groups around the world. Participants pair up, sit down, and place a blank piece of paper in the middle. They take turns to draw a face, one line (or feature) at a time. Players alternate adding a line or feature as quickly as possible. Whenever a player hesitates, the drawing is done. Now the players name the person, writing one letter at a time, again alternating with each letter and ending the name when one person hesitates. The resulting drawings (and names) provide striking evidence that playful collaboration results in creative outcomes.

## SLIDE SET

The facilitator gives a lecture on a training topic, using a typical set of text and bullet-point slides. All participants receive a handout copy of these slides. Later, teams of participants study the slides and convert them into a set of graphic slides (with minimal text) using stock photos and images. After spending a week on the group project, participants upload their slide sets to a website for mutual review and feedback.

## Square Wheels®

Dr. Scott Simmerman ( <http://squarewheels.com/> ) uses a cartoon illustration that shows people pulling and pushing a cart with square wheels. Ironically the cart is filled with round tires. The facilitator explains that the illustration represents the way things work in most organizations and asks participants to brainstorm ideas about how the illustration resembles their organization. This starts a fun and provocative dialogue among participants.

## VisualsSpeak

VisualsSpeak ( <http://www.visualsspeak.com/> ) sells ImageSets that include 200 evocative photographs. The facilitator gives each participant a large piece of paper to use as a background. The facilitator also primes the group with a framing question (example: *What's your vision for your group over the next two years?*) Participants quickly select the images for their response and assemble the pictures on the background. Later, each participant describes what the collection of images means to him or her. The facilitator debriefs the group and identifies overall impressions, connections, and insights.

## Visual Explorer

The Center for Creative Leadership ( <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/index.aspx> ) has been using the *Visual Explorer* as a collaborative tool for group facilitation, coaching, problem solving, survey panels, and focus groups. The tool features a collection of images (currently available in different sizes and as a digital library). Typical use of the Visual Explorer consists of five steps: During the *framing* step, participants ponder on a frame question such as *What are the key elements of the challenge that we are facing?* During the *browsing* stage, participants pick images that are associated with the framing question. During the *reflection* stage, participants examine the images they selected and think about their significance. During the *sharing* stage, each participant describes the image and explains its connections to the question. Other participants share their reactions. During the *expanding* stage, participants build upon the momentum generated by the previous dialogue.

## VISUAL SUMMARY CLOSER

At the end of the training session, each team of participants creates a poster that summarizes the key learning points—without using any text and depending exclusively on pictures. After completing the task, teams display their posters on the wall. Each team now moves to the poster of the next team and tries to figure out what the pictures symbolize. During the final show-and-tell session, teams take turn interpreting the poster they studied and explaining its significance to the others.

## *An Application Exercise*

Learn to think visually and display information in a graphic form. Here's your first practical exercise: Organize the contents of this article in a graphic form such as a mind map or a summary table. Take your time and debrief yourself at the end of the exercise.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Guest Gamer*

*Nick started working in software development but went to a leadership course, based outdoors, and realized there was more to life. Retraining, he entered the world of outdoor*



*and experiential education from whence he further evolved into a personal development trainer and coach. He is a founder of **xpand UK**, a training and coaching company that helps people achieve their potential, especially in leadership and teambuilding. Helping learners to experience things is Nick's passion and the outdoors is his preferred milieu. He has written articles on a wide variety of topics and is currently co-authoring a book on experiential meditations.*

## **Interview with Nick Smith**

***TGL: Nick, what is your specialty area?***

**Nick:** Using outdoor challenges to facilitate learning of any sort is what really excites me. These challenges can be designed to bring out points in personal coaching, on a leadership seminar, or in a change management workshop. In recent years I have worked particularly as a team developer, going with the flow of the experience and creatively reviewing them to bring out significant learning.

***TGL: How did you get into designing and using games?***

**Nick:** My outdoor-instructor colleagues wanted to run the sexy sessions (sailing, kayaking, climbing and the like) that clients thought were brilliant fun, but I quickly realized that I preferred the problem-solving activities, because there was more scope for helping people to learn. My first encounter with Roger Greenaway was when it all came together, realizing the scope for active learning in the outdoors. Then when xpand (an existing European company) started in the UK, I was presented with the challenge of using these activities within an existing structure of classroom-based training and began to specialize more.

***TGL: How long have you been designing and using games?***

**Nick:** I suppose I have been using experiential learning and games since I started as a youth worker, 16 years ago.

***TGL: Where do you use games?***

**Nick:** The places I haven't used games are the places I haven't been to yet. The settings where I use games tend to be wide and varied. Unless I have limited time in a very traditional environment, (where overcoming preconceived misconceptions might be too

time-consuming), I try to use outdoor games and activities whenever I am working.

***TGL: How do your participants respond?***

**Nick:** Generally, participants have fun and are surprised by the amount of learning that can take place with such simple activities.

***TGL: What is the most horrible or embarrassing moment you've had in conducting games?***

**Nick:** I was in the middle of introducing an activity a few weeks ago and the participants said, "We did this with your colleague last month." She blithely agreed and pointed out that she hadn't told me. I was left furiously planning what to do next. In the end, since any of the activities I do are more about processes and interactions than results, I batted on regardless. The participants, assuming that the activity was identical to the previous one, did likewise. Later they discovered subtle differences that led to failure and learning. I was saved some blushes.

***TGL: What advice do you have to newcomers about interactive training?***

**Nick:** If you want to use teambuilding activities, keep them simple. Make the rules easy and unbendable to save you having to think on your feet too much.

Prepare thoroughly. Practice anything new on a receptive audience (your friends or colleagues) who can pick holes in it and make it more robust (again reducing on-your-feet-thinking time in front of clients).

Don't be too precious about the way you want the activity to run. Let the team flow through the task, especially when they do something you didn't expect. Lots of good learning comes out even when they go off track from your point of view.

