

TESTIMONIAL – HOW TO USE SIMULTRAIN® WITH 16-YEAR OLD STUDENTS

A TESTIMONIAL FROM KARSTEN SCHLEIDER – MAX WEBER SCHOOL, GERMANY

With nearly 3,000 students, the Max-Weber School is a large, commercial Vocational - Technical school in Freiburg, southern Germany. Students attend full-time to finish their secondary education or attain technical or business administration college degrees. Project Management is part of the state-prescribed curriculum.

The school has used the project management simulation SimulTrain® in several courses since 2009, beginning with students in the computer sciences and business curricula as young as 16. SimulTrain® is also used in the Vo-Tech IT program with students 16 to 40, and in the secondary school of Economics, where students average 25 years old.



Students demonstrate a high level of acceptance for the SimulTrain® tool and the challenge of problem solving within its life-like simulations. The "Soccer Tournament" planning scenario is especially popular, and frequently used with younger students, with whom instructors are careful to avoid using complicated technical terminology. Students especially enjoy the team-building experience and the role of being project managers while accepting individual responsibility for specific tasks.



The serious game is typically executed in six, 45-minute periods per session, regardless of whether students are already familiar with the project management techniques or just novices. However, for the latter, more time is needed; an additional 2 to 4 hours of instruction to explain the Gantt chart, network diagram and metrics used in SimulTrain®.

Age appropriate presentation is essential to success.

The background story is especially important. For younger students, a simplified version of the scenario, including subject matter they can relate to and less complexity in the simulation, is recommended. Duration of the standard simulation should also be reduced, and performance indices simplified. The latest version of SimulTrain® 11, just released, enables instructors to make simulations shorter and simpler.

Karsten Schleider, a teacher at the Max-Weber School who uses SimulTrain® with younger students, says, "My 14-year-old son can easily solve complex planning scenarios in computer games. Therefore, it should be quite possible to organize and process business games for students as young as 12."