2023 VR Learning Adoption Guide

E-BOOK

TALESPIN

Welcome, and thanks for reading this e-book about virtual reality learning. We're glad you've stopped by.

Immersive learning and VR learning have become popular learning solutions, and for good reason—the benefits and use cases they provide companies across industries are vast.

At Talespin, we've seen this potential since our founding in 2015. We've collected a lot of learnings over the years and helped customers in industries ranging from healthcare to insurance and telecommunications start their immersive learning journeys.

We're excited to share some of these insights with you in this e-book as you consider adopting immersive learning at your own organization.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

You've probably been hearing more lately about the Metaverse and Web 3.0. You may have noticed that it is starting to infiltrate not just our personal lives, but our work lives as well. Amid all the noise and hype, one of the key use cases for the Metaverse in the business world is through training and workforce development – also known as VR learning – a use case that we will thoroughly examine in this whitepaper.

So what exactly is this guide? Quite simply, our goal is to provide a framework for understanding VR training and a roadmap for adopting it at your organization.

We'll do this by zooming out to examine the broader immersive learning and VR training landscape, the associated benefits of this technology, and how it can be incorporated into your workplace training.

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We'll share best practices for planning your VR learning program, evaluating VR learning technology, and measuring the metrics that matter. We hope to give you the tools to set you on a successful trajectory when it comes to implementing this exciting technology.

"So many companies are taking an innovative approach to their training by incorporating an immersive learning program," said Kyle Jackson, CEO and Co-Founder, Talespin. "As we'll see in this guide, there's no limit to the use cases that companies can draw on as they look to accelerate their workforce development using immersive technology."

WHAT THIS GUIDE IS NOT

Now that we've established what this guide is, the next natural question might be: what won't I find in this guide?

With that in mind, please note this guide is not:

- An "end all be all" when it comes to VR learning, or a comprehensive VR learning program design. Rather, it is a guide to help you understand the basic components of an immersive learning program and to offer a foundation for building your own unique immersive learning strategy for your organization.

- A guarantee that VR learning is the right fit for your organization. While we believe VR learning has amazing benefits that nearly any organization can receive ROI from (see benefits in section 1), it may not be the right fit for your organization's specific goals, challenges, and timelines.

- A recommendation for how to integrate immersive learning into your pre-existing training programs. Although we mention that such considerations are critical, every organization's learning and development programs are unique, and we do not have that context for your specific organization. Such guidance would be provided during a deeper engagement with an immersive learning platform provider, or consulting services firm.

- An accredited course or original peer-reviewed research on VR learning adoption or implementation.

- Any sort of prediction about VR learning, the Metaverse, and their future.

Now that we've established how this guide can serve as a tool in your immersive learning adoption journey, let's dive in.

2023 VR LEARNING ADOPTION GUIDE

UNDERSTAND THE FUNDAMENTALS OF IMMERSIVE LEARNING AND VR TRAINING

PART I:

Understand the Fundamentals of Immersive Learning and VR Training

Section outcome: An understanding of immersive learning that you can use to guide adoption and to socialize your immersive learning initiative within your organization

WHAT IS IMMERSIVE LEARNING? — INTRODUCTION + DEFINITION

According to Training Industry, immersive learning provides individuals with an "interactive learning environment, either physically or virtually, to replicate possible scenarios or to teach particular skills or processes.

Simulations, role play, and virtual learning environments can be considered immersive learning."

Accenture's definition states: "Immersive learning, an advanced form of active learning, uses technology to create fully simulated environments where learners interact with the experience—as close to the 'real world' as you can get."

No matter the exact definition you find, the key characteristics of immersive learning include offering learners:

- A higher level of engagement
- Realistic training experiences
- The opportunity to practice and apply skills
- Immersion while learning new subject matter and developing skills

Immersive learning may seem like a cutting edge, entirely new technology. And while the use of virtual reality technology to deliver immersive

learning is relatively new, people have used immersive learning in the real world for decades, if not centuries.

Humans have always relied on immersive learning to master skills. It's the reason why firefighters have fire training structures to learn how to navigate real-life situations. It's why NASA does parabolic flights —where airplanes take steep dives in order to create the weightless environment their astronauts will experience in space. And it's the same reason role play is a staple for learning and development organizations across the world.

By enabling people to take what they've learned and put it into practice and application, they get to simulate what it's like to perform tasks and navigate situations, gaining invaluable experience for when the time comes to perform those tasks for real.

