



Business Simulations – Apollo 13 And customised simulations

‘Apollo 13 has the ‘wow factor’! Since our Apollo 13 team away days the teams are working much more closely together. They had fun AND learned how to improve processes. A double win! As one of my team put it: ‘The best team day I’ve ever been on!’

*Alan Shrimpton, Interim Head of Transformation
British Transport Police*



You are the Mission Control Centre of NASA. Your aim is to support the Crew during this extraordinary recreation of the original 1970s Mission. You must design and implement your services, juggle multiple projects and work closely as a team to make the Mission a success.

In each round you will be challenged with increasingly complex issues, time and budget pressures, then review your performance.

You will have full responsibility for supporting the astronauts through the launch, journey to and from the moon and ensuring their safe return and splashdown, at the same time realizing NASA’s strategic goals, unless things have to change ...



‘Failure is not an option.’

Why use simulations?

However your department is structured, there are very diverse groups of people who perform best when they work together but often work in isolation, even when in the same building.

Many teams often fully appreciate this but ‘habit blindness’ means they don’t see the wood for the trees. They feel too busy to stop and take a step back. Also, in fairness, suggesting changes can be sensitive.

Business simulations break through all of this. They give teams an unforgettable shared experience. Apollo 13 is completely absorbing, yet mirrors very accurately the challenges that all teams face. They learn new ways to

- use their diverse skills and knowledge creatively
- solve problems earlier and faster
- make better decisions
- give each other constructive feedback
- get fired up again after setbacks
- use processes to improve clarity and efficiency, rather than slowing things down
- replace ‘do-do-do’ with ‘plan-do-review’

Simulations immerse people in a situation with clear parallels to their real work. They can experiment safely, experience the consequences and benefits of different approaches and transfer these to their real work after the event.



‘And for once all the actions agreed at the end actually got done!’

Darren Goldsby, CTO, Hearst UK



Learning & Business Objectives

We work with you to understand your specific team and business development objectives. We then bring the very latest thinking in experiential learning to help you achieve your goals. Here are some examples of objectives our clients have achieved.

- Reward the team for a year of hard work, while also generating ideas on how we can continue to adapt to new business challenges
- Experience how, by talking, thinking and working together, teams can learn to solve problems and make continual improvements to services without the stress typically associated with changes
- Achieve a more reliable, cost effective, consistent service for the business, so that we are trusted to be involved earlier in projects and given a more strategic role
- See our service delivery from a business rather than an internal/technical perspective, and learn to make a stronger business case for our services
- Bring people from remote teams together and give them a shared experience that will enable them to work more closely together when they go back to their offices

Contact us

For more information and a no-obligation consultation
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How can Apollo 13 be used?

Stand-alone team building or learning event

A dynamic, supportive event for a new or established team to work and learn together. The outputs include practical ideas for cross-team working, service management, process or project improvements, plus the shared confidence and drive to actually transfer those ideas into reality.

A kick-off event for a project or change initiative

A fresh and unexpected way to launch a project, which sets the tone and provokes discussion on how best to lead and manage the initiative together. There are different simulations available which focus on different team skills and business or project goals.



Based on the inspiring story of Domino's Pizza. How Marketing, Finance, Admin, Products need to align with IT to deliver challenging technological and business change. Sit in each other's roles for a day and deliver the company's biggest ever transformation!



Challenge of Egypt

Projects! Are you doing Agile, product development, or needing to re-invigorate a process that has become tired and clunky? Get creative, build high-performing teams, juggle complexity, multiple stakeholders with strong personalities, plan and track collaboratively and roll with the changes that come at you. Because they will!



A story with a twist that will inspire everyone. All about leading and inspiring behaviour and attitude change, knowledge sharing and organisational awareness. And nowhere is this more significant for organisations than in the area of cyber-security. The biggest risk? People of course!

Team coaching

To sustain the momentum, light-touch team coaching sessions can be provided. An experienced facilitator will help the team to reflect on and adjust habits, behaviour and practices, appreciate the wider organisational context and the value that they and their project are contributing, continually improve processes and build relationships.

The groups select their own topics and take responsibility for their own learning, project delivery business impact. The facilitator provides working processes and 'nuggets' of best practice.

Our facilitators

The Open Limits team is led by Philippa Hale, who is also on the Associate Faculty at Henley Business School. The team each have at least 20 years in Organisation Development, learning and change leadership and ensure a valuable, memorable experience.

Our clients include





Customised Business Simulations

In addition to the GamingWorks' simulations we also build customised simulations for clients. Here are two case studies of different size and scope to illustrate what is possible.

Project Leadership for Hydraulics Research Wallingford

Brief: to build a business simulation using the organisation's world class wave basin and ship simulator, to give their senior engineers a powerful, experiential learning experience in Project Management, Team Building & Leadership.

The simulation was so successful it has been made available to both HR Wallingford and Open Limits clients. For the full story, visit our website www.openlimits.com.



'A huge amount of information to take away that is relevant to my role and I can use.'

Tony Appleton, Business Development Director, Parsons Brinckerhoff

'Interesting, challenging and fun! It is always a challenge making engineers/scientists take on board 'soft skills' as we are too used to analysing data and being professional sceptics!'

Chris Lomax - Technical Director, Head of Ports & Marine, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Major Incident Management Simulation

'Our Apollo 13 experience truly launched the Service Management journey for Harrods. Both the day itself and the follow up were excellent: including creation of a mini-simulation to assist with the launch of a new Major Incident Management process. The prep work gave us food for thought on how we might approach this and the day itself was great fun. The team's feedback included:

'Really made it real for me'

Totally get now why we need to do things in the way suggested. Prior to this I would have just gone off and done my own thing.'

In fact we were able to test the process for real the very next day and the team did really well. Thanks Open Limits!'

Humaira Ali, Head of Business Transformation, Harrods

We have worked with a number of clients and co-developed scenarios related to critical business systems. Though the processes and policies are often there, they require multi-layered knowledge sharing, individual awareness, team relationship consolidation, cross team working and clarity of roles, process and accountabilities to be fully embedded.

We will work with you to understand roles, map out the details of events and responses from multiple stakeholders, work out who would most likely have what information, at what stage in the process. We then run the simulation with your people so everyone across all teams involved experience it together. We distribute both business and technical roles across the teams and involve all in a comprehensive debrief.

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