Debrief everything you do: Where did it work (or did not work) as you expected? How could it be adapted? How could the instructions be improved?

Play things repeatedly to gain more insights for yourself.

***TGL: What types of games do you use most frequently?***

**Nick:** Classics such as SPIDER'S WEB work every time. I also like BLIND SQUARE and LEAKY PIPE, both of which tend to be effective, versatile, and fun to observe. Others I will use regularly but tweak and amend every time I play them so they are constantly evolving, either for improvement, to keep my own interest, or for the learning outcomes required.

***TGL: Who are your favorite game designers?***

**Nick:** Mike Rix of Grafham Water Centre, Cambridgeshire, UK. He hasn't written any books, as far as I know, but he is constantly experimenting and building new activities and challenges. He has the enviable advantage of grounds in which to leave things *in situ* (I travel to clients and take all the equipment I need) and he always has ideas on how to adapt things. Discussions with him are stimulating and insightful. Further to that, anyone that uses games and activities with a passion has been an inspiration in pushing me further and giving me new ideas.

***TGL: Do you have any book recommendations?***

**Nick:** I recently came across Garry Kroehnert's *Games Trainers Play Outdoors* and was quite pleased with it. Too often books of games have 20 old ideas or things that wouldn't work with your particular client group (whoever they are) and then one real nugget. Kroehnert's book, however, has lots of classic activities and several ideas that were new to me, or at least clever variations. The activities all have cute titles and clever wee stories to introduce them that I find a bit too much but the information on setting up and running the activities is excellent.

For debriefing (or reviewing) I haven't found any books yet to rival what is on Roger Greenaway's website, <http://reviewing.co.uk/> . More ideas than you can shake a big stick at.

TGL is the other thing I am constantly recommending to trainers I meet, whatever their background in experiential learning and games. There's learning for everyone there.

***TGL: What is your prediction about the future of games?***

**Nick:** The future **is** games. I see young people growing up with shorter attention spans for listening to others and with a lack of respect, even for subject matter experts and people in authority. I would expect a society that becomes less and less willing to learn from

someone else but rather needs to experience things for themselves and then be helped to learn from that.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Rope Game*

## **BLIND SQUARE by Nick Smith**

This is an activity that I use in almost every teambuilding session I run--because it delivers results every time. I can take no credit for its invention since it has existed from long before my time, in various forms and with a variety of names (such as BLIND POLYGON). The activity can be frontloaded to focus on particular issues by changing a few parameters or altering the instructions. However, I often use it as an activity for exploring overall team building issues to see how the participants get on.

### ***Preparation***

Before the exercise begins, tie a length of rope (about 20m) into a circle. Also, provide blindfolds for everyone.

### ***Instructions to Participants***

To complete this activity, all the team has to do is to form the rope into the shape of a perfect square.

You will have 15 minutes planning time, during which no one may touch the rope.

At the end of this time, everyone will be blindfolded and the rope will be placed in your hands.

You will have 10 minutes to form the square.

All the team members must be holding the rope.

Once you think that the square is complete, lay the rope on the floor.

## ***Debriefing***

Ask questions to draw out responses that focus on any of these types of topics:

- Attention to detail
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creating a square
- Evaluation
- Planning
- Problem solving

## ***Variations***

Don't tie the rope into a circle at the start.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Improv Game*

*Status is a major factor that affects the effectiveness of your interactions with others. Being aware of your status, the status of the other person, and the difference between the two and being able to increase or reduce your status is an important interpersonal skill. This is the reason why improv actors spend a lot of time in status work. **PLAYING WITH STATUS**, the improv game by Kat Koppett, gives you opportunities for practicing your status-related skills. Kat is the author of the brilliant book of improv exercises, **Training To Imagine**. Check out her [article](#) (and [game](#)) in last month's **TGL**. For more information on Kat or her work, visit [www.koppett.com](http://www.koppett.com) .*

## **PLAYING WITH STATUS by Kat Koppett**

## ***Overview***

Participants are given a short script of 8-10 lines of neutral dialogue. The scene may depict a job interview (see the sample below) or a coaching session. Pairs take turns enacting the scene, playing with the status relationships through non-verbal behaviors.

## ***Improv Topics***

- Non-verbal behavior
- Listening and awareness

## ***Purpose***

- Team building
- Communication

## ***Supplies***

Handout with the script for the scene

## ***Time***

15-30 minutes

## ***Number of Players***

Any number

## ***Game Flow***

1. Distribute the handout with the script for the scene.
2. Recruit two volunteers to act out the scene.
3. Allow the pair to play the scene once without any outside direction.
4. Discuss the perceived status of each character.
5. Assign status roles to each of the two players and have them play the scene again.  
The status assignments may include any of the following:
  - Person A has high status; Person B has low status.

- Person A has low status; Person B has high status.
  - Both have high status.
  - Both have low status.
  - Status of both persons remains equal but shifts from low to high.
  - Status of one person starts high and ends low; status of the other person starts low and ends high.
6. Replace the two players with a new pair and continue with different status combinations.
  7. Debrief at the end of each round.
  8. Conduct a final debriefing discussion.

### ***Suggested Debrief Questions:***

How much do you think the words mattered in this interaction?

What were the most effective ways to raise your status?

What lowered your status?

What status choices would you like to make in a real-life interview? A sales call? A coaching session?

What is the value of being aware of status during a conversation?

### ***Tips***

- Allow each team to try a couple of different status interactions before moving on to the next team.
- Feel free to freeze the action of the scene in the middle to point out a clear status moment.
- Point out that attempts to claim status can backfire: High status people can fall quickly if the other person fails to be intimidated. Low status people can gain status

by being self-focused.

### ***Variations***

Use one pair for the initial demonstration. Then divide participants into triads (two actors and one observer) for subsequent enactments.

Have the group write their own neutral scene. Make sure that the script is really neutral.

