

Increase Classroom Success through the Fun of Games

For over 10 years, the instructors at SkillsPlus International Inc, have been using games in their corporate training programs. Through competitive games used in small teams, the energy level of the class dramatically increases. That increased energy level keeps fatigued students engaged in a class they otherwise would have dropped out mentally, if not physically. Once the student is engaged through a memorable activity, the content of the game is retained.

First, the game needs to be content focused. Our experience in experimenting with different game strategies has discovered that for the adult learner, the game needs to be directly related to the subject of the class. Games that do not add to the learning of the class subject are actually resented; the student describes irrelevant activities as a time-waster. To make a game more relevant, SkillsPlus has designed games to fit many different topics relating to the Current Good Manufacturing Practice Regulations 21CFR211.

Second, the game needs to relate directly to the organization. Again, our experience has surfaced that both students and instructors are very frustrated with materials that need clarification. That is, the instructor should never have to reframe or correct the learning objectives of the game because the game infrastructure did not match exactly to the organization's philosophy or practice. To make the game more flexible to the needs of individual instructors and organizations, SkillsPlus has designed games with customizing or editing functions. The corporate team can then agree on the issues that need to be addressed in classes and tailor the game components to meet those learning needs.

For games to be fun and create the energy needed for learning, prizes are a valuable asset. Some organizations use inexpensive prizes like pens, hats and T-shirts. Others have awarded televisions and dinner tickets for two. Our experience has found that less expensive prizes are actually better. They are better, because students dislike losing and not getting the television or dinner tickets. However, if a team does not win the ink pen – big deal! Yet, amazing as it is, teams will be more than sufficiently competitive with the prospect of winning an ink pen.

The biggest obstacle for the instructor is game development time. Hundreds of hours of development time are needed to define requirements, flowchart, program, and field test. SkillsPlus has invested in the development time.

To learn more about our games visit: <http://www.skillsplusinc.com/products.htm>