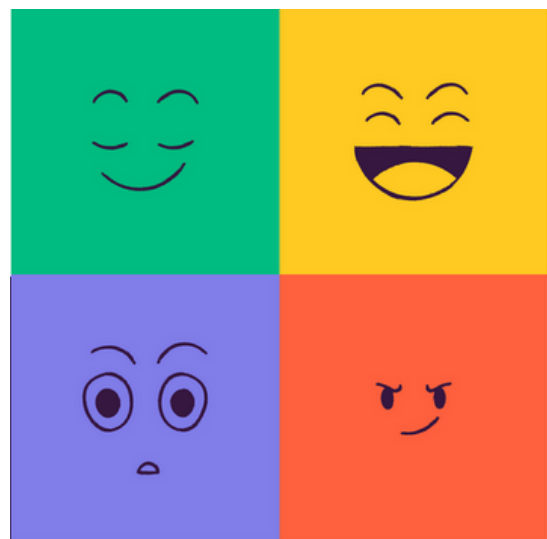


Case study

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Immersive business simulations for staff training



Written by

Elton Daddow

Commercial & Training Director, Immersive Edge

Foreword

Elton Daddow

In April 2023 the Global Head of Talent at one of the top 10 asset management companies in the world, with €2.2 trillion of assets under management (AUM) in 2024, began a conversation with our Immersive Edge Founder and then CEO Tim Dew about embarking on a transformative “**big vision**” journey for talent development across the global business.

Immersive Edge was identified as a potential partner for business simulations training to form an integral part of this journey and helping to bring this vision to life.

This is a case study which outlines the exciting, rewarding, ambitious and fruitful partnership that has developed throughout the first successful ‘cycle’ of business simulations training delivery with company staff.



Contents

- A “**Big Vision**” for Global Talent Development
- Simulation Delivery: *How it Works*
- Meet the Facilitators
- Simulation Delivery: *Hybrid Working Format*
- Feedback
- What Came Next? **Culture.Inc** Official Launch Partners
- Facilitator Reflections
- Ready to Find Out More? ***Get in Touch!***



A “Big Vision” for global talent development

Global Head of Talent

During early discussions, three key areas for possible simulation-based learning implementation had been identified, with a view to a blended in-person and online approach to delivering the immersive training sessions.

- 1) Mid-level management development cohorts
- 2) ESG integrated thinking
- 3) Other applications

As the conversations progressed, it became clear that the Immersive Edge **Boardroom.Inc** leadership focused simulation would be most appropriate for teams of identified “*Future Leaders*” within the organization, with the **TeamWork.Inc** simulation to be delivered for cohorts of new employees across the globe.








Simulation delivery: how it works

5

Immersive Edge business simulations are designed for 5-15 people, to be played over 3 levels of gameplay, with reflective periods between levels, built on [David Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle](#), [explained in more detail here](#).

Participants are assigned the below roles within the simulation, with 1-3 players in each role/department.

We use game technology to create a business environment with departments, and typical interactions.

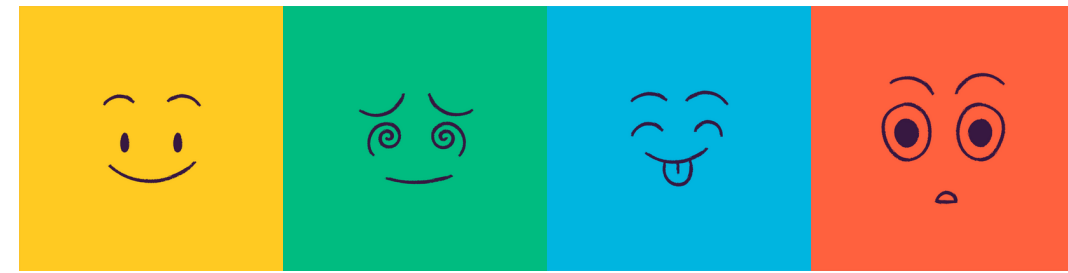
 Marketing department	 Delivery department	 CEO
 Sales team	 Finance department	

A really integral part of the accelerated learning in the simulations is that when the game starts, **26 weeks of company trading happens in just 26 minutes!**

During the gameplay, facilitators are observing people, individual behaviours and how they're going about doing things and performing tasks. Are they good at persuading people of the priorities? Have they understood the complexity of the problem? Are they working as a team, utilising the brains around them to help solve the problem? What strategy is emerging? How are people communicating with one another? Is it effective? What company culture is emerging? Who is showing leadership qualities?