Set up status battles with the observers voting to decide who is the lowest or the highest.

Incorporate 30 seconds of silence somewhere in the scene.

Allow actors to improvise the scenes in their own words.

### ***Source***

Adapted from Keith Johnstone's *Impro*, and Freestyle Repertory Theatre

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Handout 1*

## **Handout**

### ***Sample Scene: The Job Interview***

A: Good morning.

B: Good morning.

A: Have a seat.

B: Thank you.

A: I have looked over your resume.

B: Yes?



A: I see you worked at Global Inc.

B: Yes. For a number of years.

A: Very impressive.

B: Thanks.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Jolt*

## **SAY IT IN SEQUENCE**

Here's a jolt that can be conducted within a few minutes and debriefed for a long time to explore different aspects of learning and performance. You can use this jolt with individuals or with groups of any size. And the best thing is that you don't need any supplies or equipment.

### ***Purpose***

To explore the impact of previous learning on present learning.

### ***Participants***

Any number

### ***Time***

3 minutes for the activity and at least 10 minutes for debriefing

### ***Preparation***

Memorize these numbers in this sequence:

Eight

Five

Four

Nine

One

Seven

Six

Ten

Three

Two

Use whatever memorization technique that works for you. For example, I wrote down the string of numbers and memorized them as if they were a telephone number: 854-917-61032. Make sure that you memorize the underlined 10 as "ten" and not as "one" and "zero".

### ***Flow***

**Give instructions to count.** Ask participants to say the numbers from one to ten in numerical sequence beginning with "one". As soon as they completed the task, ask participants to stand up (and remain standing). Pause while participants do this.

**Give instructions to say the numbers in alphabetical order.** Ask participants to say the numbers from one to ten in alphabetical order (when the numbers are spelled out in English), beginning with "eight". As soon as they completed the task, ask participants to sit down. You will have to pause for a longer time for participants to complete this task.

**Demonstrate your mastery.** Ask participants to sit down. Ask them to listen as you rattle off the ten numbers in alphabetical order. Confess that you spent a lot of time practicing this skill.

**Debrief participants.** Ask them why they think it took them a longer time to recite the numbers in alphabetical order than in numerical order. Also ask them why they made a lot more mistakes during the second activity. Ask additional questions to drive home these

learning points:

*What we have already learned interferes with what we are trying to learn afresh.*

*It is easier to learn something new if we have a blank, beginner's mind. It is difficult to learn something new if we have previously learned a related skill (or knowledge or belief) in a different fashion.*

**Ask participants for examples of old learning interfering with new.** If necessary, use these examples to get them started:

*If you have learned to drive on the right side of the road, you will have problems learning to drive in the United Kingdom, Australia, or South Africa where people drive on the left side.*

*During the Olympic Games in Australia, many pedestrians got killed because they crossed the road after checking the traffic from the left side of the road.*

*The accent we acquire during early childhood interferes with our attempts to change it during adult days.*

*The work styles, beliefs, and standard procedures that we learned during successful business periods interfere with our ability to change them to cope with current realities.*

*The stereotypes that we have acquired about other races, religions, and cultures interfere with our ability to accept and accommodate global realities. If we have taught our workers to depend on us for complete directions, it is difficult for them to acquire demonstrate initiative.*

*If we have been taught to think in terms of linear cause-effect relationships, it is very difficult for us to acquire systems thinking.*

*If we expect to learn from authoritative lectures, we have difficulty learning from a jolt.*

**Ask participants for strategies for handling learned interference.** Elicit and discuss

these types of guidelines:

*Keep an open mind about alternative approaches for achieving your goals.*

*Be aware of your current beliefs, knowledge, and beliefs.*

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Jolt Principles*

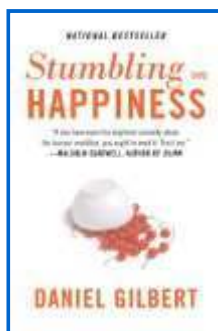
*Jolts are interactive experiential activities that lull participants into behaving in a comfortable way and then suddenly delivering a powerful wake-up call. Jolts force participants to re-examine their assumptions and revise their habitual practices. A typical jolt lasts only a few minutes but provides enough insights for a lengthy debriefing. Not all jolts entrap the participants; some of them suggest thought experiments and activities to provide enlightening insights.*

## **Finding Jolts from Books**

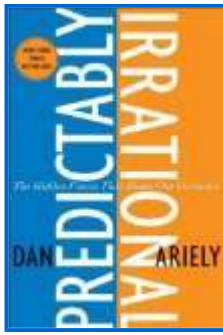
I find ideas for jolts in the books I read. Puzzle books are good sources of jolts. Collections of games can also help us locate activities that can be compressed into a jolt.

Several other types of books provide ideas for jolts. For example, almost any psychology textbook contains several ideas for jolts.

Here are two recent books that have contributed ideas for powerful jolts (click the covers to order from Amazon):



*Stumbling on Happiness* (2007) by Daniel Gilbert.



*Predictably Irrational* (2008) by Dan Ariely.

You can find useful ideas for jolts in short story anthologies. Short-short stories with surprise endings provide the basis of powerful jolts: You read the story (or tell it in your own words) and stop short of the ending. Ask participants to come up with a conclusion to the story and to share them with each other. Then reveal the author's ending and debrief to discover useful insights.

