N A S A G A
North American Simulation and Gaming Association

SIMAGES

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The NASAGA Organization would like to thank Gail Heidenhain and Randy Hollandsworth for their time and effort in creating this issue of SIMAGES.

Inside this Issue:

- A message from the Chairman - Kevin Eikenberry
- Cool Stuff
- Treasurer's Report
- Internal Communications - Pierre Corbeil
- Building Teams with a Good Yarn - Todd Weatherly
- Just Off the Top of Your Head - Jeff Disend
- FLEXGAMES - Joanne Mowat
- Nonviolent communications - Gary Baran

Welcome to NASAGA

The sun is shining here in Indianapolis and the calendar says it will soon be spring! Spring is a time for growth, and as your Chairman, that's exactly what I've been observing, let me tell you what I'm seeing:

- Two areas hosting regional NASAGA meetings - your friends in Atlanta and the San Francisco Bay Area are getting together to play and learn!
- At least one more area is exploring how they could put together a meeting.
- Membership numbers are growing! Since the membership coordination is taking place in our offices, I see it! Our membership numbers are still small by the standards of other organizations, but how many of them can say they have a membership about 50% above last year this time?
- A re-built web site with more features to be added over time.
- Lots of excitement surrounding our next Conference - San Francisco this November (mark your calendar now!).

Spring is my favorite season. I love to see things grow! NASAGA is definitely growing. Please let me (or any Board member) know if there are other things we can do to help it grow in ways that will help you reach your personal and professional goals.

Kevin Eikenberry
1999 NASAGA Board Chair
kevin@discian.com
888-432-GAME

Cool Stuff

Last Word

At a recent workshop on how managers can become leaders, a puzzle was prepared consisting of words related to a common topic. An extra letter was added to each word and the letters were scrambled (including the extra letter). A puzzle based on the same design can be seen in the figure below.

Your task is to rearrange the letters in each line to form a word. Make sure that all the words are associated with a common topic.

There will be one extra letter left over from each word. Take these 5 extra letters and rearrange them to form another word. This last word will identify the common topic associated with the words in the puzzle.

Puzzle	Word	Extra Letter
AVERTECITANI	?	?
GAAIENGGN	?	?
NLGNAIERN	?	?
ANFU	?	?
RTGVEIACE	?	?
PTNTYESIONSA	?	?

Need a hint? All the words in the puzzle relate to key purposes for using games and simulations. Need more hints?

Cool Stuff - Hints

Puzzle	Word	Extra Letter
AVERTECITANI	I	?
GAAIENGGN	E	?
NLGNAIERN	L	?
ANFU	F	?
RTGVEIACE	C	?
PTNTYESIONSA	S	?

Cool Stuff - Solutions

Puzzle	Word	Extra Letter
AVERTECITANI	Interactive	A
GAAIENGGN	Engaging	A
NLGNAIERN	Learning	N
ANFU	Fun	A
RTGVEIACE	Creative	G
PTNTYESIONSA	Spontaneity	S

Last Word? **NASAGA**

This revised excerpt is from the Thiagi Gameletter
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Treasurer's Report

NASAGA's financial situation is healthier than ever before. This situation is due first to the success of last year's Conference as everyone knows. Over all the Conference (auction and conference benefits) turned in just over $5,300.

The Assets are, as of March 31, 1999, a total of $10,801.70. A large part of it has been invested in a 90-day Bank Deposit Certificate to accumulate some interest.

Revenues exceeded the expenses for the first semester by $9,600.00. This figure takes into consideration the fund transferred by Rajib to the new Treasurer.

The present financial situation will enable NASAGA to increase its services to members through the Web Site and the publication of SIMAGES on a regular basis.

Charles Dupont, The Treasurer

A Game on Internal Communications inspired by Nature...
Pierre Corbeil Ph.D.

Introduction:

Any serious organization, academic, commercial, or other, manages carefully its communications with its customers. The more thoughtful organization will worry about the client-supplier relationship within as well as without. But this laudable attention to a fundamental aspect of any activity can lead the organization, and the individuals within it, into the technological trap. The managers will put their trust in the most modern technology, purchase the best and brightest computers, network every department, and, of course, put every employee through long training sessions on the use and abuse of every magical scheme. It might be wise to step back and look at nature to discover that the essentials of communication depend rather on codes and behaviors. What used to be called good manners were the human solution to this constant. Inspired by the society of the little bee - who used to be a symbol of industry - In the Hive offers to those interested on really thinking about internal communication a ludic tool to review together the basics of working together.

