



We Help You Focus Clearly,
Organize Effectively,
And Act With Courage



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When to Consider *SimuReal*

- When you have a concrete, specific, and complex problem that needs to be addressed.
- When you want to uncover the structural and procedural blocks to solving that problem effectively.
- When the organization (and you) are prepared to engage in self-examination.
- When you want to shorten the time it takes to make decisions.
- When you want to “test drive” a restructuring plan before you implement it, and you are willing to accept feedback that may change the design.

When to Pass

- When the organization is in crisis. (This is powerful tool for improvement, but you might need to get past the crisis first.)
- When the organization is highly dysfunctional. (*SimuReal* focuses on improvement, not transformation. You may need pre-work to improve the organization’s readiness for self-examination.)
- When you want to focus on aligning the organization around a given vision or strategy. (Consider *Real Time Strategic Change* instead.)
- When you want to focus on building a common vision. (Consider *Future Search* instead.)
- When you simply want to do team-building. Although improved teamwork may indeed result from *SimuReal*, there may be a better approach to that goal. □

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SimuReal

The Power of an Organizational Mirror

Have you ever thought, “if everyone in my organization could just see how we *really* work, things would change?” This is the essence of *SimuReal*** , a large-group method that holds up a mirror to a system or an organization.

In a one-day workshop, *SimuReal* allows an organization to examine how it operates, and then spontaneously adjust structure or process to complete its work more successfully. This is different from basic simulation because it is not a role-play. *SimuReal* has *real* people doing *real* work. The goal of the workshop is to deal with a concrete, specific issue. What *is* simulated is the organizational structure in the confines of the room, although not necessarily the structure according to the organization chart!

It is the “psychological” structure of the organization that is simulated. For instance, if one group seems to be continually marginalized, it might be seated in the farthest corner of the room. If decision-making is conducted on the golf-course, a small putting green might be placed in the hallway. If the power group meets behind closed doors, they might be in the center of the room, with a screen around them.

A one-day *SimuReal* workshop includes three stop-action periods, in which participants do real work (action) and then debrief (analysis). The debriefing is focused on what people are noticing about *how* they work and how they contribute to the task. The goal is to help the organization learn from its experience and determine what to improve for the next action period. After a successful *SimuReal*, participants leave with new awareness, real work progress, and an improved organization.

Before the event, a design team works with facilitators to determine the task(s) or issue(s) to be addressed, who will participate, and how to lay out the “psychological map” of the organization. Once in *SimuReal*, the facilitators act as “cultural anthropologists” during the action periods and facilitate the analysis process.

Our experience is that amazing insights have been gleaned simply by *seeing* how the organization works in its “usual” way. People often take advantage of action periods to try new methods or behaviors, and they can see the impact of their changes immediately.

SimuReal is also a wonderful tool to assist restructuring efforts. If used at the kick-off point, you can identify issues that need to be addressed. If used in a “test-drive,” you can see how the new organization might respond to its work challenges, and what gaps exist in the design.

Interested in exploring this approach? Give us a call. We’d love to help! □ *CMP*

** *SimuReal* was developed by Don Klein in the 1970’s. Klein is a community psychologist, consultant, and Union Institute faculty.