My favorite example of this type of jolt incorporates a science-fiction short story by Fredric Brown called "[Sentry](#)". This story describes a battle between humans and aliens in a remote planet. It is narrated by a sentry who shoots and kills a loathsome invader from another planet. Only in the last few lines you realize that the narrator is an alien and the dying intruder is a human. Learning point? The essential universality of all sentient creatures.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Brian's Words*

*Brian Remer is Creative Learning Director at The Firefly Group ( [brian@thefirefly.org](mailto:brian@thefirefly.org) ). In addition to being a master of the 99-words format, Brian invents games and interactive strategies to expand learning and deepen insights. To find out more about him, read his [Guest Gamer Interview](#).*

## **Self-Distraction by Brian Remer**

### ***Self-Distraction***

At a Chamber of Commerce workshop, the presenter mentioned several times how

relieved he was to have a small class so that he wouldn't have to use PowerPoint. But his presentation consisted of walking us through a paper version of his slides! When questioned later, he explained that he finds PowerPoint "distracting."

"People look up at the screen and not at me!" he said.

Why does he need people watching him? Recognition, affirmation, reinforcement, attention? The workshop shouldn't be about him but about learning.

Take your eyes off the goal and all sorts of self doubt creeps in.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Check It Out*

## **Creativity and Play**

My friend Bill Matthews sent me a link for a TED video featuring Tim Brown on creativity and play:

[http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/tim\\_brown\\_on\\_creativity\\_and\\_play.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play.html)

Watch this video because it will make you happy that you are a playful person. Tim incorporates interesting jolts throughout his presentation.

By the way, if you are not a regular visitor to ted.com, you are missing one of the most valuable learning resources.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Single Item Survey*

## **Trick Questions**

In the October issue of *TGL*, we published a game called [TRICK QUESTIONS](#). It included

several questions that can be easily answered if you think outside the box.

We are collecting more trick questions that can be incorporated in the game. Our goal is to collect more than 100 of these questions so we can play the game at next year's NASAGA conference by giving each participant a different question.

Do you have any trick questions to contribute to the collection? The October issue contains 20 samples. Here are four more:

- You are driving a shuttle bus at an airport. Five people get into the bus from the Continental terminal. Three people from the Delta terminal. Two from the United terminal. What is the age of the bus driver?  
**ANSWER:** Your age, because the first sentence said, "You are driving a shuttle bus at an airport."
- A French woman has five children and half of them are girls. What is happening here?  
**ANSWER:** All the children are girls.
- You are stranded in a desert island and with a single match. You have some paper, dried leaves, and small sticks. Which one do you light first?  
**ANSWER:** The match.
- You have two US coins that add up to 30 cents. One is not a nickel. What coins do you have?  
**ANSWER:** One of them is not a nickel, but the other one is. So, you have a nickel and a quarter.

To send your questions, visit [this survey page](#) (opens in a new window). You may send more than one question. You may include your name along with your question or keep it anonymous.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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# THIAGI GAMELETTER: December 2008

*SERIOUSLY FUN ACTIVITIES FOR TRAINERS, FACILITATORS, PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS, AND MANAGERS.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Masthead

*Our mission statement, copyright notice, and cast of characters.*

### Tool Kit

Graphics Games

*Interact with pictures.*

### Guest Gamer

Interview with Nick Smith

*The future is games.*

### Rope Game

BLIND SQUARE by Nick Smith

*Give them enough rope.*

### Improv Game

PLAYING WITH STATUS by Kat Koppett

*Raise or lower your status—nonverbally.*

### Jolt

SAY IT IN SEQUENCE

*Forget it.*

### Jolt Principles

Finding Jolts from Books



*Read a good book lately?*

Brian's Words

Self-Distraction by Brian Remer

*It's not about you.*

Check It Out

Creativity and Play

*Create more, play more.*

Single Item Survey

Trick Questions

*Respond playfully.*

*Masthead*

## **THIAGI GAMELETTER:**

***SERIOUSLY FUN ACTIVITIES FOR TRAINERS, FACILITATORS, PERFORMANCE CONSULTANTS, AND MANAGERS.***

### ***Mission***

To increase and improve the use of interactive, experiential strategies to improve human performance in an effective, efficient, and enjoyable way.

### ***Editorial Roster***

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Assistant Editor: Raja Thiagarajan

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## ***Feedback Request***

Thiagi believes in practicing what he preaches. This is an interactive newsletter, so interact already! Send us your feedback, sarcastic remarks, and gratuitous advice through email to [thiagi@thiagi.com](mailto:thiagi@thiagi.com) . Thanks!

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Tool Kit*

## Graphics Games

Photographs, paintings, drawings, diagrams, charts, or cartoons are essential elements of graphics games. Some of these games require participants to create a graphic; others require participants to review a graphic, analyze its elements, discover relationships, and discuss their findings. Training objectives for these games are not limited to graphics; they can be related to different types of skills and concepts.

### ***A Sample Graphics Game: PHOTO ANALYSIS***

You are attending a workshop on critical thinking. Sue Malone is your facilitator and she begins the session by distributing a one-page handout to everyone in the room. The handout has a simple set of instructions:

*Carefully study the photograph below. On a separate sheet of paper, write down a list of things that you see in the photograph.*

The handout contains a crowded street scene from a foreign country. You decide that it is probably from Thailand or Cambodia and start making a list of items such as "A girl is standing in front of a street vendor who has several colorful birds in a cage".

After about 2 minutes, Sue asks everyone to stop writing and count the number of different items in the list. You have 18 items in your list. Sue explains that while everyone received the same photograph, there were two slightly different sets of instructions: Half of the handouts asked participants to make a list of things while the other half asked for a list of *interesting* things in the photograph.

Sue asks participants with the five longest lists to check which set of instructions they received. Everyone in this group (which included you) was merely asked for a "list of things". Next, Sue asks participants with the five shortest lists to check their set of instructions. Except for one of them, this group had instructions that asked for "list of interesting things".

