

Training With SQuARE Eyes

I remember the moment well. I'd been taught SQuARE on a course and was so impressed I wanted to train everyone in my training team as soon as possible. I was taken back by how easily a "chalk and talk" session could be turned from a one way dialogue to an interactive session where delegates were challenged, excited and rewarded. You see on a training course there are essentially two types of question a trainer will ask. The testing question and the teaching question. Testing questions just test to see if the person has learnt or remembered what you're teaching them. They have their place but not all the time. Now teaching questions are a different kettle of fish all together. A teaching question literally teaches a subject to a group of people by asking them questions. Using SQuARE allows you to do this effortlessly and elegantly. SQuARE is an acronym which stands for: • Statement • Question • u answer • Acknowledge • Reward • Explain. And you can SQuARE a training session from start to finish. Let me explain how to SQuARE. Statement We're looking to explain something to our group so we need to set some context or begin the subject we want to talk about. We make a statement about the subject. For example, let's say we wanted to teach people how to overcome an objection in selling. We could say something like "In selling, some customers like to voice concerns about the product we're selling" Easy that one. Now let's go onto question. Question Here we ask a short, open question with good tonality such as "From your experience at what point in the sales cycle do most concerns get voiced?" u answer They answer. Once you've asked the question, PPP works well – pose, pause, pounce. Look around the group encouraging an answer. Bob answers "usually at the end when I ask them for the business." Acknowledge Thank the person for answering "That's great, thank you Bob" Reward These last two often go together. "That's great, thank you Bob. You're spot on with many other sales people" Explain This is your chance, as the trainer, to explain further Bob's answer to enable you to progress your explanation of the whole topic. "Many salespeople experience customer concerns at the end of the sales process and this is really frustrating, don't you think? The fact of the matter is that we then spend time trying to overcome these and it can sometimes put off the customer buying the product." Next you swing back around to the beginning again. Back to statement. "It's a plain fact that handling concerns at the end of the sales process is not ideal." Next the question "What sort of problems can this cause sales people?" Now you've started the process again. Someone will answer and you can acknowledge and reward and explain again. Someone says it makes them dread the close and may put them off actually closing, so your explanation might be along the lines of, "I can understand how you feel there, if I knew the customer was going to object after I'd close I think human nature would be to not close. And that's no good when we're selling" Back to statement. "So there's many problems handling concerns at the end of the sales interview. Let's say we moved this handling to the beginning or heart of the selling interview and handled them then. What difference would this make to you?" Having received various answers and acknowledged, rewarded and explained you can then swing back around to the statement again. "So it appears that the benefits are stacked up for earlier handling of objections. One method is to pre-empt the objection before it even is mentioned by the customer, in other words handle it before it becomes an issue." Onto question "Taking your product, what are the typical client concerns that always cause people trouble?" And then you can ask questions around how best to pre-empt these. Do you see where we're going with SQuARE? We're not using the "guess what's coming up question" which are easy to answer, we're trying to make our group think. The answers aren't obvious and the trainer is steering the session and guiding the delegates. We're making them work and at the same time getting them involved in the explanation process which is so very typically a one-way street – trainer to delegate. And that's what modern training is all about – involvement. It's the one advantage that face to face training has over other means of delivery such as Internet based, CD based, DVDs, MP3s. These struggle to truly involve delegates, but face to face learning has to involve otherwise there's no point doing it this way as the other methods are far cheaper to administer in the long run. SQuARE is just one way of doing this.

About the Author

Collection of trainers, editors, cheats and hacks for Diablo 2 Expansion Set, Halflife, CounterStrike, Starcraft, Medal Of Honor, and other classics.

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