



**Advanced Interactions:
Building Real Engagement
into Your eLearning**

June 2 & 3, 2011

401

**Secrets of Simulation Design:
How to Create Effective
Performance Simulation**

Richard Mesch, Performance Development Group





The Secrets of Simulation Design

An Insider's Look at Creating Effective Performance Simulation

Rich Mesch

Performance Development Group

Presenter Contact Info:

rmesch@performdev.com

(610) 308-9445



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Which statement do you most agree with?

- “I build simulations and I’m looking for more insight.”
- “I’m interested in simulation, and I want to learn more about them.”
- “I’ve heard of simulation, and I want to learn what all the fuss is about.”
- “I’m unfamiliar with simulation and I want to gain some basic knowledge.”

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The Definition of Simulation

What does the word “simulation” mean to you?

(Type your response into the chat pod)

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Simulation Definition: Literal

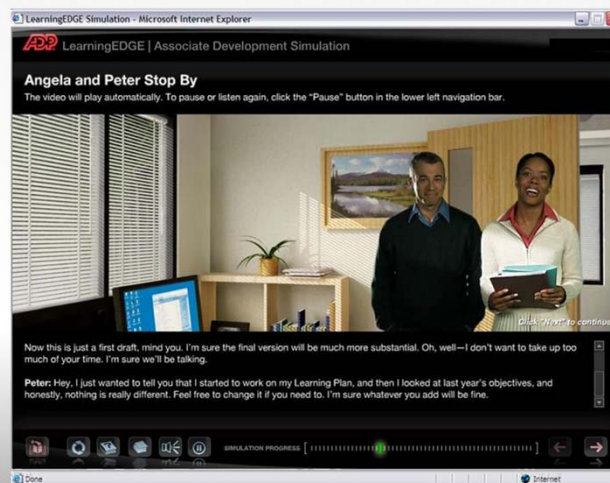
- Simulation is a realistic, controlled-risk environment where users can practice behaviors and experience the impacts of decisions
 - Learn-by-doing
 - Application of Learning
 - Performance Support/Reinforcement

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Example: Performance Management



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UNISYS
imagine it. done.

Review your feedback.

Employee Engagement: 74%
Business Results: 70%

This is your feedback report. Since it will no longer be available once you close the simulation, you must print it now or save it and print it later. Choose either the **PRINT** button or **SAVE TO FILE** button below.

Decision 3: Julio, the manager of one of Robert's projects, told you he was disappointed with Robert's performance. You had to decide how you would handle this situation. **How will you handle this situation?**

- C. Document what Julio has told you. It's early in the year, and you don't want to discourage Robert. Give him a chance to get his bearings. If Robert's performance hasn't improved by mid-year, you can address it with him then.
- D. Ask Julio for more detail and some specific examples of Robert's performance issues. You can decide what to do next based on what Julio tells you.

You Chose: Response C

Feedback on your decision:
This decision does not provide Robert with feedback in a timely manner and does not give him a chance to address any possible performance gaps. While documenting feedback is a good idea, you haven't given Robert a chance to discuss the feedback with Julio, and take appropriate action in adjusting his performance.

Feedback on behavior should be specific and actionable, and should be given as close to the time of the behavior as possible. You should have regular discussions (at least quarterly) with your employees on progress against objectives to allow for adjustments and improvement. Ideally, that should also include feedback from project managers or matrixed managers. Most importantly, employees should not hear about performance deficiencies for the first time at an interim or end-of-year review. Employees should not be surprised by any of the feedback they receive at interim or end-of-year reviews, since they will have heard it previously and have a clear idea of how they are proceeding against their objectives.

[PRINT](#) [SAVE TO FILE](#) [View previous feedback](#) [View more feedback](#)

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The Learn-Do Gap

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How do you close the gap?

- **Context**
 - How does it impact my role and the roles of others?
- **Application**
 - What do you expect me to do?
- **Practice**
 - Try it out in a safe environment
- **Example**
 - What does it look like when I do it right/wrong?
 - What is the impact of different approaches?

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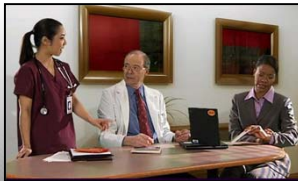
Great simulation...

...tells a **story**



...is **immersive**

...has **real-life goals & metrics**



...lets you **learn without
feeling like you're
learning**

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Why Simulation?

**Context
Application
Practice
Example**

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Simulation Definition: Conceptual

Simulation is the nexus of...

Learning

Performance **Storytelling**

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Agree?

“Simulation is a good methodology for most learning challenges.”

Green Check = Agree

Red X = Don't Agree



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The Nexus: Learning

- Do users learn content in simulation?
- Users apply skills and knowledge and learn the consequences and results
- Users learn from feedback- intrinsic and extrinsic

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Simulation Content

Simulation is most effective for content that is:

- Behavioral
- Observable
- Has defined consequences and implications
- Process or System Driven

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Agree?

“Simulations are just another form of e-learning.”



