

## **Report of the Real Times, Real Life Writers' Working Group 7 to 10 October 2002**

Members of the WWG had received a copy of an 'anglicised' version of the RTRL pack prior to attending the event to familiarise themselves with its contents and identify areas, topics, sessions that they feel should be changed, removed or developed to help meet their particular target audiences. Members of the NAC had also received copies and had been invited to forward comments.

The workshop was opened by David Vickers from Competence at Work Ltd, who outlined the purpose of the event. He introduced Jenny Wallis DfES, who outlined the background to the project and then Helen Hackett (National Life Works Centre), who facilitated the workshop. Helen was supported by, John Howley from National Life Works Centre and Bill Barry and Vicky Hammond author and writer from Real Games Inc.

Helen opened up a discussion by asking members of the WWG the types of clients they represent. Each member of the group outlined their role, the areas where they concentrate their efforts and the issues that cause the biggest challenge.

They were also asked how something like RTRL could help and support their particular client group.

She went on to ask the following questions of the Writers' group:

- Two things that they liked about the RTRL pack / programme?
- Two things they didn't like, or would be little or no use?

The following list was produced

Positive	Not so Positive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Presentation of material</li> <li>➤ Context of the game</li> <li>➤ Role simulation</li> <li>➤ Group working</li> <li>➤ Interactive</li> <li>➤ 'Dare to dream'</li> <li>➤ Transferable skills</li> <li>➤ Stage approach &amp; options</li> <li>➤ Instructive</li> <li>➤ Tools for transition</li> <li>➤ Not too complex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dealing with mixed ability groups</li> <li>➤ Need for qualified, capable facilitators</li> <li>➤ Readability, presentation</li> <li>➤ Soon becomes out of date</li> <li>➤ Historical aspects can become too involved</li> <li>➤ Too academic</li> <li>➤ High Five Poster</li> <li>➤ Doesn't deal with basic skill needs</li> <li>➤ Length of time to complete</li> <li>➤ Handouts don't take into account reading and writing requirements</li> <li>➤ Availability of received resources</li> </ul>

Helen informed the group that they had the opportunity to really influence this resource and asked such questions as:

- How could the Real Times Real game be better?
- What should it be like?
- How should it be structured?

Among the things mentioned were, colour, easy to follow, fun, enjoyable, good facilitation notes, flexible use (pick and mix menu).

Arrangements were made for the group to see the CD ROM of the Real Game series and how it links to Real Play, Make it Real, Real Game, Be Real, Get Real and now Real Times Real Life(for adults in transition).

There was a discussion around the following:

- Producing core elements and options
- Objectives and outcomes, important factors that drive the evaluation
- Ensuring that individuals who attend the programme know, 'what are the drivers in their life and work'.
- Models for Guidance and how these could be integrated into the Pack.

The current Real Times Real Life package is split into 3 Units, each unit contains a number of sessions that represents a step in the journey, and each step builds on the previous one. Each Unit can be undertaken in larger or smaller blocks over a short or longer time period, depending on need and availability of the group. There are a total of 19 sessions that takes approx 22 hours to complete.

The group was taken through the current version of the RTRL game as participants, role playing and discussing topics at specific stages of the programme to add genuineness.

The following day the group was divided into teams to look in more detail at each of the units to produce a UK version suitable for piloting. This included the identification of areas for

improvement, change, importing other materials and taking into consideration the positive and not so positive elements identified from the list mentioned earlier.