There are tremendous learning benefits to staging simulations in the real world, but there are downsides as well. Even in a staged fire, there is still the inherent risk of running into a fire. It's expensive and wasteful for NASA to burn fuel during these parabolic flights. Role play with actors for difficult conversations can lack realism, and isn't scalable.

In other words, creating immersive simulations in the physical world has challenges and limitations, making it difficult to reap the aforementioned benefits. But what if we could deliver the benefits of simulated experiences another way, without those limitations?

That is exactly what immersive learning that uses virtual reality technology presents—the ability to reap the benefits of simulation, role play, and scenario-based learning, but in a format that is easily repeatable, scalable, and realistic thanks to VR technology.

But those are just a few of VR learning's benefits—let's take a look at some of the others in this next section.

Learn more about immersive learning in this blog post: *What is Immersive Learning? An Introduction to Learning in the Metaverse*

E-LEARN
45 MINUTES

CLASSROOM
2 HOURS

TIME TO
COMPLETE
TRAINING

VR
29 MINUTES

BENEFITS OF VR TRAINING

So why is immersive learning being used for training purposes? As mentioned, there are countless benefits of VR learning.

In a world where learners forget 70% of what they are taught within 24 hours, and 90% within a month – there has to be a better way to engage

workers and retain knowledge.

To start, research has found that VR training is more impactful for the learner. PwC, for example, found that learners trained with VR were 275% more confident to act on what they learned after training, representing a 40% improvement over the traditional classroom and 35% improvement over e-learning.

Companies are already taking advantage of the ROI of learning in the Metaverse, deploying VR training for use cases like leadership development, employee onboarding and VR soft skills training.

Currently, these training experiences take place in "Microverses," or siloed virtual environments designed for a specific training use case, that are analogous to a virtual office space or classroom. In these virtual environments, companies can have their employees practice skills through simulated role play with virtual human characters, coaching and mentoring sessions, and larger group learning formats with multiple learners in the same virtual space.

Because they are in a virtual environment, learners get the chance to simulate conversations and tasks in a safe place, giving them crucial repetitions, practicing the navigation of tricky interactions and learning the best ways to build empathy and establish rapport. There are numerous benefits that stem from VR training that are applicable across use cases.

These include:

- **The opportunity to practice skills in a safe place:** Learners are able to replicate difficult conversations or tasks in a safe environment, which is particularly helpful for practicing difficult conversations such as giving performance feedback, delivering bad news or negotiating. This applies to hard skills as well, as companies like Osso VR, a surgical training company, empower healthcare professionals with better ways to share, practice and learn new skills and procedures using virtual reality.

- **Emotionally engaging training content:** E-learning is a passive experience that doesn't require a learner to think on their feet or deeply engage. VR offers an entirely new level of emotional engagement, as learners experience real emotions as they engage with virtual human characters that exhibit realistic speech, body language, and mannerisms. This emotional realism helps learners facilitate a greater deal of empathy for their colleagues and direct reports.

- **Realistic immersive environments:** Traditional training takes place on a computer or in a classroom—places that are subject to distractions. VR soft skills training takes place in an immersive virtual world, ensuring employees are focused and engaged with critical training programs. Verizon found that 97% of employees felt better prepared to handle an in-store robbery after VR trainings.

- **Real-time feedback:** Learners are able to get feedback immediately on the decisions they make in a virtual simulation, allowing them to try again and improve their skills on the fly. Immersive learning modules can allow feedback to be delivered verbally via a virtual human coach to promote greater learning and improvement, as well as built-in performance scoring for specific skills.

- **Identifying workforce skills gaps:** Immersive learning platforms that feature skills analytics and learning insights empower companies to understand the skills and performance of employees—as well as progression at the individual, team, and organizational level. This level of insights empowers companies to know where they need to improve and invest. It also can help you retain workers: Gallup found that 48% of American workers would consider changing jobs for better skills training.

- **On-demand training for remote workforces:** Unlike roleplay with an actor or a classroom learning session, virtual humans are available for learners to practice soft skills with at any time. All learners need to do is turn on the headset, or computer if the simulation is being experienced via desktop streaming, and they're good to go. This is an important advantage in the age of the remote and hybrid workforce.

- **Reduced training costs:** At scale, VR is proven to be more cost effective than classroom and e-learning as referenced in

PwC's study. At the time of this study, no-code content creation tools that further decrease the cost of immersive learning programs were not available. With the ability to put immersive content creation capabilities in the hands of learning designers and instructional designers, content can now be made even faster, cheaper, and with fewer resources required.