Meet the facilitators



Neil Ballantyne

CEO

Immersive Edge



Elton Daddow

Commercial &
Training Director

Immersive Edge



Wendy Zwart

Business Manager
Immersive Edge



James Choles

Programme Manager
Roffey Park Institute



Immersive Edge facilitators were delighted to be joined by **Roffey Park Institute Programme Manager & expert facilitator James Choles** for the **Future Leaders Boardroom.Inc** simulation sessions, who had 4 teams in total each requiring a separate facilitator throughout the in-person and subsequent online simulation sessions.

Click on the facilitator names to view [LinkedIn](#) profiles



Simulation delivery: agreed approach

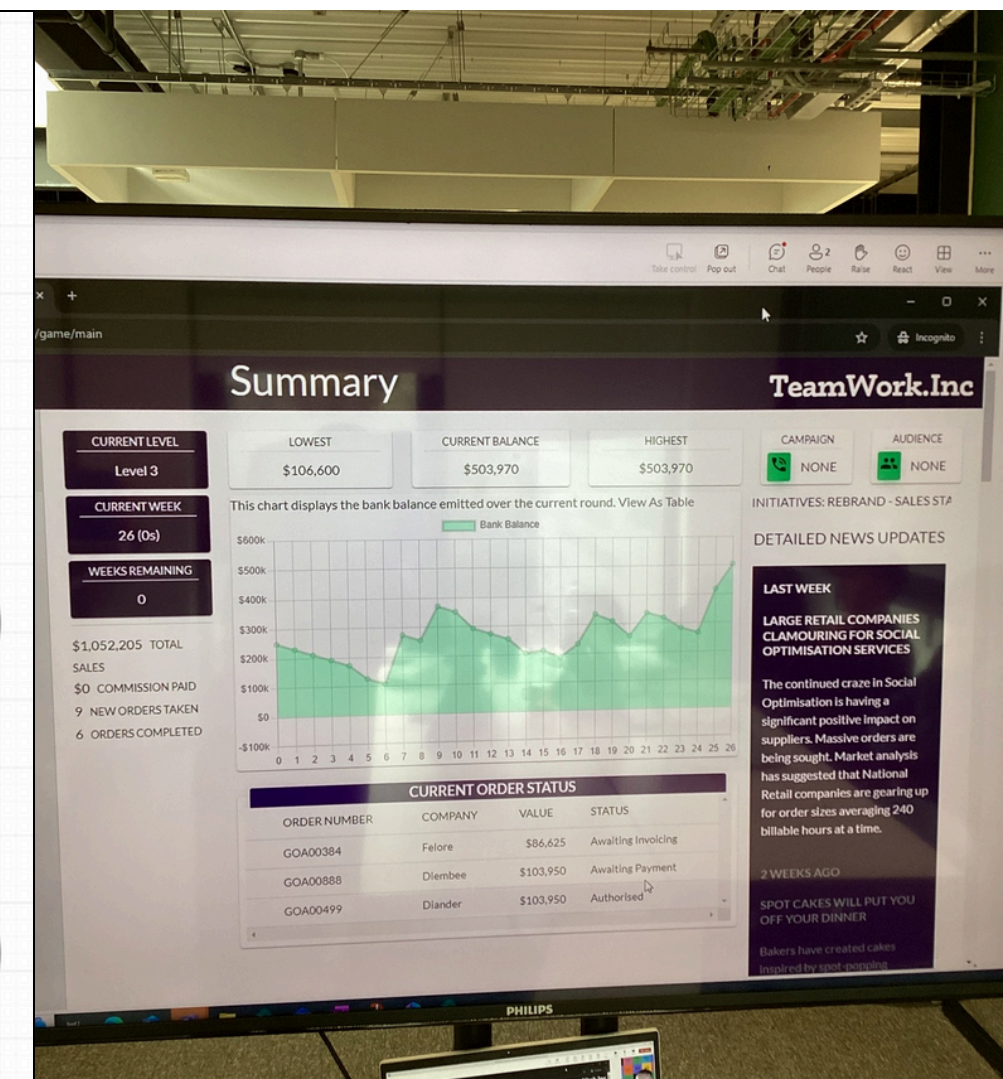
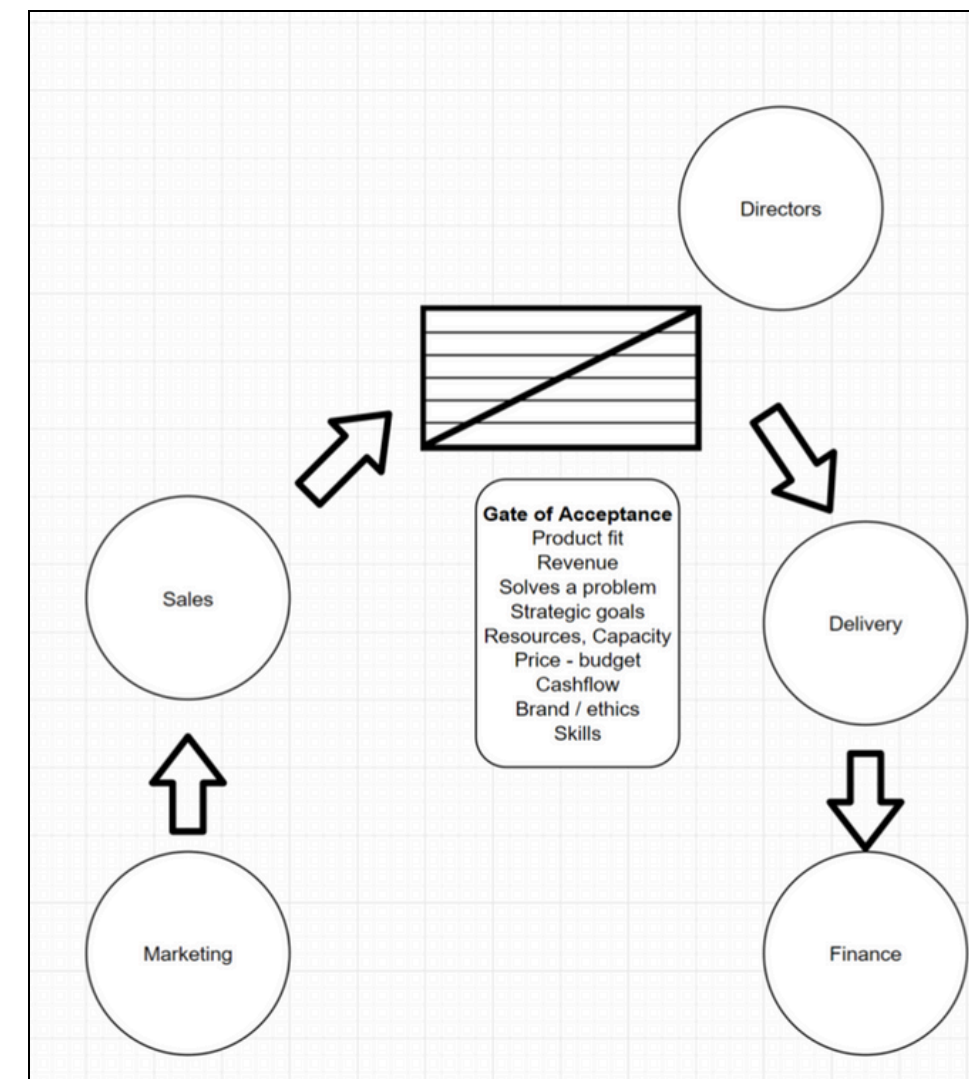
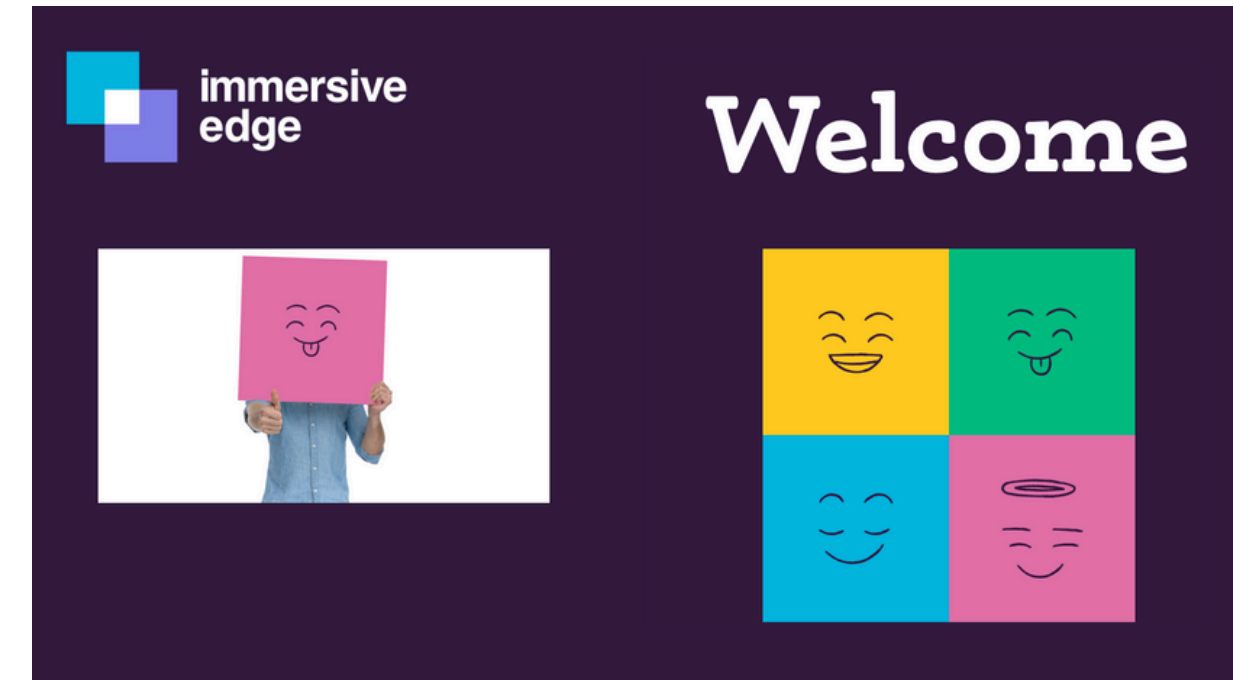
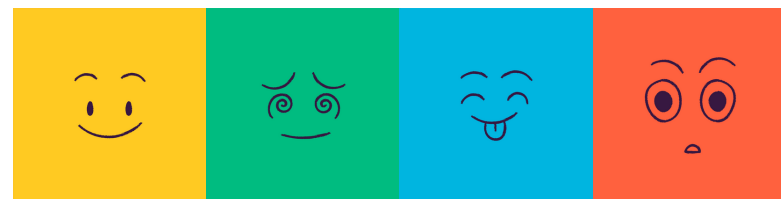
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Employees from all competing teams were given an introductory online overview presentation of the business simulations including:

