Solve a crisis in 8 minutes!

SAFETY

Learn more about a crisis management process in eight minutes.

At this moment mayors have one major ways to train for possible future crisis situations: large table-top exercises. We came up with an additional way based upon serious gaming, brief, single-player and anonymous: "Play and improve the process". Crises change but a good process goes a long way.

To be able to advise on a game for strategic managers, like a mayor of a BT, we first established the learning goals for this group. This was done in 2009 together with a focus group consisting of subject matter experts. The learning goals chosen were 'Setting priorities and making underpinned decisions –under time pressure'. For this game, to be a real addition to existing training methods there were specific conditions: (1) the game supports learning in max. 15

"Crisis management training for Mayors; quick & on your one"

minutes; and (2) is a single-player game, to make it easier to arrange a training session and guarantee anonymity.

Change a paper prototype into a mockup

To design a serious game, a game that allows players to learn, we work with three groups of experts in our team: 1. Game experts; to make a game entertaining, motivating and look good; 2. Educational experts; ensure that the learning goals can be reached by playing this game; 3. Domain experts, help the team with the content of the scenarios.
The team built a paper-based game first. The focus group could play a first round in November

2009. With some brief revisions we were able to take our game to a next level in 2010: a first digital version, a mock-up.
While the developers were looking for ways to translate the (paper) game-elements into digital components (mock-up), the educational experts set up an experiment. With 24 students from the Haagse Hogeschool (Integrale Veiligheidskunde) the paper-based game was played, to establish how the game affects the way in which people learn. Students filled out a digital questionnaire (before and after the game) about four elements of Self-Directed Learning (Control, use of Learning Strategies, Reflection, and use of Social environment) and some questions about motivation and self-efficacy. We found that where most tested elements did not change, there was (expected) improvement in the element Reflection.

All Dutch Mayors
The mock-up will be evaluated during the summer with a number of (deputy) mayors. The challenge for 2010 will be to prove that the effect found in the paper-based game, also applies to the digital version. All the feedback collected during the summer will be used to create the final game prototype. This prototype will also have more graphic details and meet the maximum possible of the learning goals and conditions as determined in the focus group meetings. In a final evaluation, probably late 2010 – early 2011, this game will be tested again with a group of mayors.
Having created a game that allows mayors to add another way of training to their curriculum, the team has only one wish left; Continue to develop the game by adding other learning goals and audiences, so that all Dutch Mayors and board members use this game to prepare for crises.