Sue conducts a discussion that leads to the conclusion that any type of judgment (such as looking for interesting things) narrows what you notice in a situation. The learning point of the activity is *if we really want to pay attention to all details we need to keep an open mind.*

## ***Uses and Limitations of Graphics Games***

The word *graphics* denotes the display of information in a visual form. In general, the word refers to nonverbal modes of information in contrast to information conveyed through text (written language). Illustrations and photographs are in *analogic* form. They are also referred to as *nonverbal* or *iconic* forms. Pure text is the *digital* form. An important type of information display is the mixed mode that combines both text and nonverbal forms. Mixed graphics that are frequently used in training include bar graphs, Venn diagrams, pie charts, organization charts, tables and matrixes, fishbone diagrams, process maps, and mind maps.

Since most people think visually, the use of graphics in training helps us to clearly communicate concepts, principles, and processes. Graphic information is also easier to recall. Requiring participants to use graphics for processing information (for example, using mindmaps for taking notes) and for responding to questions (for example, organizing information in the form of a table) utilizes our visual thinking abilities.

Technology has made it easier for trainers and participants to make effective use of graphics. We can use computer software programs for creating graphics, mapping processes and ideas, presenting arguments, and summarizing data in charts and graphs. We can also search the Internet to locate all types of images, clip art, and stock photos. We can take photographs with easy-to-use digital cameras and camcorders. We can store the photographs and video clips in our computers and edit them to suit our training needs.

Just because we use graphics instead of text, there is no guarantee that everyone around the world can clearly understand our message. Here are some limitations of using graphics in training.

- Visual literacy (the ability to read graphics) is a learned skill. Participants from different cultures and different language groups interpret graphic conventions (such as working from left to right or from the front to the back), techniques (such as zooming in and zooming out), and symbols (such as arrows and dotted lines) differently. We may have to train our participants on how to read our graphics (such as flowcharts) before we use them extensively.
- Participants may feel that they cannot draw and the requirement of using graphics may make them apprehensive about embarrassing themselves in front of their

teammates.

- Participants may also think that drawing pictures is a trivial and childish task.

### ***More Examples***

Here are brief descriptions of different graphics activities, ranging from short exercises to total systems.

#### **COAT OF ARMS**

This values clarification activity serves as an effective icebreaker. Each participant receives a sheet of paper with the outline of a shield divided into four quadrants and a scroll underneath the shield. Participants spend 5 minutes drawing pictures and symbols in the quadrants to reflect their values. They also write a suitable motto on the scroll. When completed, participants walk around the room silently displaying their coats of arms. Later, they organize themselves into teams of five and take turns describing what the images on their shield represent.

#### **CONTAINERS**

This activity works as an effective closer. At the end of the training sessions, the facilitator gives each participant a set of different graphic organizer templates. Participants pair up and select three different graphic organizers and use them to arrange suitable elements of content. All participants display the final products on a wall for a gallery-walk type review.

#### **Graphic Guides**

For more than 25 years, The Grove Consultants International ( <http://grove.com/site/index.html> ) has been spreading its visual planning and organizational change approach around the world. Among other products and services, Grove sells a set of large-size visual wall templates called *Graphic Guides* that helps facilitators guide a group through a collaborative planning process. This set includes *Meeting Startup Guide* (to frame the meeting), *Graphic History* (to summarize the history of the organization or the team), *Context Map* (to scan the environment), *SPOT Matrix* (to identify internal strengths, problems, opportunities, and threats), *Cover Story* (to envision the future), *Five Bold Steps* (to summarize key vision themes), and *Graphic Game Plan* (to expand on a key step).

## **QUICK DRAW**

I learned this improv game from my friend Alain Rostain and have used it effectively with groups around the world. Participants pair up, sit down, and place a blank piece of paper in the middle. They take turns to draw a face, one line (or feature) at a time. Players alternate adding a line or feature as quickly as possible. Whenever a player hesitates, the drawing is done. Now the players name the person, writing one letter at a time, again alternating with each letter and ending the name when one person hesitates. The resulting drawings (and names) provide striking evidence that playful collaboration results in creative outcomes.

## **SLIDE SET**

The facilitator gives a lecture on a training topic, using a typical set of text and bullet-point slides. All participants receive a handout copy of these slides. Later, teams of participants study the slides and convert them into a set of graphic slides (with minimal text) using stock photos and images. After spending a week on the group project, participants upload their slide sets to a website for mutual review and feedback.

## **Square Wheels®**

Dr. Scott Simmerman ( <http://squarewheels.com/> ) uses a cartoon illustration that shows people pulling and pushing a cart with square wheels. Ironically the cart is filled with round tires. The facilitator explains that the illustration represents the way things work in most organizations and asks participants to brainstorm ideas about how the illustration resembles their organization. This starts a fun and provocative dialogue among participants.

## **VisualsSpeak**

VisualsSpeak ( <http://www.visualsspeak.com/> ) sells ImageSets that include 200 evocative photographs. The facilitator gives each participant a large piece of paper to use as a background. The facilitator also primes the group with a framing question (example: *What's your vision for your group over the next two years?*) Participants quickly select the images for their response and assemble the pictures on the background. Later, each participant describes what the collection of images means to him or her. The facilitator debriefs the group and identifies overall impressions, connections, and insights.

## Visual Explorer

The Center for Creative Leadership ( <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/index.aspx> ) has been using the *Visual Explorer* as a collaborative tool for group facilitation, coaching, problem solving, survey panels, and focus groups. The tool features a collection of images (currently available in different sizes and as a digital library). Typical use of the Visual Explorer consists of five steps: During the *framing* step, participants ponder on a frame question such as *What are the key elements of the challenge that we are facing?* During the *browsing* stage, participants pick images that are associated with the framing question. During the *reflection* stage, participants examine the images they selected and think about their significance. During the *sharing* stage, each participant describes the image and explains its connections to the question. Other participants share their reactions. During the *expanding* stage, participants build upon the momentum generated by the previous dialogue.

## VISUAL SUMMARY CLOSER

At the end of the training session, each team of participants creates a poster that summarizes the key learning points—without using any text and depending exclusively on pictures. After completing the task, teams display their posters on the wall. Each team now moves to the poster of the next team and tries to figure out what the pictures symbolize. During the final show-and-tell session, teams take turn interpreting the poster they studied and explaining its significance to the others.

