

Business Acumen Simulations:

What Works and What Doesn't

 AVOID:	LOOK FOR: 
<p>Passive or automated learning</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will limit engagement and reduce retention.</p>	<p>Truly experiential learning</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it utilizes hands-on, interactive methods to drive engagement and retention.</p>
<p>Closed decision-making</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will limit engagement and reduce retention.</p>	<p>Open decision-making</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it engages learners: it's a game they control. (Bonus: this develops autonomy and accountability!)</p>
<p>Audio/Visual Learning Only</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will neglect 2 of the key learning styles.</p>	<p>Integrated Learning & Playing</p> <p><i>Because...</i> people learn better when actions lead to results, and both lead to analysis and discussion.</p>
<p>Game design that only focuses on <i>Competitors</i> and <i>Achievers</i></p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will only satisfy and engage some of the participants, some of the time.</p>	<p>Playful Learning design with 1) exploration and 2) collaborative decision-making.</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it allows participants to play and learn in the mode that best suits their personality and mood.</p>
<p>Modeling The <i>Wrong</i> Business Drivers</p> <p><i>Because...</i> unrealistic or irrelevant scenarios do not connect to real-world functions.</p>	<p>Relevant Real-World Business Drivers</p> <p><i>Because...</i> people <i>connect</i> to scenarios that reflect their real-world roles, and the learning sticks!</p>
<p>Hidden rules (or a 'black box' process)</p> <p><i>Because...</i> they will obscure understanding and destroy trust.</p>	<p>Transparency</p> <p><i>Because...</i> participants see how their everyday actions change the business.</p>

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<p>Fine-Grained Detail</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will overwhelm the learner with unnecessary detail and prevent their developing a 'big picture understanding'.</p>	<p>Broad-Brush Concepts</p> <p><i>Because...</i> focusing on fundamental business principles builds the strong foundation needed to support looking at the details.</p>
<p>Silo Thinking</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it will lead to isolated decisions which ignore broader business needs.</p>	<p>Whole Business Thinking</p> <p><i>Because...</i> it promotes decision-making to benefit the company.</p>
<p>Partial Financial Statements</p> <p><i>Because...</i> the game will provide an incomplete understanding of business.</p>	<p>Full Financial Statements</p> <p><i>Because...</i> the game builds a complete picture of the needs of the business. (E.g. the need to manage for both Cash Flow and Profit.)</p>
<p>Learning That Ends When The Workshop Ends'</p> <p><i>Because...</i> It does not add to growth and development.</p>	<p>Applied Learning & Life-Long Learning</p> <p><i>Because...</i> learning that goes beyond the classroom ensures practical skill application and ongoing growth.</p>
<p>A Mix Of Unrelated Solutions</p> <p><i>Because...</i> if people go through different programs, they will not have a common language or understanding of the needs of the business.</p>	<p>A Scalable Simulation</p> <p><i>Because...</i> people going through different programs have a shared experience, a common language, and can better communicate about the needs of the business.</p>
<p>Too Much Focus On Your <i>Company</i></p> <p><i>Because...</i> It can lock people into static thinking and prevent future flexibility.</p>	<p>A Focus On Your <i>Industry</i></p> <p><i>Because...</i> It promotes critical thinking and industry-wide understanding.</p>