- What **experiential learning** is, and its many benefits
- The **science** behind **Immersive Edge** simulations
- **Gate of Acceptance**: Interoperability of **key business functions** and how they drive productivity effectively together through collaborative, effective teamworking
- Overview of the **TeamWork.Inc** & **Boardroom.Inc** business simulations for respective groups

Competing teams were then split into smaller groups of circa 13 per group and given a walkthrough level by their facilitator in each room, with preparation time to read the company handbook and onboarding guides before starting Level 1 of the simulation gameplay, and running their own business for 26 weeks of trade in 26 minutes.

After playing level 1, teams were shown key metrics about their performance and given the opportunity to reflect on the experience during facilitated discussion time, then strategizing before the close of the face to face session with a clear plan of action to take into the following couple of weeks before level 2 would be played online.



Level 1 in Paris, in-person. Let's Play!



Team 1

TeamWork.Inc



Future Leaders

Boardroom.Inc



Team 2

TeamWork.Inc

Kicking off face-to-face with each group in Paris, with a 3 hour session, the company's **Team 1** & **Team 2** employees were playing the **TeamWork.Inc** simulation competitively, with **Future Leaders** playing **Boardroom.Inc**.

The teams were **competing against each other on Net Profit** over the 3 levels of gameplay. There was great intensity in the rooms as all players strived to get to grips with their individual roles whilst communicating effectively as a team to understand the challenges faced by their colleagues, showing great determination to succeed at the tasks they were faced with in running a business in an accelerated learning environment.

Levels 2 & 3 online. Let's Play!



Team 1

TeamWork.Inc



Future Leaders

Boardroom.Inc



Team 2

TeamWork.Inc

Levels 2 & 3 of the simulation took place online, 2 or so weeks apart following the in-person session in Paris, with staff attending from different timezones across their global organization. This presented real-world challenges with staffing, organizing, communicating and strategizing whilst still running the business effectively and efficiently during the levels of gameplay.