Objectives:

- To analyze the nature of interpersonal relationships necessary to the operation of contractual services.
- To pressure participants into considering the basic elements of communication.
- To liberate thinking from the bondage of technology.
- To develop the individual sense of responsibility in the execution of a collective task.

Intended users:

Managers and operators of all service tasks, in any industry.

Number of participants:

A minimum of seven is required to properly use the game. There could be up to thirty participants in one group. Several groups can play simultaneously, since the game requires no physical material.

Playing time:

About three hours, more or less debriefing.

Material required:

Enough free space for the participants to play and move and writing materials.

Rules and description:

A group of seven participants are placed in a line. The central person is the Queen, or decider. There are thus three players, the Queen, and three more players, thus: (P=player)Pa1 Pa2 Pa3 Queen Pb1 Pb2 Pb3. When there are more players, they should be disposed in a star formation, composed of several lines, so that the Queen is at the center of each line, thus:\In the Hive has one fundamental rule: there shall be no communication with words, written or spoken, during a round, and all communication shall be by gesture, mimic, or mime.The game is played in a series of rounds, and inter-rounds.

Round 1:

The first player in the line, or in each line - Pa1 - is given a verbal description of a problem to be resolved. For example, participants in an insurance company might ask if M. Dupont, who paid his contract late, must suffer a delay in receiving a claim. The question and problem, is to be communicated to the Queen, according to the communication rule.When the Queen has made a decision, this decision must be sent on to the other end of the line - Pb3 - by the same means of communication. The last player in the line will note, mentally or in writing, the result obtained. This result will be shared with the whole group.If there are many participants, placed in a star formation, each line can be given a different problem to resolve. Inter-round 2: Each line considers the result obtained, and decides if it was satisfactory. They are then given time to work out a communication code for their line.

Round 2:

The exercise in Round 1 is repeated, with a different question or problem. More than one question or problem can be dealt with, to practice using the code.Inter-round 2: If there is only one line, the participants have the opportunity to review their code. If their are several lines in a star formation, all the lines, as one group, can work out a common code for communication.
Round 3:

If there is only one line, the participants can attempt to solve one or two last problems. If a whole group is working, they can test their common code with one or two problems.With a large group, it may be desired to have one more inter-round to modify the code and one more round to test it.

Debriefing:

With a group exercise, it is always useful to end with a full group discussion so that personal experiences and learning experiences can be shared. It is true that an experience is by definition unique to each individual, and that the sense of epiphany is mental. But a sharing of personal accounts of the activity, of errors committed, and of useful inventions, is likely to encourage learning.

Here are a few questions to help begin the process of collective learning.

- What did you understand the nature of the task to be? Administrative? Scientific? Semantic? Psychological? Or what?
- How did you go about identifying the elements of the task, and what did you find?
- Do you feel you succeeded in working out an effective procedure?
- Describe the obstacles and the strategies, including the unsuccessful ones, that you tried.
- What did you find the most difficult?
- Defining the content? Inventing signs and codes? Individual attitudes? Transmitting the solution? Making the decision? Or what?
- How did you go about inventing a common code?
- Did you work with a leader, or did you act as a group of equal partners?
- Identify possible applications of the lessons learned in this game for your particular organization.

Pierre Corbeil Ph.D.
690 104e avenue
Drummondville J2B 4P9 Québec
819-477-3983
pcorbeil@cdrummond.qc.ca

Building Teams with a Good Yarn
From the Atlanta NASAGA regional meeting on March 11,1999
Activity led by Todd Weatherly

For those of you who wanted the description of the "Web of Connections" or "Web of Life" activity that I led and/or heard me talk about, here it is. Buy some yarn, a good amount. Remember you can use this at the beginning of the day or program, to debrief an activity, at the end of the day, for behavior contracting to revisit throughout the day, or whatever.

Start the activity by talking either about everyone having the chance to make connections with others throughout the program and that every time they do that they give something to those they connect with. Pass off the yarn to a person (preferably across the circle not right next to you)and using that persons' name give him or her a gift. (Mike today I give you my Honesty because I think that that is important for this group - or whatever). Have each person upon receiving the yarn ball to pass it around his or her waist before passing it to the next person. This does not have to be tight and you don't have to tie any knots in the yarn - just go around the waist.

After everyone has been passed the yarn and put it around their waists, then speed it up a bit and make mention that connections don't become strong by making them just once. Strong connections are made frequently and maintained consistently. SO, everyone starts to pass the yarn back and forth (they don't need to do the names or gifts unless you want them to for reinforcement or learning names). I would have everyone get passed the yarn at least three times. You want to have a nice mesh of yarn for someone to lie on in the center.

