

THE SIMULATOR AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

We can define the simulation environment as the activities that bring people together in time and space around a simulator.

When we talk about the simulation environment, this refers to the context of the situation where simulation is used or applied, this can be a course, a research environment, a demonstration, etc. In the case of educational or business environments, the objective of the simulation is to provide learning opportunities to the participants, and in the case of research environments, what is sought is to answer the questions of the research being carried out, while in the demonstrations, they are only used to share the news and applications related to the simulation in order to make them known.

Every simulation environment is made up of a social practice, through which people interact with each other, with the simulator and with various teams depending on the situation and the rules, whether the intention of this simulation is to achieve individual goals, for example, in learning environments, there are rules for instructors and learners, and the former are responsible for creating learning opportunities while the latter have the role of being responsible for absorbing those opportunities. The interaction of both is based on rules, limitations and requirements established in each course.

The simulation environment includes the following phases, which are related to each other.

Previous information session.

All courses start before the participants have access to it, through the previous informative session, the participants receive prior information and general expectations about the course, this information can be sent through an invitation letter or flyer, to through other previous participants and using various sources of information.

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Introduction to the environment.

In this phase, the participants present themselves and are given information about what the course includes or deals with, what they are trying to obtain, the limits and how the course is organized in general. It is important to start with a positive atmosphere of welcome, giving participants the opportunity to express their expectations of the course formed during the previous phase, and to clarify any information that has not been well understood or has been confused.

Simulator briefing

In this phase, the participants are allowed to know the simulator and how the simulation will work, they are explained how to interact with the environment, how they can ask for help, etc., this is done with the intention that the participants take out all the advantage of the simulation and at the same time feel comfortable, without fear or tension during the stage. The necessary time should be taken to help participants during this stage, until they are confident when using the simulator.

Theory input.

In this phase, theoretical information about the content of the course is provided to the participants, such as: principles, background, procedures, etc. To provide these content, instructors can use different classical formats such as lectures, exhibitions, or active learning methods can be applied, such as asking participants to create a collage or mind map on aspects of theoretical content.

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Briefings on the scenarios.

Through this stage, participants are provided with information related to the case simulated in the scenario, for example the financial history of a company, the problem to be solved and the tasks to be performed, as well as information on the scenario where it occurs for which can answer questions such as where and when?, what resources are have available ?, etc. In addition, they are given information about the roles that each participant will play, as well as the roles that the others involved will carry out.

It is important to provide all the necessary information to each participant, otherwise they will have trouble understanding the scenario.

In this informative meeting you can use questions that help to make the scenario more understandable, these can be:

Who is participating?

What is being done?

Where does the situation take place?

When does the situation take place?

Why did this situation evolve?

What motivated this situation?

What is sought to obtain?

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Course completion.

In this last phase, the course is completed, through summaries, debates or reflections, where participants apply what they learned during the course, exchange opinions, analyze actions, propose solutions, make constructive criticisms, in addition of expressing your learning experience both cognitively and emotionally.

In order to optimize the simulation environments, attention must be paid to all the aforementioned phases, presenting an organized and well-designed course is the starting point to guarantee learning and avoid inconveniences during scenarios.

Referencia

Dieckmann, P. (s.f.) *La simulación es más que tecnología: el ambiente de la simulación*. [Simulation is more than technology: the simulation environment]. Recuperado de http://cdn.laerdal.com/downloads/f1198/ABAQYJSM/La-simulacion-es-mas-Tecnologia--FINAL_ESPANOL_WEB.pdf