

New Learning Tools

by Sacha Cohen

THE TWILIGHT PHONE

According to John Cleese, co-founder of Video Arts, humor in training opens people's minds and facilitates learning. The company's newest video, *Call To Order: Converting Telephone Inquiries Into Sales*, uses comedy to teach polite, professional telephone manners and effective selling techniques.

The narrator, a Rod Serling look-alike, introduces us to Dave, an inbound rep with a penchant for doing everything wrong. He is slow to answer the phone, never introduces himself, uses jargon, makes wisecracks, and hangs up before the customer is finished speaking. Dave receives a dose of his own medicine when he goes to purchase his dream car. He is propelled into a dream sequence, the "Twilight Phone," and



emerges a better rep.

Some of the points illustrated by the story are

- ▶ Avoid company jargon.
- ▶ Explain product benefits rather than listing features.
- ▶ If you don't have what the customer wants, suggest the nearest available alternative.
- ▶ Always check back and confirm.

Video Arts was co-founded in 1972 by Monty Python member John Cleese. New releases from the laugh-and-learn series include: *Talking to the Team*, *You'll Soon Get the Hang of It*, and *Negotiating — Tying the Knot*.

A long-term license purchase is \$625 for this video. To receive more product information, contact Video Arts, Chicago, Illinois or call 800/553-0091, ext. 1513.

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RESULTS ON-SITE



National Computer Systems introduces the SelfScore option for its Op-Scan 4 scanner. SelfScore

converts the OpScan 4 into a self-contained, portable processing unit that can be used without a computer or printer. Users can conduct pre-employment testing at recruiting locations, process test scores off-site, or collect and tabulate employee survey responses at multiple locations. Trainers can use the SelfScore application to provide class participants with immediate feedback on tests and quizzes. When developing test materials, course instructors can select from two answer sheets—each with write-in areas and a place to enter a performance assessment score.

The product

- ▶ scans documents on location
- ▶ scans about 30 documents per minute
- ▶ stores results from scanned documents for detailed reporting
- ▶ weighs only 17 pounds.

The SelfScore option with an Op-Scan 4 single-sided ink read scanner costs \$8,995 or \$9,995 with a dual-sided ink read scanner. For further information, contact NCS, Edina, Minnesota, at 800/347-7226.

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GO TEAM!



Advanced Team Handbook: Tools, Techniques, Tips for Experienced Teams addresses the developmental needs of established teams.

What happens after initial team training and implementation? According to consultant Larry Miller, many teams "hit a wall," then regress or stagnate in team activities. Key issues in promoting team growth include clarifying new team roles, aligning performance and business strategy, applying performance management, and increasing problem-solving skills. It's all here, plus worksheets, self-as-

essment tools, case studies, and hands-on exercises.

This 420-page, spiral-bound soft-back costs \$49.95. For more information, contact Miller Howard Consulting Group, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia.

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ENERGY AT WORK

A six-part video series entitled *Human Energy at Work* is available from Griggs Productions. The series focuses on the ways that organizations, teams, and individuals can excel through full use of human energy. Subjects range from cultural differences and conflict resolution to team building and sexuality in the workplace. Titles in the series are: *The Bottom Line*, *Conflict as Opportunity*, *Global Contrasts*, *Relating Across Differences*, *Teams in Motion*, and *Sexual Dynamics*. Each video is accompanied by an 80-page user's manual.

For free previews of this series, contact Griggs Productions, San Francisco, California, or call 800/210-4200.

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FREE BOOKLET

Here's a booklet to help managers decide what training can do for the organization.

Training Is an Investment: Make It Pay Off for You is a brief guide to the process of determining whether training is necessary, what interventions will work best for your situation, and how to improve training. Learn what elements the best training includes and how to ensure great training, according to the folks at Training Systems.

For a free copy of the 16-page, softbound booklet, call 800/496-3560. For more information, contact Training Systems, Inc. in Frankfort, Illinois.

