

**Julie Parker**  
*practice success*

*A Guide to Role-Playing in  
Team Training*



## *Role-Playing in Training...why?*

All of our educational content is designed with YOUR learning in mind.

There is a terrific quote you should keep in mind:

*“Tell me and I forget,  
teach me and I may remember,  
involve me and I learn.”*

Benjamin Franklin

### **VAK Learning Styles Model.**

**V – Visual** When information is presented via written word, images, diagrams and charts

**A – Auditory** Information is in the form of listening to voices, in a discussion group or lecture

**K – Kinaesthetic** When there is a physical experience, or ‘hands-on’ approach

We all learn in different ways. Between visual, auditory and kinaesthetic, most prefer one method over another. What better way to learn information than by tapping in to each of these three areas at once?

***Role-Playing is the most effective method of staff training. It works particularly well when implementing the training and systems contained in our modules. The benefits are three-fold:***

- 1 Higher degree of absorption of information, as described above***
- 2 The Role-Play also acts as a ‘dry-run’. It provides the opportunity to step through the proposed process and discover what modifications are required so you end up with a smooth and faultless experience***
- 3 Self-confidence plays an enormous role in our performance. In fact, our sub-conscious cannot tell the difference between a real and a false memory. Role-Playing allows us to register in to our subconscious memories of performing a task successfully, without anxiety. This leads to a relaxed confidence when called upon to put the new system in to action***



# The Role-Play In Training Process

***To achieve the greatest success from your role-plays, you need to first create the right environment and set the expectations for the team.***

A good role-play can take up to 2-3 hours, depending upon the complexity of the new process you wish to implement. So make sure you hold the role-play session in a comfortable area of the practice, where everyone can sit and write notes. Everyone should feel comfortable to get up for a drink refill and toilet break whenever they choose.

The key to achieving great results in your role-play is everyone's enthusiasm and participation. This can only occur once they feel SAFE and their contributions VALUED.

The environment should be upbeat and relaxed. Have fun through the process and laugh throughout. Don't be so controlling or agenda-driven that you lose sight of what makes these sessions successful.

Whether a staff member is playing the role of participant or observer, the impact is always high, and the ideas of how to improve scenarios will flow.

## STEP BY STEP

Select a scenario to role-play (example the new patient visit).

Allocate staff members to each role (example dentist, nurse, patient).

Each person gets 'into' their character, and experiences the scenario through their eyes.

**Role-players** are looking for physical, communication and behavioural barriers to overcome so the real-life scenario flows smoothly.

**Observers** are looking for elements that don't seem right, or appear uncomfortable for the roles. Observers are encouraged to make suggestions throughout.

There will be constant interruption with people's thoughts and ideas. This is GOOD! This is the process of finessing all of your systems.

Re-play sections of the role-play incorporating people's ideas until everyone is happy with the result.

Change around the role-players so everyone gets a chance to see things from a different perspective, including being observer. We want every team member to benefit from role-playing.

Have a 'scribe' to make notes throughout so the chosen ideas, verbiage, physical surroundings etc. can be formalised in to your finished system.

## Code of Conduct

*Be respectful of each other at all times*

***Be encouraging and enthusiastic of people's 'performances'***

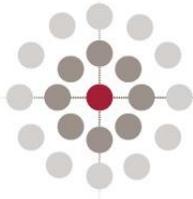
*Allow each other time to speak uninterrupted*

***Validate each other's input and ideas***

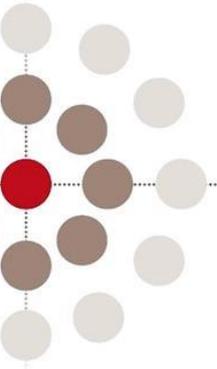
*Stick to the topic chosen for the role-play*

***Be supportive of staff members who are struggling by helping them feel less anxious***

*Do not make anyone feel silly, offended or unduly pressured*



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