

**A selection of comments from Students who have participated in the
CIPFA in the Midlands 6th form management games**

2006

“Each task had a specified time limit, which made us work to deadlines and under pressure. We had to delegate individual tasks to ensure each aspect of the task was covered. The tasks were varied and showed us each side of the public sector. Although we had to work under pressure the tasks were fun and allowed us to bond as a team. I have learnt how to work under pressure, how to tackle different tasks and situations and how to work as a member of a team.”

“I feel that I have learnt to co-operate within a team easier by having one person in control delegating task and settling discussions or arguments. I have developed more skills by working with others and feel that I have learnt more today than in any lesson. I thoroughly enjoyed the ‘interruption tasks’ where members of the team had to go into a situation and keep calm whilst putting forth their points of view.”

“From today I understand more about public sector organisations and things they have to deal with e.g. budgets etc. It was enjoyable working as a team and producing work under time pressure. I now know what working in a career in the public sector would be like, and I think it would be quite stressful ! But it hasn’t changed my opinion on a degree in finance or accountancy, I would still consider doing one !”

“We worked well as a team as we discussed who was best for each role, then we did the work individually and then put it together. The interruptions showed how hard it was to work on a goal, whilst having to deal with problems asap. I liked it as it was not a completely stressful environment.”

“Despite the pressure, the activity was fun and brought members together as a team. I do not want to do an accountancy / finance degree, but it has encouraged me to do business studies”

“Being given such a limit on time showed overall how difficult it was and made the experience ‘real’. The time limits and interruptions ‘forced’ us to work as a team in order to finish tasks. The interruptions were very realistic and the timed responses to them showed the pressures faced.”

“We had to do lots of different tasks – 1 main and two interruptions we had to overcome which put us under more time pressure. We all had to come to an agreement with each area and justify why. Interruptions were realistic and we had to solve them realistically. I have found it interesting and it will help with my A level exam, but I don’t think I want to pursue a career in this area.”

“I have learnt how much pressure some people go through at work and how to get round some things.”

“I have learned during the day that time is very important and we should use it wisely. It has made a great impact because I have now got more ideas about finance and I will take this into consideration.”

“Writing reports up after interruptions throws your mind off course – remaining focused and making decisions was hard. A more enjoyable, realistic way to learn and develop skills.

Remaining calm and confident is the key to success in presentations. The best part of the day was having a serious role to play – the feeling of having a serious responsibility to the public.”

“I learnt about the different departments involved in making the decisions and the types of issues and pressures that they have to face. It has given me a good insight into the public sector and will be something to think back to when decisions on careers have to be made.”

“To meet deadlines was tough, with constant interruptions it added pressure. We all had to work hard to achieve the deadlines, we soon realised if we didn’t all contribute it wouldn’t get on. Realistic interruptions, it seemed realistic, could have been real life ! It was interesting, bit stressful.”

“It was fun to play, because it was a game with a working outcome. I have learned about councils, finance and working in a team.”

“Interruptions were good, because it pressurised us into dividing time between our main objectives and other tasks. We had to organise the team into specific roles and duties and to work as a unit and reach overall judgements. It gave me an idea of the process in which councils / businesses have to go through when trying to reach a decision. The day was enjoyable as a whole and flew by. I furthered my interest into an accountancy degree”

“I have learnt negotiating skills and team work skills. I also learnt time management skills. It will have a large impact on the decision I make to take accountancy.”

“Some of the time pressures were exceptional i.e. 5 minutes to prepare for a press conference. Each person in our group competently completed a variety of roles, while teamwork throughout the competition were exceptional, each member of the group having a voice and working in unison with the others. The day flew by and everyone was concentrating on the tasks in hand. I learned to cope with time pressures, changing situations and some of the responsibilities of managers, particularly in the public sector. Completing the press conference was rewarding and finishing the projects was also a good thing. I was impressed by the organisation and structure of the day. I never realised what a career in the public sector entailed before and the variety of jobs available, so this experience gives me another career path to look into further.”

“I have looked upon accountancy in a different light. I now consider it more difficult and especially if not in a well efficient team.”