## *An Application Exercise*

Learn to think visually and display information in a graphic form. Here's your first practical exercise: Organize the contents of this article in a graphic form such as a mind map or a summary table. Take your time and debrief yourself at the end of the exercise.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Guest Gamer*

*Nick started working in software development but went to a leadership course, based outdoors, and realized there was more to life. Retraining, he entered the world of outdoor*

*and experiential education from whence he further evolved into a personal development trainer and coach. He is a founder of **xpand UK**, a training and coaching company that helps people achieve their potential, especially in leadership and teambuilding. Helping learners to experience things is Nick's passion and the outdoors is his preferred milieu. He has written articles on a wide variety of topics and is currently co-authoring a book on experiential meditations.*

## **Interview with Nick Smith**

***TGL: Nick, what is your specialty area?***

**Nick:** Using outdoor challenges to facilitate learning of any sort is what really excites me. These challenges can be designed to bring out points in personal coaching, on a leadership seminar, or in a change management workshop. In recent years I have worked particularly as a team developer, going with the flow of the experience and creatively reviewing them to bring out significant learning.

***TGL: How did you get into designing and using games?***

**Nick:** My outdoor-instructor colleagues wanted to run the sexy sessions (sailing, kayaking, climbing and the like) that clients thought were brilliant fun, but I quickly realized that I preferred the problem-solving activities, because there was more scope for helping people to learn. My first encounter with Roger Greenaway was when it all came together, realizing the scope for active learning in the outdoors. Then when xpand (an existing European company) started in the UK, I was presented with the challenge of using these activities within an existing structure of classroom-based training and began to specialize more.

***TGL: How long have you been designing and using games?***

**Nick:** I suppose I have been using experiential learning and games since I started as a youth worker, 16 years ago.

***TGL: Where do you use games?***

**Nick:** The places I haven't used games are the places I haven't been to yet. The settings where I use games tend to be wide and varied. Unless I have limited time in a very traditional environment, (where overcoming preconceived misconceptions might be too



time-consuming), I try to use outdoor games and activities whenever I am working.

***TGL: How do your participants respond?***

**Nick:** Generally, participants have fun and are surprised by the amount of learning that can take place with such simple activities.

***TGL: What is the most horrible or embarrassing moment you've had in conducting games?***

**Nick:** I was in the middle of introducing an activity a few weeks ago and the participants said, "We did this with your colleague last month." She blithely agreed and pointed out that she hadn't told me. I was left furiously planning what to do next. In the end, since any of the activities I do are more about processes and interactions than results, I batted on regardless. The participants, assuming that the activity was identical to the previous one, did likewise. Later they discovered subtle differences that led to failure and learning. I was saved some blushes.

***TGL: What advice do you have to newcomers about interactive training?***

**Nick:** If you want to use teambuilding activities, keep them simple. Make the rules easy and unbendable to save you having to think on your feet too much.

Prepare thoroughly. Practice anything new on a receptive audience (your friends or colleagues) who can pick holes in it and make it more robust (again reducing on-your-feet-thinking time in front of clients).

Don't be too precious about the way you want the activity to run. Let the team flow through the task, especially when they do something you didn't expect. Lots of good learning comes out even when they go off track from your point of view.

Debrief everything you do: Where did it work (or did not work) as you expected? How could it be adapted? How could the instructions be improved?

Play things repeatedly to gain more insights for yourself.

***TGL: What types of games do you use most frequently?***

**Nick:** Classics such as SPIDER'S WEB work every time. I also like BLIND SQUARE and LEAKY PIPE, both of which tend to be effective, versatile, and fun to observe. Others I will use regularly but tweak and amend every time I play them so they are constantly evolving, either for improvement, to keep my own interest, or for the learning outcomes required.

***TGL: Who are your favorite game designers?***

**Nick:** Mike Rix of Grafham Water Centre, Cambridgeshire, UK. He hasn't written any books, as far as I know, but he is constantly experimenting and building new activities and challenges. He has the enviable advantage of grounds in which to leave things *in situ* (I travel to clients and take all the equipment I need) and he always has ideas on how to adapt things. Discussions with him are stimulating and insightful. Further to that, anyone that uses games and activities with a passion has been an inspiration in pushing me further and giving me new ideas.

***TGL: Do you have any book recommendations?***

**Nick:** I recently came across Garry Kroehnert's *Games Trainers Play Outdoors* and was quite pleased with it. Too often books of games have 20 old ideas or things that wouldn't work with your particular client group (whoever they are) and then one real nugget. Kroehnert's book, however, has lots of classic activities and several ideas that were new to me, or at least clever variations. The activities all have cute titles and clever wee stories to introduce them that I find a bit too much but the information on setting up and running the activities is excellent.

For debriefing (or reviewing) I haven't found any books yet to rival what is on Roger Greenaway's website, <http://reviewing.co.uk/> . More ideas than you can shake a big stick at.

TGL is the other thing I am constantly recommending to trainers I meet, whatever their background in experiential learning and games. There's learning for everyone there.

***TGL: What is your prediction about the future of games?***

**Nick:** The future **is** games. I see young people growing up with shorter attention spans for listening to others and with a lack of respect, even for subject matter experts and people in authority. I would expect a society that becomes less and less willing to learn from

someone else but rather needs to experience things for themselves and then be helped to learn from that.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Rope Game*

## **BLIND SQUARE by Nick Smith**

This is an activity that I use in almost every teambuilding session I run--because it delivers results every time. I can take no credit for its invention since it has existed from long before my time, in various forms and with a variety of names (such as BLIND POLYGON). The activity can be frontloaded to focus on particular issues by changing a few parameters or altering the instructions. However, I often use it as an activity for exploring overall team building issues to see how the participants get on.