The following pages list the current RTRL programme with Units and current sessions. It also includes (for ease of comparison), the format of the redesigned version produced by the WWG in which they now all agree is suitable for the UK adult audience and for piloting purposes

<p><b>Unit 1 A journey through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century World of Work</b></p>	<p><b>Revised Module 1</b>  <b>Changing world or work</b>  <u>(Role play in historical context)</u></p>
<p>This unit enables participants to explore and discuss the changing world of work by taking a simulated journey through the twentieth century 1900 – 1930, and familiarise themselves, possibly through seeing videos that deal with major changes in work such as cutback, job termination, downsizing, relocation. Gain historical / sociological perspective, identify transferable skills, causes of job loss.</p> <p>Use of the High Five poster</p> <p>Session 1 Changing world of work          Session 2 1900 -1930          Session 3 1930 - 1950          Session 4 1950 - 2000          Session 5 Taking stock</p> <p><b>5 sessions – 6 hours</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed changes</b>          Same as the original unit 1, taking a simulated journey, but the group felt that going back to the year 1900 was too far. They agreed that it should start at 1945 – 1970. Still include the changes at work including, cutback, job termination, downsizing, relocation, transferable skills and causes of job loss.</p> <p>3 Topic areas          Topic 1 Charting the course          Topic 2 Time travel          Topic 3 Taking stock of Change</p>

<p><b>Unit 2 Exploring Modern Times</b></p>	<p><b>Module 2 Exploring Life and Work</b> (Role play in modern context)</p>
<p>Participants assume individual job roles and complete various exercises that reveal some of the realities of working life. Sessions focus on areas of employment that are expanding and those that are in decline. Use variety of learning styles to explore relationships Between work, education, income, lifestyle, leisure time etc. How having to make decisions becomes an important part of your life.</p> <p>Session 1 The modern work world  Session 2 Quality of life  Session 3 Fair play-fair pay or is it?  Session 4 Job aspects  Session 5 The Pink Slip  Session 6 New work! New jobs!</p> <p><b>6 sessions – 7.5 hours</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed changes</b>  Participants still assume individual job roles and complete various exercises that reveal the realities of working life. Areas of employment that are expanding and declining. Use a variety of learning styles to explore the relationship between work, education, income, lifestyles, leisure and time.</p> <p><b>5 Topics</b>  Covering the period 1970 - 2000  Topic 1 Lifestyles  Topic 2 Question of balance  Topic 3 P45  Topic 4 Old dogs / New tricks  Topic 5 Taking stock of Life and Work</p>

<p><b>Unit 3 Discovering Real Times, Real Life</b></p>	<p><b>Unit 3 Moving On</b> <u>(Focus on self)</u></p>
<p>Participants engage in personal exploration, visioning and planning activities. They create a realistic achievable Life/Work Action Plan. To aid participants, this unit uses a number of self awareness exercises. This unit draws on what participants have learned in Units 1 and 2 as well as their own dreams and aspirations.</p> <p>The participants leave the programme with Life Work Action Plans that are supported by a variety of materials.</p> <p>Session 1 Knowing my skills  Session 2 Knowing my interests  Session 3 Knowing my learning styles  Session 4 Knowing my priorities  Session 5 Knowing my goals  Session 6 Knowing my resources  Session 7 Creating my life/work action plan  Session 8 The end of the beginning</p> <p><b>8 sessions – 8 hours</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed changes</b></p> <p>The purpose of this revised module is the same as the existing Unit 3 Participants engage in personal exploration, visioning and planning activities. They create a realistic achievable Life/Work Action Plan. To aid participants, this unit uses a number of self awareness exercises. This unit draws on what participants have learned in Units 1 and 2 as well as their own dreams and aspirations.</p> <p>Participants leave the programme with Life Work Action Plans that are supported by a variety of materials.</p> <p><b>8 Topics</b></p> <p>Topic 1 Life Work Journey  Topic 2 My ideal work  Topic 3 Skills for employment  Topic 4 Personal interests  Topic 5 Ways of learning  Topic 6 Putting the pieces together  Topic 7 Making plans  Topic 8 Taking action  Topic 9 The end of the beginning</p> <p>A celebration, completion of the programme and issue certificate</p>

Smaller groups looked in detail at the following key areas of the programme:

1. Aims and objectives
2. Production of a flow chart (to assist facilitators) and
3. How to obtain feedback and evaluation, from the pilots

They produced the following, which they felt was fit for purpose, but would need to be reviewed again following the pilots (after March 2003).