“We had to make pressured decisions with uncertain outcomes however we found we completed them with time to spare. We all had our role to play in the team; we pooled ideas and made concrete decisions well. There are a lot of considerations that the public sector has to address, many that were unknown to me before. We enjoyed working together as a team and we co-operated in a jovial atmosphere.”

“The interruptions were a great way of putting us under pressure as we didn’t have a lot of time to do them. Team skills were developed as we had to all work together to get things done. I developed individual skills when working on something alone. The interruptions gave a good insight into problems, which may arise in the public sector. The whole day was fun; it was really interesting and was fun to work as a team. The time pressure made it very exciting. I am much more likely to consider a career in the public sector as today was very interesting.”

"We were given deadlines for certain tasks, but the interruptions came as surprises, this proved a challenge to delegate. Without teamwork the tasks would not be possible, so working together was key. Individual tasks and input were important too. The tasks made you consider a number of issues and helps you understand all the parties involved in the decision. It was challenging and competitive but overall you got to see the results of your own work."

Wolverhampton 04 July 2007

"I have learned about how decisions are made within public sector organisations and the pressures they have from different parties. I have also learnt that it is impossible to please everybody"

"I really enjoyed the day and although I have a curiosity for this field of work, I don't feel as though it is an area of work which is ideal for me"

"I have learnt that public sector management can actually be quite interesting"

"Has shown me that public sector is just as interesting as private"

"I learnt to micro manage more after trying to do too much myself in the first task"

"I have learnt how public sector workers must work together with limited funds under the pressure of the media, whom may not wish to make it easy for you"

"The tasks we had to complete were clearly linked to the financial issues and problems facing public sector organisations"

"The role playing interruption tasks were fun to take part in"

"(We learnt of) the problems faced by those working in the public sector and how much the tasks employees complete are pressured by time constraints"

"I am not considering such a career, but I feel that the day portrayed public sector work in a positive manner"

"I was already looking towards a course in finance and this has strengthened my belief that this is what I want to do"

"The whole day was fun !!"

"I have become better at time management (and have) more of an insight into public sector jobs"

"I feel I have been given a good insight into a job in the public sector. Also in the role I was given"

"(The day has) convinced me that I would like a job within Business"

"(I have learnt) the importance of co-operation and communication"

"I believe a lot went well and we just needed to improve on skills attained. The organising went well."

Stoke 18 July 2007

“Interruptions made sure we prioritised and worked more effectively”

“It made us all bond really well”

“(I learnt) about pressures and time management. I feel I coped really well and really enjoy coping when lots needs to be done”

“Having time limits and the interruptions added to the pressure. Although we all had separate roles we all had to correspond with each other to reach a conclusion. (We were) given an insight into some of the issues that may crop up. It felt quite competitive and it was easy to get into character”

“It has made me interested in a career in this profession”

“It allowed me to see how the public sector works”

“Strict time deadlines and interruptions meant we had to manage time well. A large amount of work meant we had to split up the work and feedback as a team. The game was very detailed. The interruptions mixed the game up and made it nice and fun to play”

“The interruptions meant that time allocation had to be revised for certain people. We had to distribute tasks as a team to individuals and then reconvene as a team”

“The interruptions were very realistic and were very challenging. We got to work better as a group and also the interruptions helped with individual skills”

“It was exciting and always changing”

“(A career in the public sector) is more appealing for me, especially accountancy”

“(I have learnt) that within daily life you are forced with problems, these can't be ignored and have to be dealt with”

“I would find (a career in the public sector) an enjoyable experience with a challenge”

“(The best part of the day was) working as a team with people from the same college, but not people I would normally work with”

“Solving a problem while being given interruptions gave me a good idea of how busy one task can be”

“(I have learnt) how to analyse information and produce a report and presentation for a professional board”

“It has opened my eyes to the prospects of working in the public sector”

“The interruptions really pressured us to make decisions quickly. We needed to work together in order to reach a decision, we also were given roles as individuals. The contexts were very relevant to actual events of organisations. It was challenging yet fun”

"It's made me realise that working in the public sector could certainly be a possible career option"

"There are many problems facing business, so it is important to "cover your back""

