

Dear Senior Fellows and Friends,

Two weeks ago, we had a discussion with Ralph Chatham about the design and use of virtual-world training games to augment the tactical and cultural training of young soldiers who are deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to the timeliness of the topic and the number of people who wanted to come, the gathering was moved to the National Academy of Public Administration. Anne Laurent, who has been reporting technological innovations that are ushering in permanent changes to the way government operates, contributed her considerable talent and business acumen by interviewing Ralph.

Ken Sosne (Department of Education) and Pam Piper (OMB, retired) provided the following notes to convey the flavor of the discussion:

"Training can require a large investment with a small increase in proficiency. Ralph was looking for way to leverage training resources by developing an electronic platform that can provide training with enormous cost savings and run scenarios over and over to increase learning. Ralph decided that 'I wanted to make sure no one rides blind into a culture again.'"

"Anne complemented Ralph's story telling with her experiences on virtual issues. The overall interplay between the two was interesting to watch. The audience was quite interactive and someone asked if there was a way one could build a game for executive leadership and meetings so that managers could have simulation similar to the soldiers."

"A lightweight and agile training approach compared to pilot training models/simulation, features an underlying gaming 'engine' with 'story' content that can be adopted to the immediate need."

So that you can think about the potential transferability of this approach, Ralph generously provided several attachments. The PDF is a report of the Defense Science Board, a Federal Advisory Committee, on "Training Superiority and Training Surprise." The other two documents are chapters that will appear in *Development of Professional Expertise*, edited by K. Anders Ericsson, 2009, Cambridge University Press.

Steve Ressler, co-founder of Young Government Leaders and founder of the new GovLoop social network, www.govloop.org (check it out), dropped in from Tampa to join us, as did the founders of Conversations About Leading, 13L, NAPA's Collaboration Project, and several other heavy-duty innovators for good government. Participant affiliations included:

American University
ARPA Consultant
Atlantic Media Company
Center for Radical Improvement
Department of Commerce
Department of Education
Department of Homeland Security
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Department of Navy
Department of State

Department of Transportation
Department of Treasury
Environmental Protection Agency
General Services Administration
Government Accountability Office
Kahler Communications
Library of Congress
NASA
National Academy of Public Administration
Office of Management and Budget/Retired
Partnership for Public Service
PMI Education and Training SIG
Senior Executives Association

Work experience levels ranged from intern to senior executive. Please consider joining us in the future.

Sincerely,

Kitty Wooley
U.S. Department of Education
<http://seniorfellowsandfriends.blogspot.com>