# Understanding Organisational Attitudes to Immersive Experiences in Training and Professional Development

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Facebook's 'big bet' on the metaverse announced in 2021 will perhaps be a milestone as big as Steve Job's reveal of Apple's first iPhone in 2007.

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are key pillars of the immersive technologies that underpin the metaverse. Like mobile before them, they have been in the shadows, hailed as 'the next big thing' while the software and hardware has been incrementally Improved. Today VR and AR are mature, stable, low cost, and offer incredible, visceral experiences which have the ability to suspend disbelief in the user.
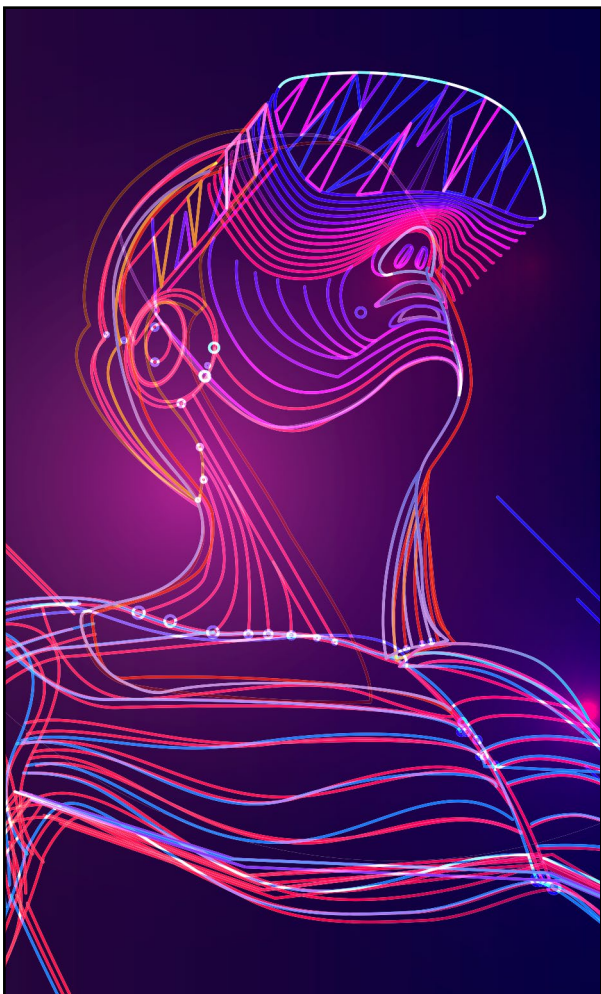
We are years away from them being as invisible and integrated into everyday life as mobiles, however they are playing an increasingly important role in imitating processes, systems, or scenarios, for the purpose of training, development and behaviour change for example:

- A virtual product development lab hosting live collaboration sessions with remote team members.

- An industrial training experience that re-creates high-risk work that's otherwise difficult, dangerous, or impossible to practice.

- A soft skills simulation module for bosses to practice having difficult, stressful conversations.

- A walk around the proposed interior design overhaul of a company's retail stores.

Nucco develops award-winning VR and AR experiences for many applications, so we wanted to understand how organisations felt about adopting these technologies into their training and professional development programmes.

We surveyed 250 upper level managers and C-suite execs about the extent to which they had used VR solutions, particularly with training and professional development in mind. The following pages reveal the results of that survey.
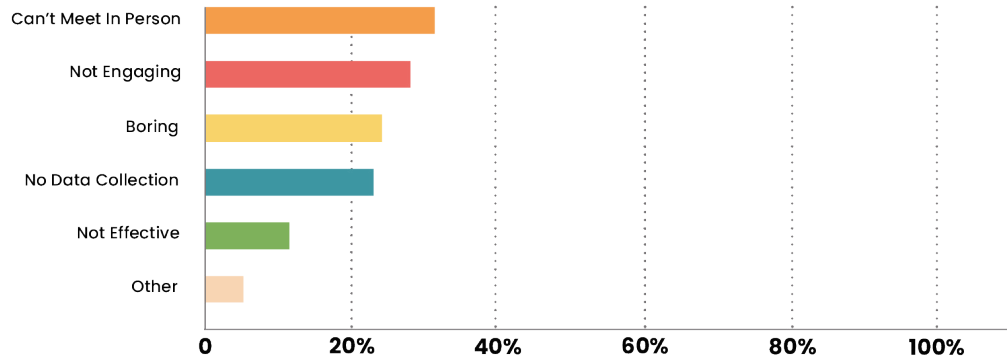
The key points are;