"Has given me a better insight into the work itself so has helped to consider future jobs"

"although it was stressful at times, it was an interesting topic and fun to take part"

"(I have learnt) the many problems faced by the PCT, and also how to tackle the interruptions with taking into consideration the main task. The interruptions were interesting and made you think further into the organisation"

"It made me realise what jobs are available in the public sector, there's not just the council"

"The interruptions could seriously make us rethink our plans and effectively deprive us of team members that were otherwise needed. We had to work as a team to make effective use of time and "bounce" ideas off each other and pool our resources. The game was good in that it showed problems revolving about making decisions on a budget when groups like the press throw in their own personal views and intervene. The game was good fun and I really enjoyed and thought it was useful"

"I have learned about how to work in a group and manage potentially trouble causing people i.e. press"

"(the best part of the day was) working together to find the best result and overcoming problems set before us"

"I have learnt that "real work" takes a lot of time and planning and does not run as smoothly as planned"

Worcester 25 June 2008

"(I learnt) how to work well as a team and help each other, and how to respond to time deadlines and problems that arose"

"I already wanted to become an accountant, but this has backed up my plan"

"(The best part of the day was) working as a team to achieve targets under time pressure, to pull as a team"

"It hasn't changed my mind, I still want to be an accountant"

"Interruptions caused quick reactions and responses which interfered with the main task times which were coped with well as a team. Everyone contributed throughout the game in a structured way without any confrontations. (It) informed the team members of the decisions that members are faced with. Was enjoyable as the tasks were not tedious and had interesting topics, with various interruptions to change the dynamics of the game"

"I have learnt that you have to expect the unexpected, that you have to be prepared for every possible situation, thoroughly"

"it has increased my opinion of an accountancy or finance degree"

“(I learnt) how to work effectively as a group and how to make decisions by considering the trade offs”

“Enjoyed working under pressure”

“Learnt how to get on within a team and pursue an individual role within a group”

“Gave me an insight into different areas of business”

“When given each task to do we were given a time scale that had to be met. During these tasks we had interruptions which shows a real life scenario. We had to work together in order to complete each task. They helped to show whether you were a good team worker. Shows that its good to work together to achieve the best outcome. Very realistic fun scenarios. I found it quite fun to play, however sticking to the time limits was quite hard and being put under pressure was a weakness for me”

“I have learnt that working within a team helps with problem solving – is best for a business if there is a small group of people on each task rather than just one”

“I enjoyed the whole day and it has given me an insight into what could happen in a real life scenario”

“I’ve learnt that in business you have to stand your ground otherwise others will try to push you over”

“The best part was the whole day as it was really enjoyable and helped to work as a team”

“Everything must be taken into consideration when making a decision on any programme / project”

“Positive (impact of the day on degree or career choice) – another option is now available to me. I enjoyed the day!”

“(I learnt) that there are so many things that you have to go through when deciding where money has to be spent”

“Having complications and having to deal with them instantly makes you realise the situations which some organisations must deal with”

“(I have learnt) how to meet deadlines and calculate decisions with money”

“Doing the presentation felt like we had a real chance to express our schemes and ideas”

“I don’t actually do business (studies) or anything in that area, but I really enjoyed it and I would consider doing it as a profession”

Walsall 02 July 2008

“We tried to deal with the interruptions as well as the main task and it gave us good experience in time management. It helped with team building skills as we had to work as a team for the whole day. We got a good insight into how a public sector organisation is run. We had a really good day and enjoyed the experience”

“(We learnt how to work closely as a team and deal with important issues. We had a lot of fun and had a good day”

“All of the interruptions were fun as we didn’t know what they were. But the best part was the presentation as all of our work throughout the day came to a head”

“I already wanted to go into business management and I still feel strongly about this”

“I can now see how they have to take into account a lot of the factors when making a decision”

“We learnt to communicate and work well as a team to achieve the objectives throughout the game”

“Time is of essence and how to organise and work well as a team. Prioritising”

“Increased my enthusiasm for (accountancy or finance) degrees”

“In order to do the tasks, we had no choice but to work as a team. At times we had to work individually to save time”

“Accountancy is not all about numbers”