After the web is complete, have everyone tug on the yarn and bring their attention to how connected everyone is within the web. Explain how it is our connections with others that gives us support.

Ask everyone to step out of the yarn belt that they have around their waist and set it on the ground without letting go of it. Have them pull the web taught.

Ask for a volunteer.

Ask the volunteer if s/he would be comfortable with lying in the middle of the web. (make sure the participant is positioned in the dense portion of the yarn mass - usually in the middle).

Have him or her lie down and on a count of 3, have everyone left in the circle lift their portion of the web to lift the person in the center off the floor about 6 to 8 inches. Let the person down slowly.

Here is your metaphor for how connections with others support members of the group. It is yours to take from there.

(P.S. you can also have everyone cut a piece of yarn to take with them throughout the program to reflect on being connected when the group is having problems or when they are having success)

Have Fun!

Todd Weatherly

Just off the Top of Your Head
From the Atlanta NASAGA regional meeting on March 11,1999
Jeff Disend

WHAT IT IS: A review game for content-based programs.

OBJECTIVE: This game can be used after a group has learned product knowledge, a process, a procedure, job tasks, or other job-related knowledge or skills. The game enables participants to demonstrate their understanding, retention, and ability to apply what they've learned.

INITIAL SET UP: Explain the importance of working smarter, not harder; and the importance of "using your head" in business today. Give each team a Styrofoam head and set of colored markers. Give them 10 minutes to come up with a team name and a name for their "mascot," and to give their mascot some personality.

GAME SET UP: At various times during your program, after hearing presentations on key topics, conduct a top-of-the-head review. When participants came back from a break (or first thing the next morning), attach questions to the heads with push pins. With one client, here's how we set it up:

> "As [sales reps, CSRs, managers, or whatever], you're often asked questions or must respond quickly. Off the top of your head. You usually don't have time to look back at notes from training class or call an associate to ask how to respond. So we're going to practice that now.
>
> Notice that we've attached some questions to the heads for each work group. In each group, when it's your turn, pick a question and hand it to your facilitator. They'll read the question aloud and then you respond off the top of your head."

VARIATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS:

- You can have only one head so everyone has to stand up and respond in the front of the room.
- You can have small groups, as we did, all with the same questions. Then participants

respond only in their groups.

- You can have facilitators with each group who have the desired "answers."
- After someone answers, others in each group can offer the correct — or other acceptable — responses.
- You can have team competition by assigning points for correct answers. Teams could get 0-10 points for each question. (We found it's good to rotate facilitators each time you play the game program to balance out tougher and more lenient scoring by facilitators.)
- You can use dice to randomly determine who answers next or just go around a table. Since the questions they draw from the head are random and unseen, participants can't mentally prepare while someone else is responding.
- You can use closed-ended, factual questions, open-ended questions, mini-scenarios, or more elaborate cases in which participants must do something (like diagram a process or procedure, or correctly key in data).
- You can use this game to help participants respond to a variety of situations, such as customer objections, knowledge of company policy, handling habitually tardy or under-performing employees, and so on.

For example: For handling customer objections, a question might read, "Suppose a customer says [a commonly heard objection]. How would you respond?"

For CSRs, a question may say, "Suppose an upset customer calls. She says [fill in whatever angry customers typically say in your organization]. How would you respond?"

- For handling tardy employees, a question might say, "John has been late three times in the past month. Today he came in 25 minutes late. Suppose that I'm John. What would you say to me?"

The key is that you must have previously given participants the information, skills, procedure, or desired response so they can practice using it in this game.

The idea for this game came from an activity originally.

For more information, contact Jeff Disend at:

The Communication Connections
2137 Mt. Vernon Road
Atlanta, GA 30338
770-395-7483
jdisend@tcc-wsa.com

How FLEXGAMES became a Contructivist Designer's Best Friends
Joanne Mowat

How often have you been asked to develop learning interventions when the redesigned processes are not completed, the equipment is not available before the training session, or the new computer application is changing right up to the time when the training takes place? Developing training when the content is not stable until days or minutes before the session, or is not stable until well after the session is over, is a fact of life. The good news is constructivist designs and the use of performance support tools have made this increasingly feasible. What has remained a challenge is to find a way to test for understanding and performance during the learning intervention. How does one develop an evaluation tool when

one does not know what one is evaluating?