- More than a third of respondents found their training and professional development initiatives boring, not engaging and dated.

- Less than 10% of respondents are conducting trials.

- Nearly half of respondents are considering a trial.

- Reducing cost, higher engagement and safety are the main drivers encouraging adoption.

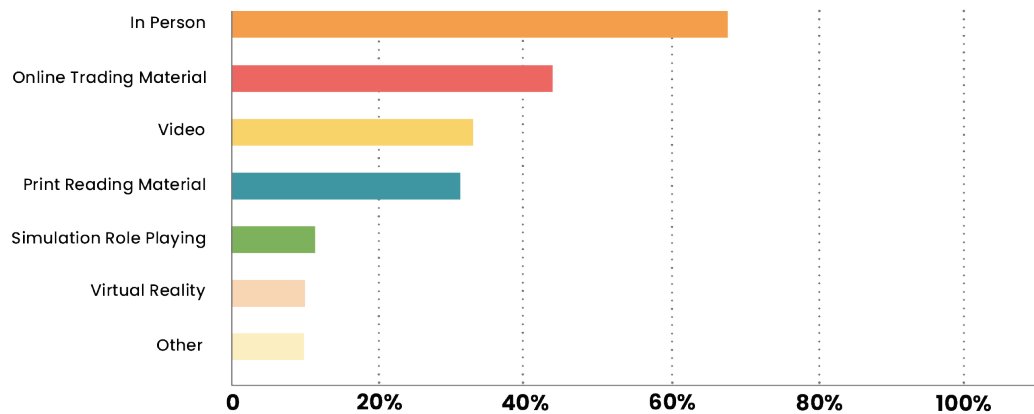- Training and development is the area seen as most relevant to immersive technology.

If you'd like to find out how Nucco can help you develop immersive technologies, please get in touch at contact@nuccobrain.com.
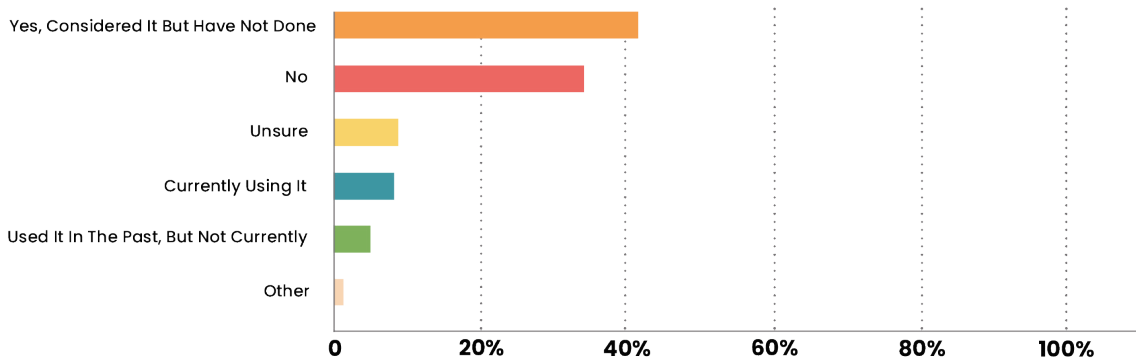
What are the shortcomings of your current training and professional development initiatives?