Learn more about the benefits of immersive learning in this blog post: Benefits of Virtual Reality Soft Skills Training Scenarios

ASSESS CURRENT WORKFORCE DYNAMICS AND TALENT PRACTICES AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

PART II:

Assess Current Workforce Dynamics and Talent Practices at Your Organization

Section outcome: An inventory of the internal factors that should be accounted for in your immersive learning program design

Any organization that is considering VR training should examine how it would work within their own organization's context. Every company has a unique culture, personalized training needs, and other factors to consider based on their locations, organizational structure, workforce philosophies, industry, and more.

Taking stock of your workforce, locations, and executive buy-in will help you understand

where a VR training program might be most successful within your company.

It'll provide key feedback to inform how you design a program and ensure maximum adoption.

Let's take a look at some of these factors.

EVALUATE WORKFORCE DYNAMICS

Any technology implementation only works if your employees actually use and engage with the technology.

For some companies, they may simply have a workforce that does not want to experiment with new platforms and products—perhaps there have been bad experiences with technology in the past, for example. Or you could be in an organization or industry that is slower to innovate. Alternatively, you may work at a startup, where

everyone is always looking forward to trying the latest innovations.

To understand where your organization sits, ask yourself: does my company promote innovation and does our workforce want to embrace it? Or are we slow to adopt new technologies? Will we face resistance when it comes to socializing our VR learning program?

This will inform how you go about implementation for a VR learning program. You may want to start with a pilot to demonstrate ROI, for example. Or start with testing immersive learning for a specific training use case, and solicit stakeholder feedback prior to exploring other use cases.

"I've yet to come across a business that wouldn't benefit from a VR learning program, but that does not mean that one-size-fits-all," said Annie Thompson, CRO at Talespin. *"To ensure long-term success, companies should conduct a careful review of their workforce, and look to implement across teams and departments that are most likely to see success, helping secure buy-in and enthusiasm for the program."*

ACCOUNT FOR REMOTE WORK / HYBRID WORK

For companies that have a remote or hybrid workforce, that can be an important consideration for how you deliver training programs, and also may necessitate the development of specific skills geared toward remote work.

If you are going the VR learning route, will you send headsets to each employee, or will you conduct training through 2D desktop devices? You should also consider which training may be more effective in a remote environment versus an in-person setting.

But it's also important to consider how a remote or hybrid workforce might inform your training programs, too. That's because the skills it takes to be successful in an in-person environment are different from those that it takes to navigate a remote or hybrid workplace.

For example, it might be harder to feel empathy for a colleague or a direct report when you only interact with them over a screen or phone call. Or it may be more challenging to establish trust with remote colleagues without a concerted effort and the skills required to do so. Training topics like virtual leadership can be simulated using VR, for example, to help employees acclimate to applying soft skills in hybrid work environments.

These considerations should be accounted for in your VR learning program from both a training deployment perspective,

as well as within the subject matter of your training programs.

EXAMINE COMPANY CULTURE

Another important aspect to consider is your company culture. As with any learning and development initiative, VR learning programs should reflect the beliefs and values of the organization. For VR training to be most effective, it should align with the company's culture in terms of tone, language, and approach.

For example, if a company values collaboration and teamwork, the VR training program should incorporate simulations that promote collaborative mindsets and collaboration skills.

By accounting for a company's culture in VR training programs, organizations can ensure that their employees are learning in a way that aligns with the organization's values.

Another cultural factor that should influence VR learning program design is the global nature of an organization. Companies should be mindful of the cultural norms for each country where they have employees, and account for localization. For this reason, VR training programs should be built with cultural differences in mind.

Nomenclature and business etiquette might differ from one country to another, as an example. These nuances should be reflected in training content, and for this reason you might decide to roll out a global VR learning program in phases to accomodate the specific needs of each of your organization's operational territories.

The level of priority that learning and employee development receives is another factor to consider. Is your company one where continuous learning is supported and is a central part of the workplace culture? Or is it secondary to other initiatives? Do employees value development in the workplace to begin with? Understanding these dynamics will help you put forth a program that is most likely to be well received and adopted, and also steer you away from approaches that may face significant resistance.

One helpful way to understand your organization's appetite and preferences when it comes to training is to conduct an anonymous survey of employees and the leadership team. This can inform where the organization believes training will be most impactful, or is in the highest demand. Partnering with L&D, People Operations and DE&I teams can help with gathering these data points as well.

An understanding of the aforementioned cultural landscape within your organization will help guide the attributes of your immersive learning program.

CONSIDER WORKFORCE SIZE

Workforce size is another critical factor to keep in mind as you assess your training needs and options. As mentioned earlier, VR learning has been proven to be cost effective at scale. To reap that benefit, understanding how many

employees you aim to train in VR is critical. This will help determine the required budget, staffing, and logistics that comprise your VR training program.