“Interruptions kept the game spontaneous and fun”

“(I have learnt) Time management, persuasive speaking”

“Increased my choices as I am very interested in this sector”

“I now want to be a councillor”

“There were certainly “too many cooks” moments and we worked individually to increase our productivity. When there was conflict within the group it showed that there are also issues within a business to be concerned about. Working as a team under pressure was enjoyable”

“I was already considering accountancy and although real life accountancy may not be as enjoyable, it has definitely made me think seriously about an accounting or finance degree”

“The interruptions helped keep the game spontaneous and lively, although were challenging”

“Helped me to consider business studies as a more realistic future choice”

“More likely (now) to choose a job involving team work”

“The games had a time limit which we all underestimated and caused us lots of stress. It was vital for us to work as a team so that the presentation ran smoothly. We also had to work to deadlines with individual tasks. It was enjoyable as it challenged us – sense of achievement”

“(I learnt) to check work twice and not expect things to work my way all the time”

“I have developed presentation skills and learned about time scales”

“Working with ICT was enjoyable and realistic. Problems and interruptions added real life effect to situations”

“The time limits on the external influences gave a good idea of how local bodies operate. The fact that challenging and constraining scenarios arose gave a good insight”

“I have learned about managing in time constraints and adapting to problems”

“Working with our own roles we had to be on top of everything we were doing. We worked together to produce letters and presentations. Individual skills involved meetings. Looking at the tasks we did we realise what type of problems we can get in a business. I had fun in all tasks because I like working to deadlines”

“Going through (the day) makes me understand how accountancy works and the problems it deals with”

“By making individuals of the group go and speak to media etc. meant all members of the group had to be engaged”

“I have learnt the importance of communication whilst working as a team”

“It has made me more aware of what is required in this field of work therefore making me want to look into it”

“(I learnt) how to function as a team and at the same time working individual. Everyone had to have some input which was good”

“(The best part of the day was) the presentation, especially answering questions at the end which were more challenging than I thought they were going to be”

“May possibly go on to a career in finance”

“Being Chief Executive I felt in the letter writing and press release activities I could see how well the team and myself worked under pressure. The final presentation was perfect for our team work and morale. I thought it was a good task for the team to gel together. The theme of the day was very insightful and certainly helped in highlighting public sector organisation problems. There was fun throughout the day and the first task was very enjoyable”

“(I learnt) the way to work effectively in a team, to delegate responsibility and to allow my team to get on with tasks”

“The final presentation (was the best part of the day) as it was a great achievement and demonstrated our good team work. It was a good end to the day”

“I have learnt about the processes of making council decisions”

“I'd think more seriously about an accountancy degree”

“Team work needs to be effective to work”

“Not in accountancy, but has made me think about a career in the public sector”

Nottingham 02 July 2008

“Finance degree seems a more attractive career than it seemed prior to today”

“The time limits for each task were tight so we had to keep checking times and interruptions kept happening. We had different job roles so we all had to participate with different things. We had realistic scenario and had to do different aspects of the job. Sometimes it was fun, the interruptions made it fun at other times it was stressful”

“I like the idea of working with the public and also in busy circumstances”

“I felt that we dealt with all of the pressures that were give to us. I feel that we worked well as a team and had to listen to each other. The different interruptions gave me an insight into what could possibly happen. The day seemed to become quite a reality and I felt that the scenarios were fun to tackle”

“I have learnt that it is very hard to deal with interruptions when going ahead with a business plan or an objective”

“It is very likely that today has made me want to go into an accountancy career even more than I did before”

“(I learnt) to improve my time management”

“(I learnt how to) work as part of a team, to be productive in a short space of time”

“Very time constrained and mistakes can happen but it’s realistic in work place and it how you rectify and come through it that matters. Working as a team to make decision and delegate responsibility – motivated with our own individual role and feel you are playing a key part. Interruptions were realistic and made us “panic” or try to cope under the pressure. Really good having an insight into council roles / public sector. Worked as a team and a variety of methods to present”

“(I have learnt) the pressure and time constraints officials can work on; the different people you meet in society and have to deal with; information about a council and prioritising; the conflicting aims to objectives and to different people e.g. community v own council”