The same facilitators managed each session with their designated teams, and a trading update was circulated around all participants at the end of each level, with a winning team announced following the conclusion of level 3, and effectively 18 months of trading. **Winning teams were announced with star performers identified by facilitators** for particularly impressive contributions displayed across the 3 levels of gameplay.

Feedback

“Lots of Fun Playing Together”

SurveyMonkey was used to gather feedback from all participants across the teams post-completion of the training, with participants anonymously answering the following 5 questions.

- 1) How likely is it on a scale of 1-10 that you would recommend this simulation training to a friend or colleague?
- 2) What was your biggest takeaway from playing the simulation?
- 3) What did you learn about team working?
- 4) Did you enjoy the 3 session hybrid format of the training?
- 5) What improvements or changes (if any) would you suggest?

Don't let a top-down org chart get in the way of good ideas flowing up

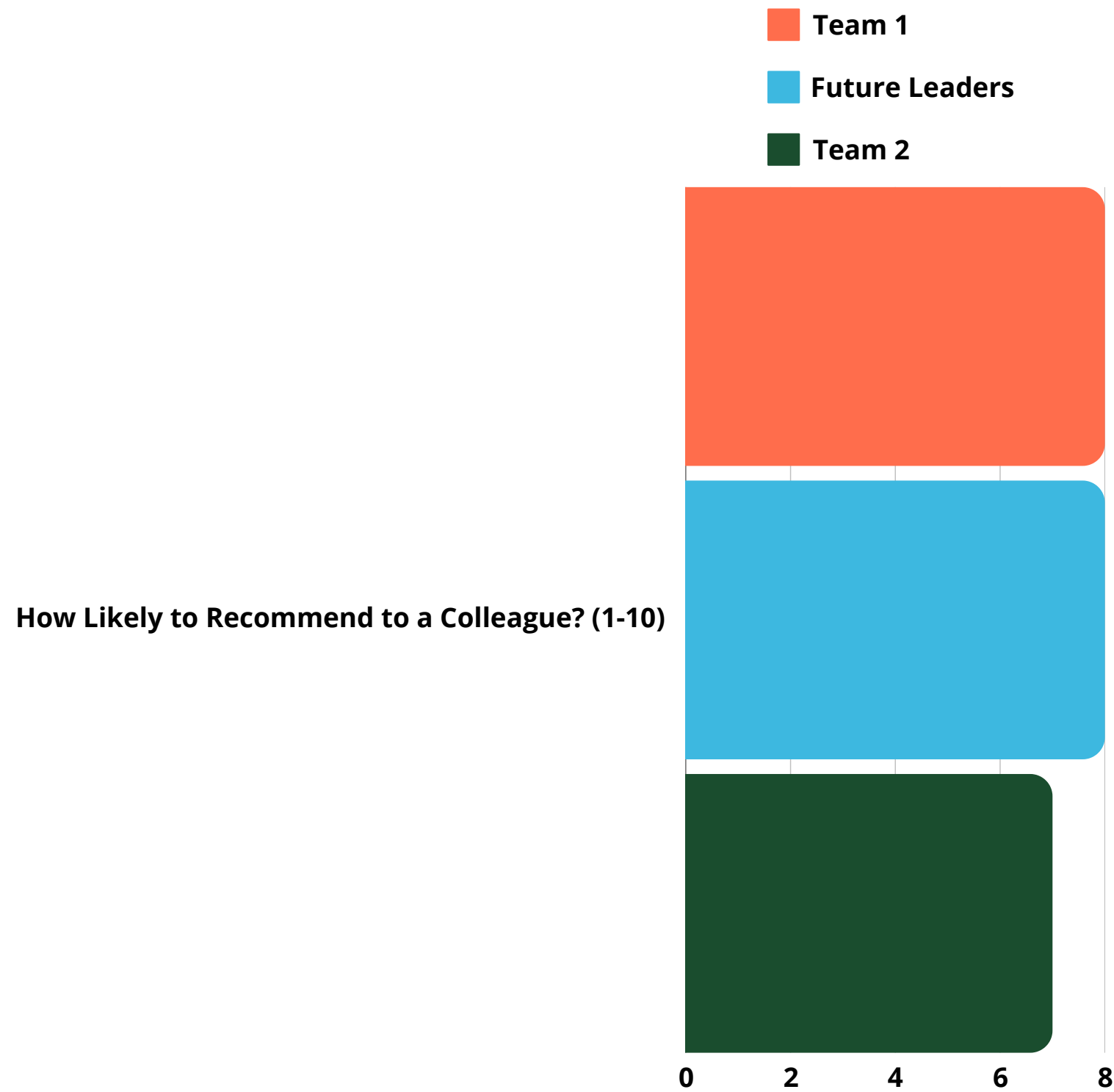
Clear communication with leadership is key for performance



