

## PRACTICAL TIPS

On the following pages practical tips are given on how training with Memory Quest can be facilitated. First there is a section for you as a prospective coach of a child training in school. Next follows a section for you as a prospective coach of an adult. Finally there is a section for those who will train alone.

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### CHILDREN

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One of the first things you need to decide when a child will start working memory training is whether it will take place at home or at school. Our experience suggests that there are a number of advantages to locating the training to school. Here are some examples:

1. It can be easier to motivate a child to train in school because the child is used to doing things at school that are not always fun and that are strenuous.
2. It is often easier to find a regular time for training and to find a training time that is suitable for the child's optimal activity level.
3. School staff have experience and knowledge of how to motivate children with various difficulties.
4. Training will not be as sensitive to illness and other potential obstacles for training because it is easier to find a substitute coach in school.
5. It is often difficult to find a time of day at home when it is quiet. Especially if the trainee has siblings. At home there are also a number of other distractors such as TV, vacuum cleaner or kitchen fan that can have a negative effect on training.
6. There is finally also a risk for the training to lead to conflicts between child and parent when it does not work optimally.

We therefore recommend that the training takes place at school if possible. It should however be added that if your home provides the proper conditions and you as a parent can manage to set up a good training

environment in the home, it can be a positive activity that involves both child and parent. It is important that parents are aware that it is a comprehensive effort that will place great demands on both your own and your child's patience. It requires you to devote as much as an hour a day for training and preparations, so you must be able to do this without too much conflict and preferably, at the same time each day.

If you train at home, it is sometimes good if someone from school can provide coaching for you as coach to the child. It is also possible that a parent takes full responsibility for training, but this is more demanding. Regardless of where training takes place and who coaches the trainee, we recommend that you use the material in the chapter "training materials, children" as support.

### REWARD SYSTEM

In many cases when working with children, encouragement and praise are enough to maintain motivation. Working memory training is often perceived as mentally demanding, and as a result, problems with motivation often occur at some point during training. A strategy to counter this and that has proven effective is to include a reward system. It is important to stress that the rewards should not consist of big things. Usually it is appropriate to let the parents implement the rewards, even if training takes place at school. Rewards must be reasonable but at the same time not too mundane. It is important that the rewards have a motivating effect on the child. Examples of rewards can be to rent a movie, play games together, get to stay up a little later on Friday night or go to the swimming pool together.



It is important to emphasize from the beginning that rewards are handed out after each five-day period of training that is completed. That the child is clear about this from the beginning means that the risk for conflicts diminishes. The parents should never threaten to take away rewards. It is also important that the rewards are always handed out on time and that agreements are kept on both sides. The objective of the reward system is to come up with something that the parents or the school feel is realistic and that really helps the child's motivation. As training becomes harder and the child often finds it more difficult to maintain motivation as training progresses, it is a good idea to rank the rewards that you choose. The first can be something small such as letting the child choose their favourite dish for dinner on Friday night. The last week maybe you will go to the movies together or do something else that the child is very fond of, but may not be able to do so often. Always ensure that the rewards are filled out in the logbook before training begins so that there are no misunderstandings during training. For guidance on how to go about selecting the appropriate rewards see Appendix 2.

## THE LOGBOOK

There is a lot to keep track of before training can begin. The logbook serves several purposes, but the most important function is to make preparations for the training as easy as possible. The logbook contains the following things:

- Information to the child on working memory and working memory training.
- Reward schedule, where rewards are to be written before training begins.
- Overview of every week of training where the child fills out completed training days.
- Easy checklist that you as coach go through together with the child before training begins. A more extensive checklist can be found in this book in Appendix 1.

Always use a logbook when coaching a student training with Memory Quest to ensure control over training and to make sure that no details are overlooked.

*The logbook can be downloaded from  
[www.memoryquest.co.uk](http://www.memoryquest.co.uk)*

## TRAINING SCHEDULE

The training schedule gives you as coach an overview of when and where training is to take place and who will be in charge of the training on each day (see Appendix 3). In the training schedule you should before training begins fill out the following:

- The location where training will take place.
- The dates when training is planned to be conducted.
- Who will coach each day of training?

## TRAINING A PUPIL AT SCHOOL

As coach to a pupil in school, you should make preparations for what happens if you are sick. Be sure to have a temporary coach who has good understanding of the training and who can keep the training going when you are absent. It is also important that the staff in your team is aware that training will be carried out and that they give you their support so you do not encounter undue resistance on the way. Sometimes the pupil training must be absent from regular teaching/activities; this is another reason that the relevant staff at school should be informed. Before a child starts memory training in school, it is important to give the child and parents information about the training. Below are suggestions on how you can provide information on working memory and working memory training for children and their parents.

### INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN

Working memory is probably a new concept for the children who will be training. As it can be difficult to explain to a young child what working memory is and what working memory training is, it is important to give the child as comprehensible an explanation as possible. It can be a good idea to use the logbook to assist you when you inform the child about working memory and the actual training.

### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

For most parents working memory and working memory training is as new as for their children. The information in the logbook can also be used to give parents an overview of how working memory functions. However, it is common that parents want to learn more about working memory and how the training practically works. The information in this book can be used as support to give them a deeper understanding. Parents usually implement the rewards that are linked to training and the more motivated parents are the easier it will be to carry out memory training effectively.