### ***Preparation***

Before the exercise begins, tie a length of rope (about 20m) into a circle. Also, provide blindfolds for everyone.

### ***Instructions to Participants***

To complete this activity, all the team has to do is to form the rope into the shape of a perfect square.

You will have 15 minutes planning time, during which no one may touch the rope.

At the end of this time, everyone will be blindfolded and the rope will be placed in your hands.

You will have 10 minutes to form the square.

All the team members must be holding the rope.

Once you think that the square is complete, lay the rope on the floor.

## ***Debriefing***

Ask questions to draw out responses that focus on any of these types of topics:

- Attention to detail
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creating a square
- Evaluation
- Planning
- Problem solving

## ***Variations***

Don't tie the rope into a circle at the start.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Improv Game*

*Status is a major factor that affects the effectiveness of your interactions with others. Being aware of your status, the status of the other person, and the difference between the two and being able to increase or reduce your status is an important interpersonal skill. This is the reason why improv actors spend a lot of time in status work. **PLAYING WITH STATUS**, the improv game by Kat Koppett, gives you opportunities for practicing your status-related skills. Kat is the author of the brilliant book of improv exercises, **Training To Imagine**. Check out her [article](#) (and [game](#)) in last month's **TGL**. For more information on Kat or her work, visit [www.koppett.com](http://www.koppett.com) .*

## **PLAYING WITH STATUS by Kat Koppett**

## ***Overview***

Participants are given a short script of 8-10 lines of neutral dialogue. The scene may depict a job interview (see the sample below) or a coaching session. Pairs take turns enacting the scene, playing with the status relationships through non-verbal behaviors.

## ***Improv Topics***

- Non-verbal behavior
- Listening and awareness

## ***Purpose***

- Team building
- Communication

## ***Supplies***

Handout with the script for the scene

## ***Time***

15-30 minutes

## ***Number of Players***

Any number

## ***Game Flow***

1. Distribute the handout with the script for the scene.
2. Recruit two volunteers to act out the scene.
3. Allow the pair to play the scene once without any outside direction.
4. Discuss the perceived status of each character.
5. Assign status roles to each of the two players and have them play the scene again.  
The status assignments may include any of the following:
  - Person A has high status; Person B has low status.

- Person A has low status; Person B has high status.
  - Both have high status.
  - Both have low status.
  - Status of both persons remains equal but shifts from low to high.
  - Status of one person starts high and ends low; status of the other person starts low and ends high.
6. Replace the two players with a new pair and continue with different status combinations.
  7. Debrief at the end of each round.
  8. Conduct a final debriefing discussion.

### ***Suggested Debrief Questions:***

How much do you think the words mattered in this interaction?

What were the most effective ways to raise your status?

What lowered your status?

What status choices would you like to make in a real-life interview? A sales call? A coaching session?

What is the value of being aware of status during a conversation?

### ***Tips***

- Allow each team to try a couple of different status interactions before moving on to the next team.
- Feel free to freeze the action of the scene in the middle to point out a clear status moment.
- Point out that attempts to claim status can backfire: High status people can fall quickly if the other person fails to be intimidated. Low status people can gain status

by being self-focused.

### ***Variations***

Use one pair for the initial demonstration. Then divide participants into triads (two actors and one observer) for subsequent enactments.

Have the group write their own neutral scene. Make sure that the script is really neutral.

Set up status battles with the observers voting to decide who is the lowest or the highest.

Incorporate 30 seconds of silence somewhere in the scene.

Allow actors to improvise the scenes in their own words.

### ***Source***

Adapted from Keith Johnstone's *Impro*, and Freestyle Repertory Theatre

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Handout 1*

## **Handout**

### ***Sample Scene: The Job Interview***

A: Good morning.

B: Good morning.

A: Have a seat.

B: Thank you.

A: I have looked over your resume.

B: Yes?

A: I see you worked at Global Inc.

B: Yes. For a number of years.

A: Very impressive.

B: Thanks.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Jolt*

## **SAY IT IN SEQUENCE**

Here's a jolt that can be conducted within a few minutes and debriefed for a long time to explore different aspects of learning and performance. You can use this jolt with individuals or with groups of any size. And the best thing is that you don't need any supplies or equipment.

### ***Purpose***

To explore the impact of previous learning on present learning.

### ***Participants***

Any number

### ***Time***

3 minutes for the activity and at least 10 minutes for debriefing

### ***Preparation***

Memorize these numbers in this sequence:

Eight

Five



Four

Nine

One

Seven

Six

Ten

Three

Two

Use whatever memorization technique that works for you. For example, I wrote down the string of numbers and memorized them as if they were a telephone number: 854-917-61032. Make sure that you memorize the underlined 10 as "ten" and not as "one" and "zero".

### ***Flow***

**Give instructions to count.** Ask participants to say the numbers from one to ten in numerical sequence beginning with "one". As soon as they completed the task, ask participants to stand up (and remain standing). Pause while participants do this.

**Give instructions to say the numbers in alphabetical order.** Ask participants to say the numbers from one to ten in alphabetical order (when the numbers are spelled out in English), beginning with "eight". As soon as they completed the task, ask participants to sit down. You will have to pause for a longer time for participants to complete this task.

**Demonstrate your mastery.** Ask participants to sit down. Ask them to listen as you rattle off the ten numbers in alphabetical order. Confess that you spent a lot of time practicing this skill.

