

## *Tips, trends and links to keep you on top of your training*

This series of tipsheets is distilled from my e-newsletters, to give you timeless information of value to your environmental training program.

### **In this summary:**

- ✓ what makes for a good environmental guideline?
  - ✓ scary statistics
  - ✓ goldmine website
  - ✓ great links
- ✓ **What makes a good guideline? Three excellent publications**

Environmental training needs to be based on a clear benchmark of what accepted best practice looks like for the issues of concern. Last year I was lucky enough to have some input to a review of the Auckland Council's erosion and sediment control guideline, and it occurred to me (rather belatedly since I've already written several environmental guidelines) that it would be good to know what "best practice" is for writing a guideline.

Interestingly, the only documents I could find were medical (see the links at the end) – but I think their criteria for a good guideline work perfectly well for environmental guidelines.

Recently I saw a review of some forestry codes of practice (a guideline equivalent) conducted by Melissa Pendly as part of her Master's thesis (see link at end). Melissa carried out research to develop a series of criteria to assess six New Zealand environmental codes for the forestry sector. She found that overall, "they had well-defined objectives, good planning information and clear communication. The weaknesses included regulatory approach, comprehensiveness, foundation (particularly stakeholder involvement), monitoring information and review process."

These elements are in line with the criteria I'd found for a good medical guideline. Moreover, Melissa's preliminary finding is that prescriptive codes are better than outcome-based codes where companies are legally liable for adverse environmental effects – a result that aligns with my experience: that is, companies need to know exactly which environmental protection practices are acceptable to the regulator. Then they can train their staff how to design, build, maintain and decommission them.

### ✓ **Scary stats**

50% of organisations are moving to 'gamify' their training, according to [frontlinetraining.com](http://frontlinetraining.com). Why? Because it works!

My favourite gamer is Jane McGonigal, whose prosocial (beneficial) environmentally-focused massive multi-player online games have fostered many positive real-world applications in all spheres of human activity. Far removed from (but just as exciting as) the "shoot 'em up" genre, such games would have huge benefits for social learning, technological innovation and the development of new businesses around ecological restoration!



In the 1990s Jane said 'Reality is broken. Why aren't game designers trying to fix it?' In 2011, she wrote the book, calling it "Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World". Clearly, as environmental trainers, we have to lift our game!

Interestingly, as I was browsing through the Dō Sustainability website I saw one of their new books, by Dr Paula Owen, is "How Gamification can help your business engage in sustainability"!

#### ✓ Goldmine website

Jan Herrington's website, Authentic Learning, is a great resource for people wanting to make their training as relevant as possible to their trainees. Dr Herrington has identified nine key elements that can be used to design authentic blended learning environments. Blended learning is learning delivered by a mix of different electronic and face-to-face methods. Authentic learning provides:

1. authentic contexts that reflect the way the knowledge will be used in real life
2. authentic tasks and activities
3. access to expert performances and the modelling of processes
4. multiple roles and perspectives
5. collaborative construction of knowledge
6. reflection to enable abstractions to be formed
7. articulation to enable tacit knowledge to be made explicit
8. coaching and scaffolding by the teacher at critical times
9. authentic assessment of learning within the tasks.

This approach means training appeals to trainees' innate sense that as dedicated professionals, they also have something to offer in attending the training, fostering collaborative learning and a sense of industry collegiality. It accords with my own experience as a trainer of adult learners – we all learn from each other, trainers and trainees alike.

#### ✓ Great links

- I think these criteria for a good medical guideline work so well for environmental guidelines that I combined and adapted them for my book! Here are the two sources I found:
  - Airedale VTS. (2010). *What Makes a Good Clinical Guideline?* A powerpoint presentation dated January 2010, accessed May 2012 from <http://bit.ly/LAsndm>
  - Author unknown. (Date unknown) *What makes a good guideline?* A presentation on the website of Health Protection Scotland. If you search for [www.airedale-gp-training.co.uk/19-Jan-10-David-s-update-on-what-makes](http://www.airedale-gp-training.co.uk/19-Jan-10-David-s-update-on-what-makes) then you should find the file
- find out more about Melissa Pendley's assessment of forestry codes of practice at <http://hdl.handle.net/10092/7308>. I found Melissa's work written up in Broadsheet, the newsletter of the New Zealand Association of Resource Management, and you can find the article in Issue 20, April 2013 at <http://www.nzarm.org.nz/publications/newsletter/>
- find out more about Jane McGonigall, her book, TED talks and games at <http://janemcgonigal.com/>. There are other interesting leads at <http://rww.to/194mXG5>
- scan the excellent publication list and get on the mailing list for the Dō Sustainability newsletter at <http://www.dosustainability.com/>
- <http://authenticlearning.info/AuthenticLearning/Home.html>.

You can subscribe to my free e-newsletter from my website, [www.clarefeeney.com](http://www.clarefeeney.com). I send it out three or four times a year, with cutting-edge news on training and environmental trends and updates on my speaking engagements and upcoming workshops on the topic of my book.



Clare Feeney is a sustainability strategist who helps organisations of all types grow their sustainability capability. She can help you grow jobs, increase profits and improve the environment – and have fun along the way! You can find out more at [www.clarefeeney.com](http://www.clarefeeney.com) and contact her at [clare@clarefeeney.com](mailto:clare@clarefeeney.com).