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## Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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From the Reference Desk  
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is a thorough index, as well as a good selective bibliography in the last volume. However, this is one of those sets that is more worthy of the title "Dictionary" of *International Relations*. The entries, while factual and clearly written, are for the most part, brief and descriptive. This is understandable. Trying to pack over 6,000 entries into four volumes is going to result in brevity. Price is also a concern. This is a four-volume dictionary at an encyclopedia price. While the *Greenwood Encyclopedia of International Relations* is a scholarly work of obvious quality, it is pricey at nearly \$500 and may give libraries pause. Nonetheless, if you library has a need, and you can part with the money, then go for it. 

## Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (Reference Librarian,  
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Weiss-Morris, Loretta, ed. *Quick Training Tips! How To Teach Computer Skills To Practically Anyone*. Hopatcong, NJ: Systems Literacy Inc., 2001. 097125740X. 148 pages. \$39.95.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

When I teach a library instruction session, I request that my students keep an open mind about the subject at hand. Even if I cover material that they already know, I tell them, I might introduce a new method of doing something or another angle of a topic to explore. Upon first glance, I must sorely admit that I wasn't practicing what I was preaching when it came to reviewing **Loretta Weiss-Morris' Quick Training Tips! How To Teach Computer Skills To Practically Anyone**. Initially, the informality of the publication put me off. Some of the clipart is dated, the binding is spiral, the cover is slight, and the presentation is—upon first glance—a bit amateur. But you can't judge a book by its cover, even if the cover is slightly flimsy. Once I made up my mind to learn a thing or two, I wised up to the plenteous *verbum sapienti*. The truth is, **Weiss-Morris' book** is packed with words of advice and food for thought.

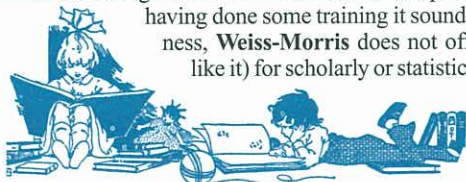
*Quick Training Tips* is an outgrowth of **Weiss-Morris' Website** (<http://www.QuickTrainingTips.com>). The Website includes links to a "Tip of the Week," "True Training Tales," "Industry News & Trends," a "Job Bank," a "Résumé Bank," and "Recommended Resources." Though the medium of the printed page does not allow for a job or résumé bank, **Weiss-Morris** stays true to her online format with Tips, Tales, and Recommended Resources, and adds articles by and interviews with professional trainers. Editorial comments and recommendations complete the publication.

With eleven chapters, *Quick Training Tips* covers the gamut of modern training techniques from personal introductions to online instruction. The first chapter, "Breaking the Ice," consists of nothing more than tips sent to **Weiss-Morris' Website**. These tips come from a variety of people and places: **Regions Financial Corporation, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, York University (Ontario), the Center for Disease Control, and the University of Wisconsin** are but a few examples. The sheer number of people offering guidance and testimonials hint at the number of users (and, subsequently, the amount of support) for **Weiss-Morris' Website**. It goes without saying that such site-loyalty is indicative of quality information.

Chapter two, "Polishing Your Presentation Skills," begins with a quiz. Have you ever considered how long a person can listen to a lecture before his/her mind begins to wander? According to **Weiss-Morris**, three to seven minutes. Though the reference citation for this particular "fact" is not given,

having done some training it sounds accurate to me. In fairness, **Weiss-Morris** does not offer this quiz (and others like it) for scholarly or statistical information. She uses

the quiz as an attention grabber, and it fits in perfectly with one of the major themes of



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*Quick Training Tips*: positive contact and the ability to keep an audience's attention is paramount in praiseworthy training.

My favorite chapter by far is "Dealing With 'Difficult' Students: How To Have 'Win-Win' Interactions." **Weiss-Morris** begins with several possible scenarios, one of which hit all-too-close to home for me: "This student lets you know that team exercises and learning games are a waste of time—and it just so happens that you've got several planned for the session." Frequently, individuals do not attend classes or training sessions on a volunteer basis. For example, library education sessions are rarely elective; furthermore, students' learning curves vary dramatically. No doubt, we try our darnedest to engage our co-eds and to allow them to feel as though they have learned valuable information and skills. But it doesn't always work, and every so often (at best) we have pupils who put up a roadblock to learning. **Weiss-Morris** has gathered tips from her Website which illustrate ways to capture student involvement. Advice from others in the field is invaluable.

Every imaginable topic concerning computer training is covered. **Weiss-Morris** does not only address classroom settings; "How To Conduct a Win-Win Training Session With a High-Powered Executive" demythologizes one-on-one tutoring. Tips for teaching basic skills classes are followed by those for instruction on advanced computer concepts. Though the chapter dealing with teaching Internet skills focuses on beginner audiences, several tips can be applied to more advanced learners. Over eighteen pages focus on information about online instruction success, and much of the content comes from **OnlineLearning.net's** Director of Online Curriculum and Instructor Development, **Susan Ko**.

One could argue that purchasing *Quick Training Tips* isn't necessary—most of the information contained in its pages is available for free on the Internet. The added value of the book is its categorical nature and added articles and interviews. Sure, much of the information is available on **Weiss-Morris' Website**, but it's scattered. I highly recommend this book for your public library patrons and for personnel who carryout any sort of computer training. I also recommend sending it to the bindery for a hardcover. 