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HUMAN RESOURCES ONLINE

Instead of rummaging through general interest on-line services or stacks of periodicals, human resource professionals can plug into their own on-line service devoted entirely to the latest industry news and trends.

Work-Life Net is a monthly subscription-based service that addresses the specific needs of human resource professionals. It includes reports on new work/life legislation, summaries from industry newsletters, abstracts from newspapers and magazines, access to independent consultants and government sources, benefits and policy trends, and forums where executives can discuss and develop programs for their companies.

Accessing this technology is as simple as installing a floppy disk and logging on. Once on-line you will find 15 libraries, e-mail, products and services, conferences, workshops, special events, and a Hot News! area.

Subscribers pay \$39.95 per month for unlimited use.

For further information, contact Work/Life Enterprises in Brookline, Massachusetts or call 617/738-6969.

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VIRTUAL TRAINING



A CD-ROM version of Nortel's three-day familiarization course for the Meridian 1 business communication system is now available. A three-dimensional virtual world reacts in real-time to the users' input and provides a high level of interactivity.

The program opens with a view of a reception area where students "sign-in" and select from one of three doors where they can learn about the system's hardware, software, or interface. Behind each door are instruction rooms where students learn to identify Nortel equipment, operate station features, and interact with a Meridian 1 PBX system.

The course takes about eight hours, and runs on a 486, Pentium, or laptop computer. For more information, contact Nortel, Richardson, Texas, at 800/4NORTEL.

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ERGONOMIC EVALUATION



Improving worker safety is a top priority for many companies. To simplify this process, Ergodyne now offers ergonomic evaluation and worksite analysis programs. The Progressive Analysis System is designed to educate and train management, supervisors, and employees on how to identify, understand, and control risk factors. The four-part series can be used separately or together and is available in office or industrial versions.

The programs are

- ▶ level one: Musculoskeletal Signal Risk Factor Survey
- ▶ level two: Workplace Ergonomics Profiles
- ▶ level three: Changing the Environment to Reduce Potential Risk Factors
- ▶ level four: Difficult Problems that Require Continuous, Long-term Improvement.

The level four program helps companies evaluate jobs; injured workers; and proposed engineering designs for

new equipment, workstations, and tools to help reduce the risk of future injuries and related costs. The first two levels are complimentary. Level three is \$229 for the office program; \$299 for the industrial version. Level four is \$199 for both office and industrial settings.

Each training program includes videotapes, participant handbooks, and an instructor's guide, complete with quizzes and handout materials. For more product information, contact Ergodyne, St. Paul, Minnesota, or call 800/225-8238.

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NO MORE JUGGLING



Coordinating audio, video, computer, and laser disc technology can be time-consuming and frustrating for presenters. Now, Consulting Associates, Inc., offers Cactis MultiPro, a self-contained, multimedia system that reportedly turns any boardroom conference room, classroom, or distance learning center into a state-of-the-art multimedia facility.

The podium-based system can produce presentations that incorporate text, audio, graphics, animation, photographs, and full-motion video. Hand-held, wireless interactive pads allow testing, voting, and audience feedback. Hundreds of these remotes can be used simultaneously to allow the teacher to monitor the entire class's understanding of the subject matter.

The portable system contains

- ▶ monitor, keyboard, desktop mouse, and computer tower (MAC or PC-based), CD-ROM, Pentium chipset, MPEG accelerator, and DAT tape backup
- ▶ built-in speakers
- ▶ video cassette recorder
- ▶ laser disc player
- ▶ laser printer and scanner
- ▶ microphone
- ▶ control panel and mixer
- ▶ audience response keypads.

For further information, contact Consulting Associates, Inc., Chesapeake, VA, or call 804/523-2559.

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How To Contact Training & Development Magazine

Unless otherwise noted, submit manuscripts and other materials to Ryann Ellis, editorial assistant, c/o *Training & Development*, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043. For package delivery, use 1640 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2746. Phone 703/683-8100; fax 703/683-9203; TDD 703/683-4323; e-mail ryann.ellis@astd.noli.com on the Internet.

