New Landscapes and New Eyes: the Role of Virtual World Design for Supply Chain Education

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With the common availability of advanced educational technology, we are able to increase the emphasis on the design of learning experiences and benefit from the given flexibility and variety of opportunities to create learning spaces. As instructional design models become more commonplace we examine their role vis-à-vis with the fidelity of the experience while learning. High- fidelity experiences are known to be valuable in learning as they provide authenticity in learning and motivation; yet, high fidelity comes at the cost of greater investment. In this paper we outline our experiments with two setups of differing levels of fidelity: using Second Life and the consumer-focused Oculus Rift Head-Mounted Display (HMD). We show qualitatively interpreted comments and user responses to demonstrate importance of the level of fidelity, uncover important elements, and relate back the fidelity to the learning experience. High-fidelity experiences can be supported by software and hardware that are now readily available but present the seductive opportunity to greatly improve participant engagement in the virtual environments presented.