These 3 sessions of simulation were much more efficient than any team building exercise. We indeed learnt by doing, and it has enabled us to develop our network.



Feedback



“Meetings held between sessions enabled us to build a common view, prepare materials, organize tasks, and this ultimately is what made a difference.”

What came next?

Culture.Inc

Launch partner for a new Culture.Inc simulation

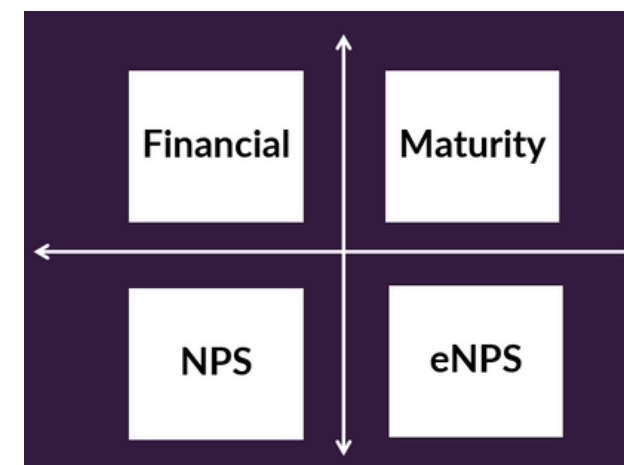
We are proud to continue our partnership working with this organization. Based on the success of the **TeamWork.Inc** & **Boardroom.Inc** simulations rollout to date, the asset management company became our official summer 2024 launch partner for a new **Culture.Inc** simulation, focused on working as a team to improve company culture, and in turn reverse the declining financial performance and brand reputation of a struggling hospitality business over 12 months of trading.

How did it work?

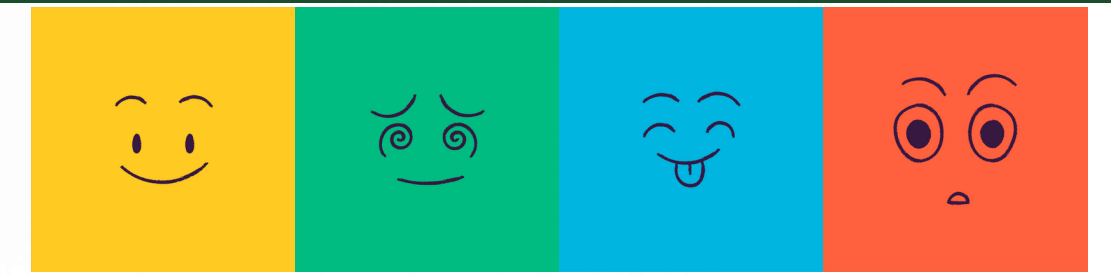
All staff who had previously played the simulations with us previously were split into 12 online teams across different geographies. Immersive Edge, **supported by Roffey Park's stellar facilitator Leigh Morris**, delivered the 12 sessions in a challenging 3 day period, with **teams ranked with a balanced scorecard approach based on their performance.**

[Find out more about Culture.Inc here.](#)

Emberglow Manor Hotel



Facilitator reflections



Neil Ballantyne
CEO
Immersive Edge

“Throughout the programme, it was great to see participants demonstrating increasing collaboration, cultural awareness, and strategic problem-solving. Early on, teams engaged in proactive discussions, aligning their actions with key metrics like NPS and eNPS. **Comparing simulation challenges to real-world issues clearly helped participants uncover valuable insights and test approaches in a safe, supportive environment.**

It was particularly rewarding to see participants **recognizing how culture influences performance**, as they reflected on their strengths in inclusivity, communication, and empowerment. While some faced challenges with team dynamics or interpreting cross-cultural values, these moments **provided valuable opportunities for growth and reflection**. Their willingness to embrace incremental changes highlighted a strong commitment to driving meaningful cultural and organizational improvements.”