Feature Articles We welcome manuscripts for possible publication in *Training & Development*. Contact Customer Service for authors' guidelines. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Mailbox We want to hear your opinions and observations about HRD and *Training & Development*. Send letters to Haidee Allerton; call the "Mailbox" phone line, 703/683-9590; or fax a letter to her at 703/683-9203.

News You Can Use Send press releases or short articles on news, trends, and best practices.

Training 101 Submit articles on training basics.

Tech Talk This quarterly column features new technologies and developments. Send ideas to Sacha Cohen, *T&D* associate editor.

Career Power This monthly column covers ideas for personal career effectiveness. Contact Richard Koonce at 703/536-8568.

FaxForum is a monthly survey of readers' opinions. Fax ideas for topics to 703/683-9203.

The Opposite Sector This quarterly column looks at training, OD, and performance in the government and nonprofits.

Research Capsules This quarterly column summarizes recent HRD research. Send material to Linda Morris, Learning and Professional Development, American Management Systems, 4000 Legato Road, 10th Floor, Fairfax, VA 22033; 703/267-8132.

Books Review copies of books welcome.

New Learning Tools Send press releases.

Working Life Send press releases on trends and tips on work/lifestyle issues.

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**TRAINING &
DEVELOPMENT**

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY



GameMill is a series of computer-based learning games for the personal computer operating environment. Games include Roulette, Evolution, and Time Out. Trainers can adapt the interactive game templates to meet individual learning needs.

Game models may be compressed and distributed to remote locations on a single diskette, used in a learning center environment, accessed over a network, used for independent study, or used in a classroom setting with up to eight teams.

Single, two-player, or multiple player modes are offered. Game models offer custom control settings for key topics, game board categories, question content, number of questions, feedback, mastery levels, number of teams, and time intervals for questions. Other features include:

- ▶ automatic score and performance reporting
- ▶ interchangeable content between game models
- ▶ multiple-user concurrent network access
- ▶ computer-based tutorial for quick game set-up.

For more information, contact Still-Water Media, Northport, New York, or call 516/261-4599.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE CD-ROM

Actions and Attitudes: The Customer Service Simulation CD-ROM from MicroMentor features three-dimensional graphics, animation, sound, text, and multiple, randomly-generated scenarios that help employees and supervisors enhance their customer service skills.

The learning objective of the program is to correct poor customer service practices of fictitious employees working at a bistro before the competition opens a new restaurant across the street. Trainees can move through numerous environments and interact directly with diverse characters. To finish the simulation successfully, the

user must select the dialogs that will most directly identify and help correct nine customer service issues that need to be solved.

Actions and Attitudes: The Customer Service Simulation runs on either MAC or PC-based computers. System requirements for MAC are 7.0.1 or higher, with a minimum of 8 megabytes of RAM and a minimum of 10 megabytes hard disk space, a 256 color monitor, and a double-speed CD-ROM drive. Requirements for PCs are 486 or higher, a minimum of 8 megabytes of RAM, and a minimum of 25 megabytes hard disk space, SVGA 256 color graphics adapter and monitor, a sound device that is supported by Windows 3.1 or higher, speakers or headphones, and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.

For more information, please contact MicroMentor in Cambridge, Massachusetts, or call 617/868-8500.

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SIX SIGMA QUALITY TRAINING CD-ROM

Motorola's internal quality training program is now available for sale in an interactive CD-ROM format. Windsor Digital Design, Inc., created the interactive CD-ROM presentation and is distributing the product nationwide.

The CD-ROM uses video, animation, narration, text, and graphics to present Motorola's fundamental quality concepts. Students learn at their own pace in a flexible, interactive environment.

Utilizing Six Steps to Six Sigma is available in Windows and MAC formats. For more information, contact Windsor Digital Design, Schaumburg, Illinois, or call 708/706-9200.

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"New Training Tools" is compiled and written by Sacha Cohen. Send items of interest to Ryann Ellis, Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.