One approach that has been proven to work is the use of FLEXGAMES. So, what is a FLEXGAME? How kind of you to ask! A FLEXGAME, as described by Harold Stolovitch and Sylvie Vanasse in their February 1998 article in Performance Improvement, contains all the attributes of a game:

- an artificial structure
- a conflict
- a set of rules governing player behavior
- a closure or win mechanism

FLEXGAMES have the added attribute that the content can be quickly and easily changed without affecting the game itself. This means that the content can be loaded at the very last minute by the instructional designer, the facilitator, or even by the learner.
How are FLEXGAMES different from FLEXSIMS and FRAME GAMES? Another excellent question! You must be reading my mind!

- In FLEXGAMES everything is stable except the content.
- In FLEXSIMS everything including the content is stable, except the debriefing strategy.
- In FRAME GAMES only the structure is stable.

FLEXGAMES can be fun, fast moving activities which let you evaluate learning and identify problem areas by having the learners answer knowledge and skill-based questions and /or performing job-related tasks. The game provides a structure which is readily adaptable to a variety of content in that you can use it in technical, hands-on training, information technology related training, and process or product related sessions equally well. Content can vary from employment equity, through accounting, and all the way to welding rail quickly and effectively. The game should also be easy to use and the rules quickly understood.

So what are some examples of FLEXGAMES in use? Once more, an excellent question!

- in a course which taught performers to use the performance support system for a new call center application the game required learners go to the new application and find a piece of information or perform a task thereby demonstrating that they could use the performance support tool to guide them through the functionality of the application.
- in a technical course the game had some the performers locate, remove, and return to the game with a component of the equipment while others had to answer questions related to proper safety and repair procedures.
- in yet another course the game required that the performers quickly sketch the steps in a new process that had just been defined, in class, on the previous day.

So the last question I am sure you are all asking yourselves is "Where can I use FLEXGAMES?" You can use FLEXGAMES to:

- review key course material at the end of a course
- as a refresher exercise at the beginning of a component of a training program
- as a brainstorming tool
- to evaluate pre-requisite knowledge before a course or program

Just remember you can use the same FLEXGAME over and over since the content changes with each course. That makes them easy to use, a great value, and the constructivist designer's

best friend!

Joanne Mowat
The Herridge Group, Inc.
herridge@herridge.ca

Nonviolent Communication
Gary Baran

NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION (NVC) is a powerful process for inspiring compassionate connection and action. NVC can help prevent and resolve conflicts and facilitate communication that helps everyone to get their needs met.

NVC consists of two parts—FULLY AND HONESTLY EXPRESSING OURSELVES, but without blame or criticism, and EMPATHETICALLY RECEIVING THE COMMUNICATION OF OTHERS, without hearing blame or criticism, even when they express themselves in hostile ways. Both when expressing ourselves and when listening with empathy to others, NVC helps us to focus attention on a four step process for communicating (1) observations free of evaluations, (2) feelings, (3) needs and values (which give rise to feelings) and (4) requests, expressed clearly in positive action language.

So instead of thinking and speaking (as people commonly do) in terms of what someone is (some dehumanizing label), blaming the person in some way, or making demands, by using NVC we might indicate what we observed the person do, how we felt in relation to that, what need of ours was not met (which gave rise to our feelings), and our request (what we would like the person to do in relation to the situation). If the other person does not seem eager to comply, we empathize, focusing our attention on his or her feelings and needs. The intent is to engage in a respectful dialogue until we can find a way to get all of our needs met.

NVC was developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg, who has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. for the past 35 years, Dr. Rosenberg and his associates have provided NVC training and conflict resolution throughout the world in schools, hospitals, prisons, businesses, communities in crisis, and families. Marshall is the author of Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Compassion (Puddle Dancer Press, 1999). Rosenberg sometimes calls NVC Compassionate Communication or the language of Giraffe. He calls it "Giraffe" because giraffes have the largest heart of any land animal. So Giraffe is the language of the heart, that is, Giraffe speakers honestly reveal their feelings and needs (but without blaming others for our feelings), which helps to inspire a compassionate response from others, and they aim to connect empathetically with the feelings and needs of others. This approach assumes that it is natural for people to want to meet the needs of others, provided they can do so freely, and, indeed, that our survival as a species depends upon this. This approach also postulates that by engaging in a process of Giraffe communication, everyone's needs can be met.

In "Giraffe" we are concerned to exchange information about how we are and what would make life more wonderful for us, and to find out how other people are and what would make life more wonderful for them. Speaking Giraffe requires staying connected to the life process within oneself and others, and being willing to dream beautiful dreams.

For more information about NVC, please contact:

Center for Nonviolent Communication
PO Box 2662
Sherman, TX 75091
Phone: 903-893-3886
Email: **cnvc@compuserve.com**
Web site: **http://www.cnvc.org**