Because VR training helps employees learn up to 4X faster than traditional training methods, according to the PwC report, it is a great tool for enterprise companies who are looking to streamline their global training programs for large workforces.

VR training for smaller and midsize companies, or individual offices or locations, is also highly beneficial. For example, take retail stores as an example: these types of businesses experience high employee turnover and need to maintain consistent standards across locations. Immersive VR training can allow businesses to get new employees up to speed faster for both the process knowledge and soft skills required for their respective job roles.

IDENTIFY IMMERSIVE LEARNING USE CASE(S)

PART III:

Identify Immersive Learning Use Case(s)

Section outcome: An identified immersive learning use case with defined objectives

With the broader dynamics at play identified in the previous check list item, zeroing in on a specific training use case is the next step in your adoption journey.

To determine how to best implement immersive learning at your organization, assessing your workforce training needs will inform where VR training can be most impactful.

Examining workforce training gaps and critical use cases, evaluating existing learning and development programs to see where immersive learning can be additive, and considering the aforementioned workforce dynamics like remote work and company culture are examples of factors that will inform how and why you adopt immersive learning, and for which use cases.

USE CASE IDENTIFICATION

For any company that is implementing immersive learning and development programs, you should take a step back to comprehensively examine what use cases will be most powerful. Oftentimes, starting with the most impactful use case will help create buy-in and excitement for a VR learning program as you roll it out to the wider company.

It's important to take inventory of your existing learning and development programs, the amount of available budget for new training initiatives, and to consider how VR training might be integrated into existing programs. For example, if you currently use a blend of off-the-shelf e-learning content and remote classroom

training, how can VR learning modules that enable learners to practice and apply training complement those existing modules?

You should also ask yourself the following questions:

- Given the benefits mentioned above, are there opportunities for VR training to replace some existing training initiatives, leading to cost savings and efficiencies?
- Identify skills gaps and upskilling initiatives where there is currently no learning and development initiative in place: are these an opportunity for you to implement immersive learning?
- Can we use immersive learning to improve and complement existing training initiatives to bolster them and improve ROI?
- When you're considering workforce skills gaps and training needs, you'll also want to analyze what goals will be most impactful for your program—a topic we'll look at more in depth in the following section.

Immersive learning use cases are virtually limitless, and we're seeing new ones developed on a regular basis. Examples of common ways businesses are incorporating this technology today include:

- Onboarding new employees
- Upskilling and reskilling managers
- Delivering leadership and communications skills training to executives
- Improving customer experience and customer service with VR customer service training
- Delivering diversity, equity, and inclusion training in VR
- Improving sales training
- Helping healthcare workers simulate the variety of situations they encounter
- Creating scenarios where insurance professionals can practice customer interactions

These are just a few examples that can become a part of your training program, or serve as thought starters for where you might best apply VR learning in your organization.

DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES OF YOUR IMMERSIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

With your use case for immersive learning identified, it is time to get specific about what outcomes you hope to achieve for that specific use case. For example, if your use case is employee onboarding, how many employees do you hope to onboard? How quickly do you hope to accomplish onboarding? What learning and business KPIs will you be tracking? (see more on success metrics in section 4.)

When setting objectives, it's important for companies to balance short term and long term goals, ensure that realistic benchmarks are put into place, and develop a program where growth and progression can be measured over time. Short term objectives might be things like onboarding a certain number of employees by a

specific date. A longer term objective might be to improve employee engagement levels over time, or to achieve training budget efficiencies.

Examples of Immersive Learning Program Objectives Might Include:

- Onboarding a specified number of new employees by a certain date
- Reduce training costs by xx dollars per year
- Increase employee engagement in remote learning modules by a certain percentage
- Demonstrate a certain percentage of performance improvement in pre- and post-assessments for a specific set of skills
- Make a measured investment in the development of xx number of employees

"Defining the objectives of your VR program will help create alignment on the goals of the program within the C-Suite, while also providing benchmarks and transparency into how your workforce is progressing and acquiring new skills," said Joe Millward, GM of APAC at Talespin.

"A rich data analysis from your program is great, but it needs to not exist in a vacuum: mapping data and KPIs back to key objectives will ensure your company is taking tangible steps that will deliver measurable and valuable outcomes to your business."