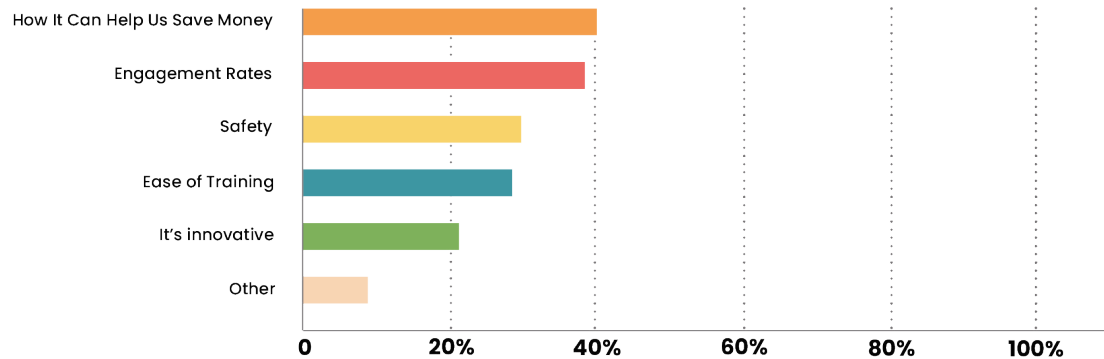| Category	Value
Can't Meet In Person	~32%
Not Engaging	~28%
Boring	~24%
No Data Collection	~23%
Not Effective	~12%
Other	~5%

What methods of training do you currently employ within your business?

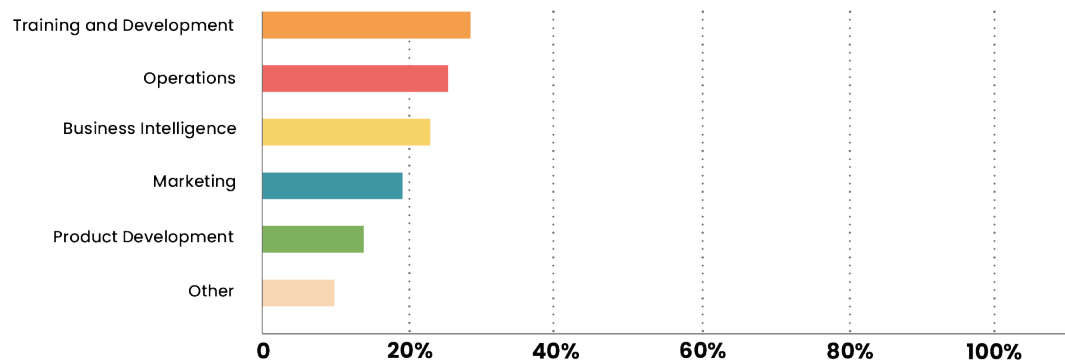| Category	Value
In Person	~67%
Online Trading Material	~44%
Video	~33%
Print Reading Material	~32%
Simulation Role Playing	~11%
Virtual Reality	~10%
Other	~10%

Has your organisation considered using virtual reality solutions for training and professional development?

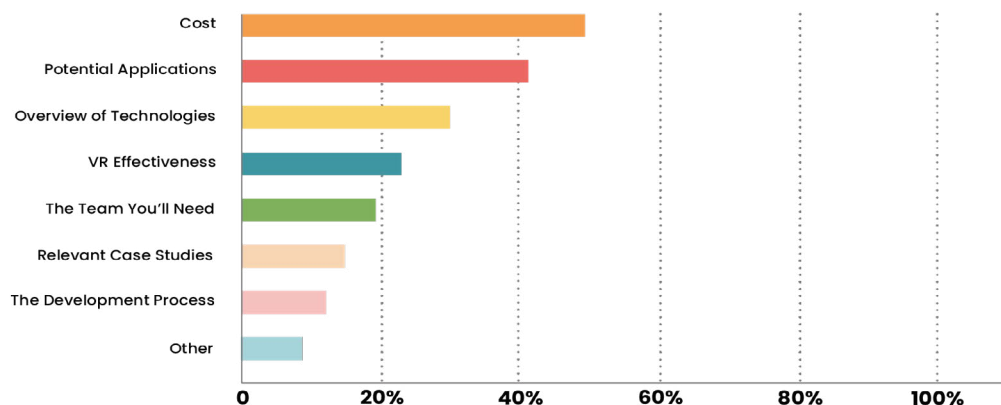| Category	Value
Yes, Considered It But Have Not Done	~42%
No	~34%
Unsure	~9%
Currently Using It	~8%
Used It In The Past, But Not Currently	~5%
Other	~1%

What is the most important thing to you and your organisation when investing in VR for training and development?

