

## RESOURCE

### Disability Confident

**Publisher** Employers' Forum on Disability and Skill Boosters (020 7357 6444)

**Price** Annual fee based on number of users and licence period (Available on CD-Rom and intranet delivery, in four formats, for accessibility)

This e-learning toolkit from the Employers' Forum on Disability and Skill Boosters is a real gem. It makes the best use of a mix of great visuals, video clips and the spoken word, and is organised into easy to follow segments. I really enjoyed using the package, and, although marketed to organisations that lack "disability confidence", I think everyone could learn something from it.

The resource covers a range of disabilities, and describes both employment and service delivery in great detail. It is organised into three modules: the first two are aimed at a general audience, while the third module will be of interest to service managers and HR professionals. The section on "reasonable adjustments" is particularly helpful, I thought.

The learning is split over a number of different segments, and needs to be digested in bite-size



THE TOOLKIT DRAWS ON REAL SCENARIOS

chunks, since all three modules take two and a half hours to read through and are very detailed. At the start of each module is a list of learning objectives, and at the end of each segment is a very useful "confidence indicator" which is a brief quiz designed to test learning. There are also checklists, which summarise all the points made.

The toolkit uses humour in one or two places with good effect, but doesn't patronise or seek to humiliate those of us who cannot yet claim to be disability confident. Instead, the toolkit draws on real life situations, taking the viewer through a range of disabilities and scenarios, including disfigurement, which is rarely covered in the disability literature. And it debunks the myths that surround disabled people, clearing up the confusion between mental health difficulties and learning disabilities.

The section on disability etiquette is particularly good, and all the way through there are helpful examples, and practical advice. I liked the way professionals in disability equality spoke directly to businesses and the people running those businesses. And there are opportunities to access additional resources, for example extra video clips which examine a topic in even more detail.

I was pleased to be asked to review this toolkit, not least because my own organisation is a member of the Employer's Forum on Disability. I have no doubt that the toolkit will attract an even wider membership, and in my view, deservedly so, as it's a really good learning tool, well-pitched and well-presented.

Undoubtedly, it is suitable for a range of organisations in both the private and public sectors. Best of all, it is designed to be accessible to disabled users themselves.

**Tracy Walters**  
Head of Diversity  
Brent Council

## BOOK

### The On-Time, On-Target Manager

**Author** Ken Blanchard and Steve Gottry

**Publisher** Harper Collins (020 8741 7070)

**Price** £12.99

**ISBN** 0 00 717923 5



This is another sequel to *The One Minute Manager*. It follows the familiar formula – a story about a manager, Bob, who is always late and disorganised, and a "coach", the CEO (Chief Effectiveness Officer). The story opens with poor Bob being put on probation for his tardy ways and finishes with him successfully applying to become the next CEO. In between, he has been put through "The Process" which involves daily coaching sessions and some thought-provoking homework.

The main theme of the book is that procrastination is a damaging behaviour that springs from a failure to understand the Three Ps: Priority, Propriety and Commitment (you'll have to read the book to find out why the third word starts with C rather than P!). Essentially, on-time, on-target managers are committed to the journey as well as the end result, to the vision, to the truth and to serving the best interests of others. The epilogue sums up the philosophy with these words:

- They are dreamers.
- Yet they are realists.
- They are hopeful.

- Yet they recognise the present situation.
- They are listeners.
- But they speak up when necessary.
- They are caring.
- But not careless.
- They have replaced selfishness with selflessness.
- They have servant hearts.

The book is based on the assumption that beliefs drive behaviour, that we create our own circumstances, and that the best people "take time to explore their thoughts, dreams and goals". It is a book, therefore, that is designed to tug at the heart-strings rather than to provide specific techniques for overcoming any tendencies to procrastinate.

The book is unashamedly American (but then it was written by two Americans!) and exudes American values. Brace yourself, therefore, for the mission

### This book is designed to tug on the heartstrings

statement of The Phoenix, Arizona, Fire Department, quarterbacks in American football, the brave actions of the passengers on United Airlines flight 93 who caused the plane to crash before the terrorists could slam it into its intended target. The book ends with three pages of acknowledgements to no less than 49 people and, finally, to God ("We both believe that it's really God who's the author of the Three P Strategy – to Him we are eternally grateful.")

If you can stomach that, this book is for you. If you can't, stick to behaviours rather than beliefs.