DETERMINE HOW YOU WILL APPROACH VR LEARNING CONTENT AND VR HARDWARE

PART IV:

Determine How You Will Approach VR Learning Content and VR Hardware

Section outcome: A determined approach to immersive learning content and content distribution

VR LEARNING CONTENT CONSIDERATIONS: CONTENT CURATION VS. CUSTOM CONTENT CREATION

Your training use case will inform the approach you take to VR learning content. For example, if your training use case is for common training subject matter like employee onboarding, managerial training, or basic communications skills training, off-the-shelf training content libraries may be able to suit your needs. Active listening is an example of a communication skill that is required across job roles that can be practiced using off-the-shelf content.

On the other hand, if your use case is specific to your organization and its culture, values, or products and services, custom VR training content may need to be created to ensure training content captures those nuances. For example, it would be hard to find VR training content in an off-the-shelf format that teaches sales team members how to sell the benefits of a specific product, as the use case is more niche.

"Whether choosing the off-the-shelf route or creating custom VR training content, businesses have two great options when it comes to beginning, or continuing to provide impactful immersive learning to employees," said Stephen Fromkin,

Co-Founder and Chief Content Officer, Talespin. "The businesses that create the most meaningful results will be those that do not delay in identifying the need and applying one of these options to sharpen the skills of their workforce."

OFF-THE-SHELF IMMERSIVE LEARNING CONTENT

Off-the-shelf immersive learning content simulates a range of situations and scenarios applicable to many industries. Similar to e-learning content libraries, off-the-shelf immersive learning content is ready to adopt, with no content creation required.

This content is typically designed to cover common skills development needs that many organizations have, delivering training for topics like communication skills, leadership training, DE&I, compliance training, and other use cases

that are critical across many workforces and industries.

Immersive soft skills learning modules, for example, engage employees in role play with virtual human characters where they can practice critical communication skills.

Talespin's off the shelf content library is an example of a collection of off-the-shelf immersive learning content, providing customers with content on topics such as Active Listening & Inquiry, Psychological Safety, Conflict Resolution, Cognitive Bias, Virtual Leadership, and Communicating Succinctly—topics that employees across numerous job roles and industries benefit from.

Off-the-shelf immersive learning content offerings have a range of benefits, with speed to adoption, proven efficacy, and a lower cost basis being examples.

Related: The Benefits of Off-the-Shelf Immersive Learning Content

CREATING CUSTOM IMMERSIVE LEARNING CONTENT

If off-the-shelf content offerings don't align to your training needs, or only cover a portion of your target use cases, creating custom content is another option.

"One of the most powerful ways a company can design their immersive learning program is to create custom content that is specifically tailored to their use cases and their differentiated workforce – from managerial soft skills to the specific technical skills needed to be successful on an assembly line or in an operating room," says Kristin Torrence, Head of Learning Engineering at Talespin.

No-Code VR Learning Content Creation Tools

Custom immersive learning content can be created through VR application development efforts, or the use of content creation tools. As immersive learning has grown in popularity in recent years, solutions for the latter are now available on the market.

These tools make it possible to design and publish interactive immersive learning modules featuring 3D graphics, simulated role play with virtual humans, and virtual environments—all accomplished with drag and drop tools and no coding necessary.

Talespin's no code VR content creation tool CoPilot Designer is an example, enabling learning designers to create and deploy scenario-based VR learning experiences. Now companies are empowered to create customized training at scale at lower costs than ever before—which is particularly useful as individuals face growing skills gaps and the need for large scale workforce reskilling increases.

Immersive soft skills learning simulations have emerged as a popular use case for the Metaverse, and virtual humans and virtual environments are critical components in the design of these experiences. Additional key considerations for immersive learning content design include deciding which virtual human most realistically matches the simulated conversation's topic, what the appropriate attire would be for the particular conversation, what virtual environment the conversation should

take place in, and where within a given virtual environment the user and virtual humans will be positioned.

Custom immersive learning content can be created with attributes that include the following:

- Learning objectives tailored to specific use cases and skills development priorities
- Narrative design that takes industry and institutional subject matter expertise into account
- Company and product specific nomenclature
- Company branding and visual assets—custom virtual environments and virtual humans can be created, for example
- Scoring and performance feedback frameworks aligned to specific skills development goals

CoPilot Designer gives content creators control over these decisions, with the platform's virtual environment and virtual human asset library offering flexibility in content design.

BLENDING OFF-THE-SHELF AND CUSTOM IMMERSIVE LEARNING CONTENT

Off-the-shelf content offerings and custom content can also be blended to offer learning & development teams flexibility in their program design.

