

Past Perspectives

"I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I **do** and I understand"

What is on offer from Jim Wallman and a Past Perspectives game?

Playing games does not necessarily mean merely 'messaging about'. Most human play is accompanied by genuine emotional intensity¹.

All of our games are, first and foremost, opportunities for experiential learning and development. Players are drawn in and engaged by the depth and richness of the game structure and content.

In such a well-structured game players can get to practice one or more of these major areas of development:

- **Critical thinking.** We use critical thinking every day in some form or another. But we rarely get the chance to practice this sort of mental exercise. In everyday life there is no time to reflect on our decision-making patterns of how we actually think things through for ourselves. As children, one of the key elements of play and make-believe is to explore our cognitive processes and test our thinking in a safe environment. As adults we lose touch with the value of playfulness as an aid to



¹ Johan Huizinga, the Dutch historian and one of the founders of modern cultural history explores this theme, and the theme of play as the origin of so much of human culture in his seminal book *Homo Ludens*.

further developing our ability to make coherent decisions and critically review ourselves and the world around us.

- **Crisis responses.** For nearly everybody the only practice you get in managing a crisis is when the crisis is actually happening. We might mull over how we managed that crisis and use the experience in future but probably the worst time to find out how well you cope in a crisis is when the crisis is actually happening. Our games create the opportunity to explore your reactions, responses and skills in a simulated crisis and this gives vital opportunities for reflection together with that all-important element of *practice*.

- **Responsible communication.** Everybody communicates. However, the quality of our communications are very important if we hope to manage conflicts, improve relationships and become better at relating to those around us. Games with a high degree of inter-communication give the opportunity to understand communication styles, and reflect on practice, and have a safe arena to explore how different communications styles inter-relate – and how that can help you be a better communicator.



- **Negotiation.** We all negotiate all the time. But when do we get the chance to practice? Core skills like negotiation and mediation need to be practiced, and they can be practised safely in the context of playing a game. Playing at negotiation has all the immediacy of real negotiation but within a safe context. And there is the added benefit of being able to review the game play and reflect and evaluate your

negotiation patterns and style.

These can be placed in different contexts and the games are designed around the needs of the group – these are not 'one size fits all' games.

They particularly allow that all-important facilitated time for post game analysis, review and evaluation so that everyone can, if they wish, come away with some reflection on their practice or personal development.

These four areas of development; Critical Thinking, Crisis Response, Responsible Communication and Negotiation find their usefulness in a wide range of applications.

Our games connect those areas with specific personal or organisational goals and create games that assist with:

- personal development
- organisational development
- team forming / building
- training
- education and learning
- developing human resources
- Strategic reviews and planning

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... I felt that I was playing in a really superbly designed game – complex, multifaceted, but very smooth, everything worked and hung together – rather like reading a superb novel, watching a very clever film or drinking a great bottle of wine...

What you get

A Past Perspectives game is more than an 'activity in a box'. It is customised to meet the development of learning needs of the audience and moderated by an experienced facilitation team, skilled not only at the organisation and presentation of the game but in drawing out the various learning or developmental reflections that inevitably arise from the game -play.

And of course, games are fun!