**Peter Honey**  
Occupational Psychologist

## RESOURCE

### Creating Powerful Presentations

**Publisher** Balance Learning (01453 769601)  
**Price** £1,200–£3,300, based on 12 users.  
 (Online courses can be purchased separately under annual licence.)

Presentations are an inevitable part of organisational life – but all too often they lack interest and appeal for their target audience. If you have responsibility for improving them in your organisation, what learning needs are you aware of? What assumptions are you making about how to deliver the relevant training?

If you are looking for a ready-made training solution, I think this new resource is well worth considering. It is flexible in its delivery, gives equal weight both to the thinking that goes into preparing a presentation and to the skills required to deliver it, and suggests ways of continuing the learning once the formal part of the training process has been completed.

Balance Learning resource packs are based on the premise – fundamental to any successful learning experience – that different sorts of learning outcomes require different sorts of learning experience.

*Creating Powerful Presentations* follows the same formula as its earlier packages. The cognitive elements of the subject are delivered on-line, the learner's path being varied according to their performance on a pre-test. The content covers topics related to giving power to a presentation: for

example, devising a clear structure, shaping the presentation according to the needs of the audience, using appropriate visuals, and thinking through the logistics in advance.

A post-test establishes whether the learner has met the knowledge criteria for progression to the workshop. The materials offer the trainer a detailed one-day programme in which participants practice clarifying their objectives, analysing the audience and writing their content, with particular emphasis on bringing their message to life with compelling openings and closes. A subsequent online assessment provides feedback on the extent of the learning.

The final element of the resource is the "Action Dimension". This is a structured way of enabling the transfer of learning to the workplace. At regular intervals after the workshop, participants receive

practical activities via email. At this stage, the trainer takes on the role of coach and mentor. A further module, based on the same design principles, is also available, entitled *Delivering Powerful Presentations*.

I've not seen a more soundly based model of delivery in any other ready-made training solution. I commend it for its scope, flexibility and recognition of the way learning happens over time and in the context of different experiences.

But I would put just one small spanner in the work, and ask whether your presentations are really necessary? I've been dipping into a book by Patricia Shaw called *Changing Conversations in Organisations*. In it, she describes the way in which she, as a consultant, no longer pitches for business by way of a formal presentation. Nor does she help her clients to design set-piece events as the medium for getting people signed up to implement change. Instead, she sets in motion and facilitates a more fluid, emergent process in which interested parties talk to one another and jointly evolve strategies that will work for them.

It's a rich process of sense-making and represents a very different paradigm from the one in which an individual uses the medium of a presentation to persuade, influence and inform a group, with a pre-determined end in mind.

**Jo McHale**  
 Hamelin Occupational Psychology

● More information on the books and resources on these pages will be available at the CIPD's HRD 2004 Exhibition at London, Olympia (20-22 April). They are among a number of new launches that will be featured at the event. Visit [www.cipd.co.uk/hrdexhibition](http://www.cipd.co.uk/hrdexhibition) for details.

## NEWLY PUBLISHED

### Developing Effective Training Skills

**Author** Tony Pont  
**Publisher** CIPD Publishing (0870 800 3366)  
**Price** £23.99  
**ISBN** 1 84398 027 4

In this updated edition, Tony Pont reflects changes in training and development, such as the growth in e-learning. While it is primarily aimed at those new to training, it also offers ideas to more experienced trainers who are considering alternative options.

The book contains practical guidance on all aspects of designing and delivering group training, such as understanding how people learn and groups interact to evaluating and improving training delivery.

### Tales for Change

**Author** Margaret Parkin  
**Publisher** Kogan Page (01903 828800)  
**Price** £18.99  
**ISBN** 0 7494 4106 2

This is the latest addition to Parkin's *Tales for* series which uses storytelling to help trainers or managers to reinforce key messages, stimulate thinking and encourage discussion.

Some 50 tales are featured in the book, grouped within a number of themes including "dealing with change", "being creative", "dealing with stress" and "emotional intelligence".

While the concept of telling stories to illustrate change – such as the tale of the ugly duckling and

Cinderella – Parkin's storytelling shows that is not just the province of children, and that this approach can be used to provide useful metaphors for the workplace.

### Evaluating Training

**Author** Peter Bramley  
**Publisher** CIPD Publishing (0870 800 3366)  
**Price** £24.99  
**ISBN** 1 84398 030 4

In this book Bramley shows how to build evaluation into every stage of the training process. This second edition includes a new chapter showing how to present your evaluation findings and raise awareness of the value your training is delivering to the organisation.