For example, immersive learning content can be adopted in the following ways:

1. Adopt an off-the-shelf content library for common training use cases
2. Utilize specific immersive experiences from an off-the-shelf content library
3. Pair off-the-shelf immersive content with custom content
4. Create, design and publish a fully custom immersive content library

In order to find the best path forward for your organization, you should research these options and determine which platform and content offerings best suit your use case.

For example, if you are planning an immersive learning pilot for managerial training, adopting an off-the-shelf content library that features modules teaching a variety of leadership and communication skills is an option. Or if your use case is training call center teams on customer service for specific products, creating custom content that features scenarios about those products may be your best option.

The good news is that you have a variety of paths forward now that immersive learning has matured, with a variety of platforms and content offerings available on the market.

HARDWARE CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMMERSIVE LEARNING CONSUMPTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Both off-the-shelf and custom content can be delivered to XR devices such as Meta Quest, and others, or on 2D devices like laptops and desktop computers. Let's take a look at the strengths and differences of both of these content delivery methods.

Desktop Streaming for Immersive Learning Content

The desktop streaming option is exactly what it sounds like, and is a highly accessible adoption route—as the vast majority of employees have easy access to a computer.

With this option, immersive learning content is consumed on 2D devices. Learners use their computer's audio hardware or keyboard and mouse input to navigate the experience, maintaining a higher level of immersion in comparison to e-learning, but without an additional hardware requirement in the form of a VR head mounted display (HMD).

Because it is a familiar mode of delivery for users, companies may see faster adoption and higher engagement—as it feels like a more engaging and interactive version of e-learning, which they likely have already used. It is also a simple process from a deployment perspective, as training managers and IT teams can distribute content to devices that employees already have on hand.

In addition, it is a cost-effective delivery option— as there is no additional hardware cost. Desktop streaming could be beneficial for companies that have workforces that are distributed, are hesitant to invest in more hardware, or want to deploy their immersive learning program as soon as possible.

VR Head Mounted Displays (HMDs)

The other avenue is to go with VR headsets. These devices can be distributed to teams or office locations, or some companies opt to send a single device to each individual employee— particularly those who are working remotely.

This technology feels more novel and exciting to many employees, which can build enthusiasm for an immersive learning program. That excitement also translates into higher engagement, better

focus, and better learning outcomes—such as faster learning, better and longer knowledge retention, and more.

For a company that is going to use HMDs to deliver a portion of their immersive learning program, they will need to decide which type of headset best suits their needs.

Some of the top HMD options include HTC Vive, Lenovo, and Meta. These HMDs present different features, benefits, and price points that you will need to evaluate as you determine which hardware is best suited for delivering immersive learning to your workforce.

"The amount of HMDs on the market are increasing every year – as are the technology and capabilities of these devices," says Flavio De Oliveira, VP of Customer Experience at Talespin. "You'll want to do research to understand the range of offerings and what will facilitate the greatest outcomes for your workforce, across teams and locations."

Your immersive learning platform partner will be able to guide you on your hardware options and work with you to make a selection that will deliver the best learning experiences for your learners, and to help you navigate technical considerations like VR content distribution and integrations with your LMS / LXP if needed.

DETERMINE HOW YOU WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

Determine How You Will Measure Success

Section outcome: An identified set of success criteria for your immersive learning program

Immersive learning platforms, as discussed earlier, can provide a new level of transparency into employee skills development. This arms organizations with new data that can be used to judge the successful completion of learning program objectives and the overall ROI of learning and development programs.

When determining the data you want to measure in your immersive learning program, your use case and objectives will inform the metrics that matter most. For example, if the aforementioned employee onboarding objective was a pillar of your program, immersive learning platform data will go beyond a simple completion statement

for a training module and enable you to examine where new employees excel in their job roles, and also identify skills that are areas in need of improvement.

Employee engagement levels, confidence in job readiness, and positive sentiment regarding the training are other metrics you might be interested in factoring while determining the outcomes of your program.

"The most forward thinking executives are not just implementing a VR learning program, but also mapping key data, learning KPIs, and metrics to these initiatives," said David Gailey, Vice President of Customer Success and Solutions, Talespin.

"Aligning your program with data will ensure that companies are gleaning the most out of their programs and ensuring maximum ROI when it comes to upskilling and onboarding their workforce."

Let's take a look at some of the data you can gather while deploying immersive learning.