“(The best part of the day was) contributing my own thoughts and presentations as well as satisfaction that came with success. Enjoyed talking with business people and meeting a mentor to talk to”

“Definitely gave me a strong insight and showed how exciting / interesting and satisfaction you can get working in the public sector and see what it was like in a councillors view”

“The prioritising of the issues must be a particularly difficult issue for public sector workers”

“(I have learnt) to work under vicious time constraints; to share work and delegate”

“The interruptions provided an interesting and challenging environment”

“It has become more of a viable option as I have enjoyed the idea of the day and the work this entails”

“(A career in the public sector) is a serious consideration for me now”

“(I have learnt about) managing time effectively. An insight into how real life situations can be interrupted and solved”

“(the day) will certainly make me think”

“(The best part of the day was) the presentation, because I liked having to perform under pressure”

“The interruptions made the game on a tight timescale even more difficult. With everyone having their own roles, it was essential that we all spoke to each other. We certainly gained an insight into the roles of the Council”

“Was interested in accountancy and finance before the day, and am more so now”

“Due to the interruptions we were pushed to deal with uncertain events and with time constraints. Having specific plans overlapping each other it forced the team to co-ordinate with each other to discover the best solution. Also the “bombshell” caused a lot of debates. By having the description of each occupation it gave an insight to their duties. I LOVED IT ! The press conference was great; the thinking on your feet aspect of the project really gave us an adrenalin rush”

“(I have learnt) time management, to be part of a team and to voice my opinions clearly”

“More interesting than I thought it was”

“I have learnt that planning is very important as well as working as a team”

“I didn’t know that accountants had to do things that I have been doing. It makes it seem more exciting”

Stoke 09 July 2008

“(I learnt) what decisions councils have to make on a daily basis”

Interruptions were constant throughout the day, for example a press release where we had to justify our proposals and decisions. I had to manage my team and make sure everyone worked well as a team so we pulled together. It was interesting to see how public sector worked, such as budgets and the effects on employment and tourism. It was enjoyable and exciting”

“I have learnt about time pressures and getting a job done. I also learnt about press releases and jobs included in the daily life of someone in the public sector”

“I enjoyed seeing all our hard work come together when we gave our presentation and managing to answer our questions successfully”

“(I have learnt) to look at problems from different perspectives e.g. financial and environmental; presentational skills and answering questions on the spot”

“(I have learnt) to be able to manage and positively handle public sector problems and tasks”

“My self confidence has increased”

“Running a business project is hard”

“We had a limited time to do a task, having to complete the task to a satisfactory level while still under pressure. We all had to work together to get information and put the presentation together. The different interruptions showed that you don't just have one thing to get on with, there are things to overcome”

“I have developed the skills needed to work in a team and realised how important it is to reach the target”

“There was time pressure as interruptions occurred and we had to deal with these in a short amount of time. I feel we worked well as a team as we didn't talk over one another and although we disagreed at times we didn't argue. I wasn't aware of the sorts of things the council dealt with and so now I understand what they do and the pressures they are under. I did enjoy the game although a few of my team members got a little stressed at times”

“(I have learnt) what the council deals with and what is the best way to prioritise”

“... now I know more about what it would be like if I had a future career in the Council”

“(I have learnt) how councils work and the pressure associated with the decisions they have to make”

“It may well influence me in to considering a career in the public sector”

“I am rubbish at Maths, but good day and would recommend”

“I am now able to efficiently delegate within the team as well as making effective decisions”

“Gained an insight into financial issues”

“(I learnt) teambuilding; improvising; real life business skills”

“(I learnt) how to work under time constraints working as a team”

“I'd consider it as serious job prospect”

“When we were given the interruptions it was important to manage the time with the original tasks. We all had to work together to get the tasks done so teamwork improved. When working on tasks your individual work had to be good. The interruptions dealt with problems faced by the Public Sector. It was fun to push myself with pressure of time”

“It is important to manage time to get tasks done”

“I would consider a career in accountancy or finance”

“(I learnt about) the issues facing the public sector and how to respond in certain situations, also key skills as part of management team”

CFPEA