
REAL TIMES, REAL LIFE PILOT

REPORT OF THE WRITERS WORKING GROUP 17 AND 18 MARCH 2003, NOVOTEL SHEFFIELD

Present

Gill Appleyard	North Lincolnshire IAG Partnership
Bill Barry	The Real Game Inc (RGI)
Kathy Blackmore	Mid Beds Job Search
Ian Carlier	Business Enterprise Support
Sandi Fisher	Stockport College
Sandra Furby	Future Prospects
Helen Hackett	National Life Works Centre (NLWC)
Maria Hamblin	TEMPO Tidworth Trust
Vicky Hammond	The Real Game Inc (RGI)
Dr Anthony O'Sullivan	Business Link Staffordshire
Barbara Wakefield	Guidance Services
Jenny Wallis	Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
Jason Mallery	Competence at Work Ltd (CAW)
David Vickers	Competence at Work Ltd (CAW)

Apologies

Lisa Bindley ETW

INTRODUCTION

1. Members were welcomed to the event by David Vickers of Competence at Work Ltd (CAW) and Jenny Wallis of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), who went on to explain the aims and objectives of the event. Members of the Writers' Working Group (WWG), facilitators and piloting organisations were also thanked for all of their work throughout the Real Times, Real Life (RTRL) pilot and the positive evaluation feedback received. Jenny Wallis said that, as the WWG had been brought together for this workshop, it could be assumed that the pilot had been deemed a success and that the Department would be supporting the further development work necessary to produce a final version for the UK market.

2. Jenny explained that the remit of the WWG was not to make RTRL suitable for a specific group or groups but for the majority. She noted that, whilst training would be provided for facilitators, there existed a need to make the package itself suitable for all levels of skills and experience.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

3. David Vickers presented the key findings from the evaluation received to date. Members noted that the pilot had involved a lower than expected number of groups but that there had been enough feedback to provide a robust evaluation of RTRL. The amount and quality of evaluation data received indicated a highly positive response to RTRL from both facilitators and participants alike. Data suggested that around 86% of respondents felt that RTRL was "very good" and "very useful" when rating the programme as a whole as well as at module and topic levels.

4. Members were advised that the evaluation suggested a number of key changes needed to be made to the RTRL programme if it was to meet the needs of the UK market. Areas to be addressed were: too much paperwork; the job profiles/characters; the content and appearance of the 'Time Chart'; the language and its clarity; budgeting; use of videos; tax/pay slips and the application form. Broader themes for change related to the introduction section of the RTRL programme, information on module/topic delivery and suitability for certain groups.

5. David explained how evaluation data had been shared with Real Game Inc (RGI) throughout the piloting period thus enabling RGI to bring some suggested changes to the format and content to this meeting.

6. Bill Barry and Vicky Hammond of RGI then presented its review of the evaluation of the feedback received drawing upon the key themes for change and broader themes identified by CAW. The need to clarify the purpose, value and needs served by RTRL were explained by Bill Barry who summarised his findings as: “a new programme providing confidence to seek out and participate in other programmes available whether for specific skills or job training”.

7. Bill hoped that the expected value of RTRL to participants could be summarised as: increased self confidence; decreased intermediation of training and/or group work, overcoming of a sense of personal blame for their situation; increased awareness of self and skills possessed.

WWG PROCESS

8. Helen Hackett of the NLWC outlined a proposed work schedule for the WWG which suggested that members consider the rewrite on a module by module basis and then in greater depth at the module and topic level and then finally clarify any changes on a page by page basis. This format was agreed upon and adopted over the two days of the WWG.

CHANGES TO THE RTRL PROGRAMME

9. During the workshop, the Writers Group made a large number of changes to the programme’s content and style. In particular, the Facilitators Guide became more user friendly, with less handouts and activities. Many of the activities have become group discussion points or background information; with a view to further discussion or research by the participants.

10. The suggested changes are summarised below.

Provide more information and guidance for facilitators:

- at the **start of the programme** to explain how RTRL works (introducing the modular concept of the programme and explaining how it could be changed to reflect the ‘pick and mix’ nature of RTRL); the Goal, Aims and Objectives of the programme; the importance of the role of the facilitator in delivering the programme; the Life / Work Principles that underpin the programme; accountability; and evaluation.
- At the **beginning of each module** to signpost the learning objectives; programme activities; preparation for delivery of the programme; and to provide hints to aid delivery.
- At the **beginning of each topic** to signpost the learning objectives; programme activities; preparation for delivery of the programme; and to provide hints to aid delivery.

Flowcharts – to be provided at the start of the RTRL programme and in each Module to emphasise the modular nature of RTRL, again reinforcing the ‘pick and mix’ nature of RTRL.

Hints and Tips - Highlighting the suitability of modules and topics for specific sectors e.g. those with literacy and numeracy issues and ESOL amongst others. There will also be enhanced hints and tips for delivery.

Optional Topics – This is to reinforce the modular nature of RTRL.

Timeline Chart – This will be revised so that only major events such as end of World War Two and those relating to the characters throughout their journey will be displayed. The graphics used will be adjusted accordingly and fewer colours will be used to address the criticism from many that the chart is “too busy”.

Job Profiles – These have been increased from 16 job profiles to 28: only the Teacher, Plumber and Lorry Driver have survived from the original 16. The job profiles themselves will be changed in layout and content and the Payslips have been removed.

NEXT STEPS

Through April, RGI will continue to work with CAW and members of the WWG to produce the final version of the RTRL programme.

Action	Deadline
RGI to provide list of changes to CAW	28/03/03
CAW information gathering and transferring to RGI	31/03/03 to 10 /03/03
1 st Draft Revision to CAW	15/04/03
CAW to meet with Jean McGuigan of Tempo Tidworth Trust to read and amend the first draft revision	16 and 17/04/03
Final amendments sent to RGI	22/04/03
Beta Version from RGI to CAW	28/04/03
Minor amendments to the Beta Version from Tempo Tidworth Trust and CAW sent to RGI	30/04/03
RTRL Product sign off by RGI and DfES	2/05/03

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