Measuring the Effectiveness of VR Training

One of the best ways to measure the ROI of immersive learning is through real-time scoring and feedback. Immersive learning platforms can provide a robust platform for data reporting and training insights to help you gather this data.
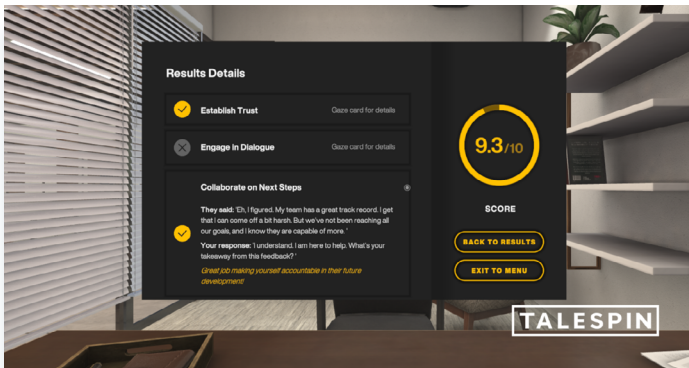
VR training modules provide real-time performance feedback.

Examples of the data that can be collected and measured within an immersive learning platform include:

- Individual learner performance within a specific learning module, including data on the application of specific skills taught within

the module
- Historic learner performance for a specific learning module, ex: Measuring improvement over time for a particular learning module
- Historic learner performance for specific skills, ex: Assessing the application of empathy across multiple learning modules
- Learning module performance for a group of learners at a team, department, or organizational level, ex: Analyzing a sales team's performance on a specific VR sales training module
- Historic performance for specific skills for a group of learners at a team, department, or organizational level, ex: Assessing a sales team's development of specific sales skills over time

Determining which of these metrics matter most to you is critical, as this is not only the data you will use to track individual learner development, but it is also data you can use to socialize and champion your immersive learning program internally, leading to faster buy-in and program growth as VR learning proves its ROI to stakeholders.

Learn more about gathering learning insights from an immersive learning platform: Talespin Platform Dashboard

Gathering Feedback From Trainees and Trainers

In addition to the skills development insights an immersive learning platform can measure, gathering feedback from learners and the training

managers implementing the training is beneficial.

Conducting surveys as a component of your program can give you additional data points like employee engagement levels and how beneficial they perceived the training to be. It also provides a more granular view of the training experiences of specific teams and departments.

For example, the Skills Immersion Lab program from JFF and SAP used post-training surveys and focus groups to gather first-hand feedback from students participating in the program. These feedback mechanisms revealed that 79% of learners said what they learned in the program would help them achieve their goals. This type of data was used to inform the design of a part II of the program, demonstrating how valuable gathering feedback can be for an immersive learning program.

Continuously Improving VR training

The companies that have the most successful VR training programs are those that consistently solicit feedback from their workforce, collect and analyze a range of insights, and then put those learnings into practice to improve their curriculum over time.

With workforce skill sets and company needs constantly changing, organizations must examine how they can best adapt on the fly and adjust their programs to meet ever evolving needs—and the best way to do that is to be data driven.

CREATE AN IMMERSIVE LEARNING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

PART VI:

Create an Immersive Learning Program Implementation Plan

Section outcome: An implementation plan for immersive learning, including identified internal stakeholders, budget requirements and adoption timeline

With the strategic components of your immersive learning program in place, it's time to get tactical and create a project plan for implementing the program within your organization.

An implementation plan will cover critical components of the project, such as identifying key stakeholders, building a budget, and establishing a program deployment timeline.

IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

Each organization's structure is unique. Some companies have a Chief People Officer, others have an HR department that reports to the COO or CEO, and many organizations have dedicated learning and development teams. All of this means that the stakeholders involved in VR technology adoption will vary from one organization to another.

For example, in some companies workforce training is under the purview of the CHRO, with learning program planning and technology adoption coming from the people operations budget. In other organizations there may be a cross-departmental learning and development organization responsible for all employee development within an organization across job roles and departments.

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Some companies may defer to individual teams to implement the learning and development training programs that are most beneficial to their field—with an allotted budget for each department.

In other organizations each business unit may have its own learning and development departments. For example, some insurance companies have claims training departments within the claims department, while other departments within the company like sales and customer service have their own separate learning and development team specializing in training for that department's unique skill sets

In addition to the departments that are responsible for training varying from one organization to another, the job titles involved in evaluating VR training technology within those respective departments will vary as well.

For example, these stakeholders may be involved in the evaluation and adoption of VR learning software:

- Training managers
- Learning experience designers
- Business unit leads
- Human resource managers
- Instructional designers
- Instructors
- Learning and development specialists
- Innovation managers

Knowing that each organization is unique in terms of its training program and learning

technology stakeholders, you should identify who will need to be involved at your own organization and socialize the plan with them so they are integrated into the process. In order to have a VR learning program gain momentum with employees, it first needs to have buy-in from the decision makers at the executive level.