## **1. Aims and Objectives**

**NB. DRAFT VERSION – subject to rewording/finalisation**

### **Aims**

To enable adults to take positive steps towards greater participation in their social and economic life. The programme will provide individuals with skills to make informed, realistic career plans and life decisions. A key feature is to develop a range of skills which can be used to secure a job, develop careers, improve employability, to use learning in a work or social environment and recognise the benefits of lifelong learning.

### **Objectives**

To provide support, advice and guidance to enable adults to participate in career planning and job search – from unemployment\* to employment - and develop career planning and employability skills.

Participants will:

- Be able to describe the changing nature of work and appropriate responses.
- Understand the links between work and broader life and citizenship, incorporating a balance between work, remuneration and leisure; underpinned by sound financial management
- Learn the process and develop skills relating to career planning, decision making and job search.
- Understand the concept of skills, recognise the transferability of skills between roles and be able to apply to their own situation
- Develop self-awareness, self esteem, confidence, communication skills and a more positive self-image.
- Recognise the benefits of vocational and lifelong learning
- Be able to highlight barriers to work and learning and identify solutions

\*\*It was agreed to replace the term unemployed with a descriptor which encompasses the whole target group (i.e. underemployed, self employed, returners to work etc.)

## 2. Flowchart

Module	Topics	Activities
<p><b>Module 1</b> Changing world or work (Role play in historical context)</p>	<p>Topic 1 Charting the course Topic 2 Time travel Topic 3 Taking stock of Change</p>	<p>List will include, What each topic covers, methods, materials, handouts etc</p> <p>(to be developed before the pilots)</p>
<p><b>Module 2</b> Exploring life and work (Role play in modern context)</p>	<p>Topic 1 Lifestyles Topic 2 Question of balance Topic 3 P45 Topic 4 Old dogs / New tricks Topic 5 Taking stock of Life and Work</p>	<p>List will include, What each topic covers, methods, materials, handouts etc</p> <p>(to be developed before the pilots)</p>
<p><b>Module 3</b> Moving On (Focus on self)</p>	<p>Topic 1 Life Work Journey Topic 2 My ideal work Topic 3 Skills for employment Topic 4 Personal interests Topic 5 Ways of learning Topic 6 Putting the pieces together Topic 7 Making plans Topic 8 Taking action Topic 9 The end of the beginning</p>	<p>List will include, What each topic covers, methods, materials, handouts etc</p> <p>(to be developed before the pilots)</p>

### 3. Feedback and evaluation

The group felt that other things may need to be included by the DfES ie Equal Opportunities monitoring, economically active and social inclusion.

#### Facilitator Feedback

- Explanation of the client group
- Numbers booked on the programme / numbers attended
- Numbers completed / reasons for drop out

#### Other questions

- How did you feel about the training / introduction you received?
- What preparation did you do before the programme?
- What resources did you use throughout the programme?
- Please tell us about videos, local literature, guest speakers
- How did you deliver the programme?  
(periods of time for delivery, sessions, unit by unit, preparation)

Produce an analysis grid for each Unit/ Session

During the programme, what comments did your clients make that you feel were relevant?

#### Client Feedback

- What do you hope to get from the programme? (this would be completed by the client at the beginning of the programme, then at the end they are asked whether this had been achieved)
- Each Unit they are asked the questions  
What did they like most?  
What did they dislike?
- Did you get what you wanted from the programme?
- What further help do you need?
- Was your facilitator (rating scale 1-4, with 1 being the lowest rating)

Supportive		Approachable	
Knowledgeable		Flexible	
Clear		Good listener	
Enthusiastic		Understanding	

- Can we contact you further about this programme?

\*\* We have to remember that this is a pilot, and we are looking to make the programme better. We need to look in detail at sessions and whether they are good or not so good. A lot will depend on the facilitator and the feedback they receive from their candidates.