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The Nexus: Performance

- **Simulation is about doing**
- **Simulation content should be driven by metrics**
- **Metrics should be the same as in real life**
- **Storytelling is important, but metrics come first**

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Agree or disagree?

Simulation should be as realistic as possible.

Focus on those aspects of reality that drive performance

Focus on the element of TIME

Too much detail is confusing or distracting



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The Nexus: Storytelling

- Drives user INVOLVEMENT
- Users care how the story turns out and make decisions emotionally
- Users make decisions as they would in real life—not as they would in a training exercise
- Story needs to be driven by same drivers as real life

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Example: Leadership & Coaching

A screenshot of a video player interface. At the top, it says 'Regional Sales Director Simulation' and 'SIMULATION PROGRESS' with a green progress bar. The video title is 'Meeting with Dr. Karrel' and a subtitle reads 'The video will play automatically. To pause or listen again, click the "Pause" button in the lower left navigation bar.' The video content shows two people, a man in a white lab coat (Dr. Karrel) and a woman in a business suit (Stephanie), sitting at a round table in an office setting. Below the video, there are subtitles: 'DR. KARREL: It's nice to see you again. And Stephanie, always good to see you. How's that little boy of yours?' and 'STEPHANIE: Great, Dr. Karrel, thank you for asking. I have a few things I'd like to cover during our meeting today.' The video player controls are visible at the bottom, including play, pause, and volume buttons. The browser status bar at the very bottom shows 'Done' and 'Internet'.

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The Storytelling Challenge

- How do you tell a good story?
 - Grab your audience upfront
 - Use goal-based scenarios
 - Get the details right
 - No robots, please!
 - Remember the role of time and place

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Writing Decisions for Simulation

- Not rights and wrongs, but shades of gray
 - What's right today is wrong tomorrow
- Use different decision types:
 - Multiple select, Prioritization, Ordering
- Focus on why it's not happening now:
 - Hard to understand
 - Easy to understand, hard to do
 - Emotionally difficult
 - Concerned about repercussions
 - Conflicts of interest

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Agree?

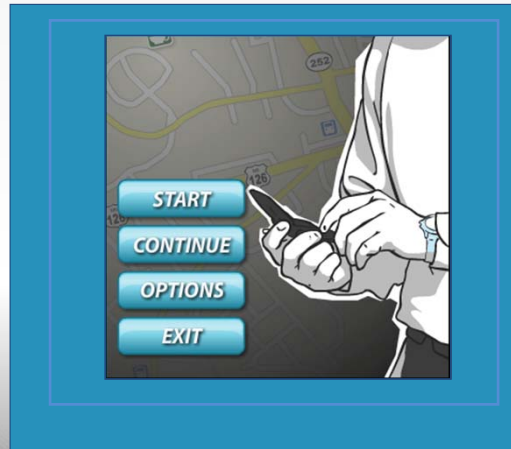
**“Simulations should not allow users to fail,
since failure is demotivating.”**



Example: VIE Sales Simulation



Example: Mobile Simulation



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Summary: What makes a good simulation?

- **Immersive**
 - Feels like doing the job, not like taking training
- **Performance-based/Behavioral**
 - Simulation is about *doing* the job
- **Driven by real-life metrics**
 - Metrics come first, and success is measured the same way it is in real life
- **Real-life conflicts and trade-offs**
 - The same things that make decisions difficult in real life are in the simulation
- **Storytelling**
 - Users are drawn into the story and make decisions to create a good outcome

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Potential Uses for Simulation

Applications

- Leadership Development
- Skill Application/Practice
- Assessment Center
- Product Training
- Strategic Planning/Model
- Future State

Delivery Methods

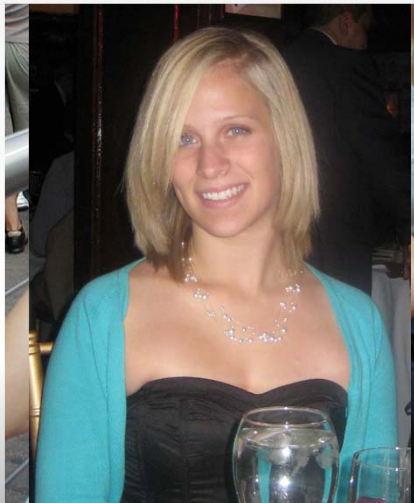
- Independent Study
- Live/Virtual classroom
- Team/Department Meetings
- Competitive/Leaderboard
- Virtual Coaching

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A final thought...



Rebecca at 23

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**“This
Looks
Like
Some
Dumb
Game
For Babies.”**

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Recommended Reading

- by Clark Aldrich:
 - *The Complete Guide to Simulations and Serious Games*
 - *Learning by Doing*
 - *Simulations and the Future of Learning*
- by Karl Kapp:
 - *Gadgets, Games and Gizmos for Learning: Tools and Techniques for Transferring Know-How from Boomers to Gamers*
- By Karl Kapp and Tony O’Driscoll
 - *Learning in 3D: Adding a New Dimension to Enterprise Learning and Collaboration*

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Talk to me!

Email rmesch@performdev.com



RichMesch



Parmal Bedrosian

Blog blog.performdev.com

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