BUILD A BUDGET PROPOSAL

Earlier in this whitepaper, we discussed the different delivery methods when it comes to hardware vs. streaming on desktop devices, as well as creating custom content compared to off-the-shelf programming.

With these hardware and content considerations in mind, the next step in your immersive learning adoption journey is to build a realistic budget for your program.

As you're starting to create this budget, be sure to factor in how custom content vs. off-the-shelf content selection will impact your numbers, as well as how you will deploy the program, whether in person or through remote learning.

Additionally, the number of employees that need to be trained will also impact the number of licenses you'll need to acquire from VR training software platforms, another factor that will impact costs. You should also examine whether you'll be implementing a continuous learning program or facilitating dedicated training events.

Here are the basic budget components of an immersive learning program to keep in mind:

- **Immersive learning platform licenses:** Given that immersive learning platforms have matured with many operating with a user license business model like traditional SaaS products, you can use this pricing to establish a formula for your budget. For example, multiply the cost of user licenses by your expected number of users to arrive at the software cost of your program.

- **Hardware costs:** The cost for purchasing and / or leasing your VR learning hardware.

- **Training logistics**: For this, you'll need to factor in whether you are shipping headsets, providing transportation if you are delivering training in an event model or at a certain office location—and determine what these costs will be.

- **Resources:** How many training managers, IT team members, and hours you'll need to invest in order for your program to be successful.

Totalling these costs and building them into your implementation plan will ensure transparency when you are seeking buy-in internally on your program proposal.

ESTABLISH A PROJECT TIMELINE

The right timeline for immersive learning adoption will be unique to each organization.

Factors such as the number of stakeholders required for the project, an organization's procurement and compliance policies for new technology platforms, and budget approval processes will influence the top level timeline for adopting immersive learning in your organization.

Project Timeline Considerations

The sample timeline below may be much shorter in a smaller organization, or if the immersive learning program adoption is for a smaller employee cohort.

However, more time may be needed in a larger enterprise. Budget approvals, stakeholder socialization, and procurement are examples of timeline phases that may need more time in a large enterprise. Alternatively, if you've chosen to implement VR training over a longer timeline, your training deployment and results collection phases will be longer, and increase the overall timeline for the program.

SAMPLE PROJECT TIMELINE

MONTH 1
Immersive learning solution evaluation
Use case identified
VR content and hardware approach identified

MONTH 2
Project proposals and approvals
Budget finalization
Stakeholder socialization
Budget approvals

MONTH 3
Software procurement
Immersive learning platform purchasing
Security questionnaires, compliance, vendor assessment

MONTH 4
Additional software procurement time (if needed)

MONTH 5
Deployment preparation
Plan integrations with LMS / LXP (if needed)
Plan IT requirements - ex. SSO
Hardware purchasing and procurement ex. VR HMDs

MONTH 6
Deployment
Hardware shipping
Content deployment to devices
Train the trainer
Employee onboarding

MONTH 7
Training results collection + evaluation

FINAL THOUGHTS

Final Thoughts

There's a lot to digest and think about when it comes to adopting and implementing a VR learning program.

Immersive learning has proven itself as an effective and engaging learning modality. Being able to distribute immersive content across devices and platforms is critical to help people realize these benefits. At Talespin we're making that possible and lowering the barrier to entry for learners and organizations.

This ebook provides a range of guidelines and best practices, but perhaps the most important takeaway is to know that each company is different, and each program's success will be dependent on whether it is tailored to their workforce's specific skills, needs, and desire to learn.

IMPORTANCE OF ONGOING VR TRAINING ADOPTION

VR training is only going to grow in importance in the years to come. That's because the technology that is becoming ingrained in our work life calls for a range of new skills, while the increasingly common remote or hybrid workplace requires managers to have exceptional soft skills in order to effectively lead.

Paired with the fact that VR training is cheaper, more effective, and more engaging than traditional methods, it's easy to see why many companies have leveraged immersive learning to bring their workforces forward.

FINAL THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since you've come this far, you are ahead of many when it comes to VR learning. But no matter what stage you are in, you should examine what types of immersive learning programs might benefit your workforce, and you can use this ebook as a foundation when it comes to adopting and implementing this technology.

Your business' needs will only grow and will not wait. The best way to get your workforce the skills it needs for tomorrow, is to start today.

Want to learn more about how you can get started on your VR learning journey? Reach out to a Talespin representative or visit Talespin's Blog for the latest updates and news.

The future of work starts here.

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