

Organization: The Centre for Renewal
Facilitator : Michael Ballard
Course : Skills 2000 - Microcomputer Specialist Program

I was one of 45 anxious students waiting to start a year of intense study and hard work on January 5, 1998. Michael Ballard had the arduous task of making us feel at ease with each other and lessening our tension level. He succeeded. He shared with us experiences from past classes and described the journey we were embarking upon was just the beginning of roller coaster ride.

He introduced us to True Colors, which allowed us to evaluate ourselves and determine into which color we 'fit'. Using worksheets we assessed ourselves and gained a better understanding not only about ourselves but our other 44 classmates and instructors. This information about each other was invaluable, and I am sure glad this was included in the beginning of our course curriculum.

We also did workshops on Dealing with Difficult People and the Multiple Intelligence Theory. During the Multiple Intelligence Theory workshop, Michael gave us some information to complete and then we were able to determine whether we were visual, auditory or kinesthetic learners. This tool was not only a great benefit for us as students to know how to get the most from our course, but also for the instructors, to help us learn.

Throughout the course we met with Michael as he helped us prepare for that special 'job' that we knew was just around the corner after graduation. He provided constructive feedback on our written resumes and suggested ways we could give them just a bit more polish. He also worked with us trying to ease our fears of those 'difficult questions' we knew we were going to have to answer. Impromptu mock interviews helped us gain more confidence in our ability to show ourselves to our best advantage.

When I was preparing my interview answers, I used all the handouts that Michael provided as I found they brought back considerable insight into the person who had started the course Jan 5, 1998 and finished December 18, 1998. Technically I had more knowledge than I thought was possible, and spiritually I had grown to a new level of understanding who I was.

Thank you Michael for all you gave of yourself last year, I really appreciate the generosity of your sharing.

Carol Cox

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