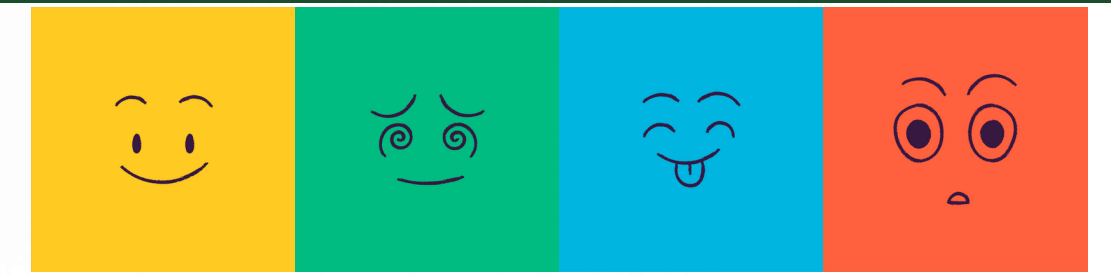


Elton Daddow
Commercial & Training Director
Immersive Edge

“**Watching the teams navigate through the business simulations was truly inspiring**, particularly taking on the added business challenge of replicating a hybrid working environment to adapt communication styles from in-person to online between levels of gameplay. Their ability to analyze data, synthesize insights, and make informed decisions in real-time **showcased exceptional collaboration and critical thinking**. What stood out most was their adaptability; they pivoted seamlessly when unexpected scenarios arose, leveraging each team member's unique strengths to craft innovative solutions with a focus on both short-term profitability and long-term sustainability that **exemplified effective leadership and sound business acumen**.

“As a facilitator, I was impressed by how they **maintained clear communication and fostered an inclusive decision-making process throughout** the simulations. They made it a point to align their goals, ensuring every member had a voice and felt empowered to contribute. This spirit not only strengthened their performance but also **created a cohesive team dynamic** that drove their successes.”

Facilitator reflections



Wendy Zwart
Business Manager
Immersive Edge

“**With each level of the business simulation the participants showed notable improvements in teamwork and problem-solving skills** to make sure the company they were running stayed in business with growing profits. As a team they found clever ways to share the available information **efficiently and effectively**, making use of each team member’s strengths and the considerable skills in the room.

I was most impressed to see that every team was so enthusiastic and very much involved, even in between the sessions. Starting by working together in one room and then doing follow-up sessions with participants dialing in from all over the world has its challenges. But with **strong communication and attention** paid to each other the participants were able to overcome these obstacles admirably and create a well-knit, high-performing team that involved every team member.”



James Choles
Programme Manager
Roffey Park Institute

“I had a great time working with the future leaders. At our first, in-person, session in Paris I asked the participants for their objectives and they mentioned **being able to drive change, deal with time and people pressures, work on their ‘soft’ skills and be able to better understand dependencies across the system**. The three levels of Boardroom.Inc, spread over three sessions from January to March 2024, certainly gave them the chance to focus on these areas as well as time to reflect on their performance (both team and individual) and apply their learning.

What impressed me the most about this group of leaders was their willingness to forget their job titles and get stuck into the roles I had assigned them. Collaboration and communication were both excellent, and I had to keep reminding myself that many of them were operating in their second (or perhaps third!) language. An added challenge was that because of work commitments we never had exactly the same group twice. This meant that the participants had to adapt in the moment (again reflecting real life), sometimes taking on new roles or mentoring others as the situation required.

As my friends at Immersive Edge are fond of saying: **‘Sometimes you win, every time you learn.’**




Ready to find out more?

If you're embarking on a **"big vision"** journey for talent development within your organization, or looking more broadly at how to engage global workforces in innovative, immersive learning experiences with serious yet fun simulated learning experiences, **get in touch with us** to explore how experiential learning can be **embedded as a core part of your training and development programmes**, either via one of our existing simulations, or a customized version more specific to your training needs, at scale.

Sometimes you win, every time you learn



Get in touch

-  Immersive Edge, 5 South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh EH2 4AN
-  +44 131 210 0201
-  hello@immersiveedge.tech

GoGreen.Inc

TeamWork.Inc

Boardroom.Inc

ChangeManagement.Inc

Culture.Inc