

# Fun ways to learn about good service

BY CHERYL LIM

**S**ERVICE staff can now learn how to handle **difficult** customers – by dealing with a virtual **simulation** that becomes increasingly unreasonable.

This customer-service program is one of several new interactive training methods being used at Singapore's first continual education and training (CET) centre for service excellence, called the Service Quality Centre.

It introduced such methods after moving to its new premises at Singapore Post Centre in Paya Lebar at the end of August.

They include a grooming **software** that designs a makeover for its trainees, and service-related computerised quiz games similar to television shows like Wheel of Fortune.

Compared to just having theory lessons conducted in classrooms, such experiential learning techniques are more effective at "leaving an impression on the trainees", said the centre's spokesman.

Trainee John Low, 46, a senior manager at National Association of Travel Agents Singapore, described one such lesson: "We were told to come up with a **strategy** for building a plastic tower using cups, satay sticks and chopsticks. That helped us to improve our communication skills as we had to work in a team to find an effective way to perform the task."

The new centre was launched yesterday by Minister of State for Trade and Industry & Manpower Lee Yi Shyan.

At 836 sq m, the \$1.5-million centre is almost double the size of its previous premises at the Spring Singapore building in Bukit Merah, allowing it to train 12,000 people annually, up from 8,000.

The centre expects more trainees in the long term as more service jobs will be created once the integrated resorts are opened, said its spokesman.

The Service Quality Centre was set up in 1990 by the former Productivity Standards Board, now called Spring Singapore, together with Singapore Airlines.

It was appointed by the Workforce Development Agency as the first CET centre for service excellence in January.

cheryll@sph.com.sg

## HELPDESK 我的字典

**Difficult:** 执拗 zhí niù

**Simulation:** 模拟 mó nǐ

**Software:** 软件 ruǎn jiàn

**Strategy:** 策略 cè lüè