Use Simulations…

- To help trainers gain insight into their behavior and become sensitive to others.
- To improve analytical, decision making, problem solving, goal setting, communication, resource allocation, and negotiating skills.
- To help trainees gain competence in interviews involving grievances and complaints, performance appraisals and collective bargaining.
- To teach risk taking and conflict management skills.
- To establish a model of reality that is a “safe” environment for making mistakes and learning.
- To provide immediate feedback as a learning tool.
- To motivate learners to explore and discover ideas related to the training objectives.
- To provide the benefit of learning skills in circumstances that resemble the actual employment, making transfer to the job easier and more effective.
- To experiment with, test, and carry out new behaviors and ideas.
- To give participants some control in the training situation by involving them in the design and implementation of the activity.
- To promote cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning.
- To provide non-threatening opportunities for feedback on performance.
- To save time and money by compressing the learning into training sessions in which costly mistakes have no consequences.
1. Discuss the actual events of the game.

2. Analyze the simulation from different points of view.

3. Relate the game experience to the real situation it represents.

4. Structure the discussions around the typically high level of trainee interaction. Ask what happened and how the participants feel about those events.

5. Expect participants to argue and vent their emotions before they can get on to a more analytical discussion.

6. Keep the discussion low key and prohibit any harsh remarks, particularly about individuals’ self worth or value.

7. Ask participants to critique the game. Give participants a chance to articulate their thoughts and feelings regarding the game and to challenge others’ impressions.

8. Solicit feedback about the game: whether it was clear, interesting or relevant.

9. Introduce a discussion of the underlying reality of the model by referring to the participants’ genuine feelings about the real situation and give the facilitator a chance to suggest new ways of perceiving it.

10. Direct participants to explain in specific terms their involvement in the game and to apply this to the real situation. Ask how the game experience compares and contrasts with the reality.

11. Debrief at various points throughout the game. This will give you a chance to provide immediate feedback, ease tensions and clear up any misunderstandings and problems before the game proceeds further.

12. Focus the processing discussion on:
   - The kinds of decisions that were made and what influenced those decisions
   - Effects of the decisions
   - Constraints of the game
   - Interactions between participants
   - Learning that resulted from the experience
   - Mistakes participants may have made
   - Possible ways of improving the game
   - The question of whether the game fulfilled its purpose
   - How well the game simulated reality.
17 Tips

1. Don’t over-explain the game. Players learn more by making mistakes and discovering aspects of the game on their own.

2. Act enthusiastically and with confidence about the game. This will engage in trainees’ interest and assure them the game is an effective learning experience.

3. Expect trainees to be confused at the beginning of the game.

4. Reassure them that the confusion is temporary and that they will feel more confident as the game progresses.

5. Answer questions only about game rules. The game as a learning experience forces participants to find their own solutions.

6. Be flexible and creative. Facilitators often perform many different functions such as the scorekeeper, timekeeper, referee, coordinator, and observer.

7. Don’t try to play and facilitate simultaneously, you won’t be able to do either very well. If you decide to play, be prepared to give up your role as guide and pass your control of the game and the following discussion to the group.

8. Stop the game at various points so players can discuss strategies and concepts.

9. Reinforce rules as situations arise. You’ll need to do this if you’ve given a concise, general introduction suggested earlier.

10. Collect whatever forms or materials used throughout the game, make necessary notations on them (players’ names, the time you received them and the round they represent).

11. If you are performing complex calculations using game data, have a qualified assistant cross-check your work for accuracy and recheck their findings.

12. Clarify deadlines. If you plan to make exceptions, explain the conditions for them.

13. Always let trainees know how much time is left in a round. Give five and two-minute warnings before you collect forms, or end the round, etc.

14. Move players smoothly through rounds and activities by reorienting them at the start of a new phase. Tell them where they stopped and how that phase related to the new one they are entering.

15. Concentrate on observing and helping players. Some individuals may feel uneasy if most are caught up in the dynamics of the game. Assist players in understanding and using the mechanics of the game. Participants with interpersonal problems may fit in better with another team, role of the phase of the game. A quiet person may enjoy a strategy planning or research group.

16. Take cues from players to tell you how to help them. Facial expressions may indicate confusion or negative responses to feedback.

17. If players begin to chat and become easily distracted, regroup them with unfamiliar faces and eliminate the distractions.