**Debrief participants.** Ask them why they think it took them a longer time to recite the numbers in alphabetical order than in numerical order. Also ask them why they made a lot more mistakes during the second activity. Ask additional questions to drive home these

learning points:

*What we have already learned interferes with what we are trying to learn afresh.*

*It is easier to learn something new if we have a blank, beginner's mind. It is difficult to learn something new if we have previously learned a related skill (or knowledge or belief) in a different fashion.*

**Ask participants for examples of old learning interfering with new.** If necessary, use these examples to get them started:

*If you have learned to drive on the right side of the road, you will have problems learning to drive in the United Kingdom, Australia, or South Africa where people drive on the left side.*

*During the Olympic Games in Australia, many pedestrians got killed because they crossed the road after checking the traffic from the left side of the road.*

*The accent we acquire during early childhood interferes with our attempts to change it during adult days.*

*The work styles, beliefs, and standard procedures that we learned during successful business periods interfere with our ability to change them to cope with current realities.*

*The stereotypes that we have acquired about other races, religions, and cultures interfere with our ability to accept and accommodate global realities. If we have taught our workers to depend on us for complete directions, it is difficult for them to acquire demonstrate initiative.*

*If we have been taught to think in terms of linear cause-effect relationships, it is very difficult for us to acquire systems thinking.*

*If we expect to learn from authoritative lectures, we have difficulty learning from a jolt.*

**Ask participants for strategies for handling learned interference.** Elicit and discuss

these types of guidelines:

*Keep an open mind about alternative approaches for achieving your goals.*

*Be aware of your current beliefs, knowledge, and beliefs.*

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Jolt Principles*

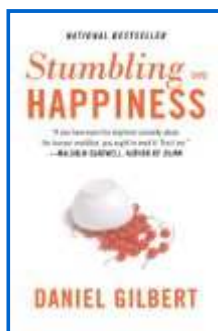
*Jolts are interactive experiential activities that lull participants into behaving in a comfortable way and then suddenly delivering a powerful wake-up call. Jolts force participants to re-examine their assumptions and revise their habitual practices. A typical jolt lasts only a few minutes but provides enough insights for a lengthy debriefing. Not all jolts entrap the participants; some of them suggest thought experiments and activities to provide enlightening insights.*

## **Finding Jolts from Books**

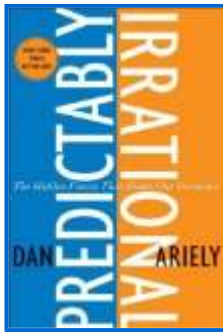
I find ideas for jolts in the books I read. Puzzle books are good sources of jolts. Collections of games can also help us locate activities that can be compressed into a jolt.

Several other types of books provide ideas for jolts. For example, almost any psychology textbook contains several ideas for jolts.

Here are two recent books that have contributed ideas for powerful jolts (click the covers to order from Amazon):



*Stumbling on Happiness* (2007) by Daniel Gilbert.



*Predictably Irrational* (2008) by Dan Ariely.

You can find useful ideas for jolts in short story anthologies. Short-short stories with surprise endings provide the basis of powerful jolts: You read the story (or tell it in your own words) and stop short of the ending. Ask participants to come up with a conclusion to the story and to share them with each other. Then reveal the author's ending and debrief to discover useful insights.

My favorite example of this type of jolt incorporates a science-fiction short story by Fredric Brown called "[Sentry](#)". This story describes a battle between humans and aliens in a remote planet. It is narrated by a sentry who shoots and kills a loathsome invader from another planet. Only in the last few lines you realize that the narrator is an alien and the dying intruder is a human. Learning point? The essential universality of all sentient creatures.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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### *Brian's Words*

*Brian Remer is Creative Learning Director at The Firefly Group ( [brian@thefirefly.org](mailto:brian@thefirefly.org) ). In addition to being a master of the 99-words format, Brian invents games and interactive strategies to expand learning and deepen insights. To find out more about him, read his [Guest Gamer Interview](#).*

## **Self-Distraction by Brian Remer**

### ***Self-Distraction***

At a Chamber of Commerce workshop, the presenter mentioned several times how

relieved he was to have a small class so that he wouldn't have to use PowerPoint. But his presentation consisted of walking us through a paper version of his slides! When questioned later, he explained that he finds PowerPoint "distracting."

"People look up at the screen and not at me!" he said.

Why does he need people watching him? Recognition, affirmation, reinforcement, attention? The workshop shouldn't be about him but about learning.

Take your eyes off the goal and all sorts of self doubt creeps in.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Check It Out*

## **Creativity and Play**

My friend Bill Matthews sent me a link for a TED video featuring Tim Brown on creativity and play:

[http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/tim\\_brown\\_on\\_creativity\\_and\\_play.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play.html)

Watch this video because it will make you happy that you are a playful person. Tim incorporates interesting jolts throughout his presentation.

By the way, if you are not a regular visitor to ted.com, you are missing one of the most valuable learning resources.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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*Single Item Survey*

## **Trick Questions**

In the October issue of *TGL*, we published a game called [TRICK QUESTIONS](#). It included

several questions that can be easily answered if you think outside the box.

We are collecting more trick questions that can be incorporated in the game. Our goal is to collect more than 100 of these questions so we can play the game at next year's NASAGA conference by giving each participant a different question.

Do you have any trick questions to contribute to the collection? The October issue contains 20 samples. Here are four more:

- You are driving a shuttle bus at an airport. Five people get into the bus from the Continental terminal. Three people from the Delta terminal. Two from the United terminal. What is the age of the bus driver?  
**ANSWER:** Your age, because the first sentence said, "You are driving a shuttle bus at an airport."
- A French woman has five children and half of them are girls. What is happening here?  
**ANSWER:** All the children are girls.
- You are stranded in a desert island and with a single match. You have some paper, dried leaves, and small sticks. Which one do you light first?  
**ANSWER:** The match.
- You have two US coins that add up to 30 cents. One is not a nickel. What coins do you have?  
**ANSWER:** One of them is not a nickel, but the other one is. So, you have a nickel and a quarter.

To send your questions, visit [this survey page](#) (opens in a new window). You may send more than one question. You may include your name along with your question or keep it anonymous.

[\[Table of Contents\]](#)

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