Category	Value
How It Can Help Us Save Money	~42%
Engagement Rates	~39%
Safety	~31%
Ease of Training	~29%
It's innovative	~21%
Other	~9%

0   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

What role(s) or department(s) in your organisation are most likely to use VR technology and solutions?

Category	Value
Training and Development	~29%
Operations	~25%
Business Intelligence	~23%
Marketing	~19%
Product Development	~14%
Other	~10%

0   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

What aspects of VR would you like to know more about?

Category	Value
Cost	~47%
Potential Applications	~39%
Overview of Technologies	~28%
VR Effectiveness	~22%
The Team You'll Need	~18%
Relevant Case Studies	~14%
The Development Process	~11%
Other	~8%

0   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Case study - How Southern New Hampshire University uses VR to improve learning and teaching outcomes in Biopsychology

The Challenge

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a large, innovative institution of higher education in the United States. Due to its global enrollment of more than 160,000 remote learners, the university has a keen interest in digital innovation, and established SNHU Labs Innovation Center to research and develop sophisticated new digital platforms for teaching and learning.

SNHU Labs partnered with Nucco to design and build experiential and immersive learning modules to study the effectiveness, engagement, and feasibility of VR for learning.

The Solution

We designed and built Synapse VR, an immersive active learning experience for a course called Biopsychology, working closely with SNHU Labs' subject matter experts.

The design of the experience was informed by discussions with the professor and students to understand the topics of the course that are most challenging to learn by lectures and reading. We collaborated with SNHU Labs to see if we could enhance the learning experience, increase student motivation for the material, and experiment with a technology that is likely to offer high-quality inclusive learning experiences for students of the future.

Results

SNHU sought to understand the potential of VR to enrich the learner experience as measured by students' levels of interest, motivation, and engagement. According to Cat Flynn, Ed. M., Director of Learning Science at SNHU Labs, *"the students overwhelmingly loved the experiences with SynapseVR."*

One of the design goals with Synapse VR was to use the special features of VR to support learners to understand the unique affordances of this technology and to leverage those for the benefit of the learning experience.
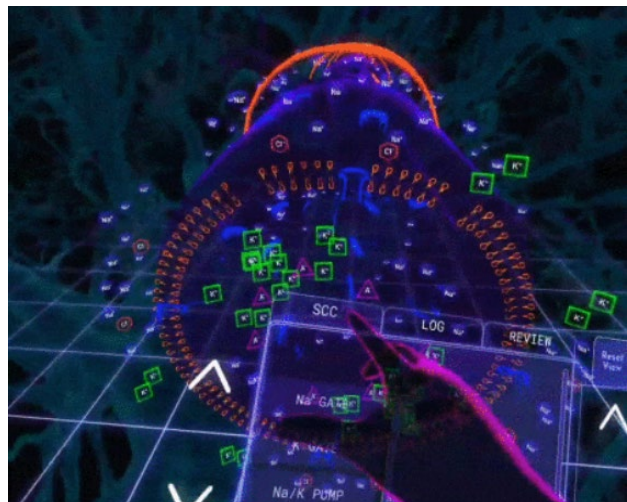
Professor Peter Frost, whose students participated in the study said; *"From the outset, it was really important to us that the experience wasn't gimmicky; that it captured the nuances of the subject material in a way that both captivated and educated our students. From our perspective, Synapse VR has been a categorical success."*

[Find out more here](#)

Case Study - Spreading empathy for sight loss through immersive technology

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The Challenge

The Royal National Institute of Blind People is a UK charity offering support, advice to almost two million people in the UK with sight loss. They work to raise awareness of sight loss. But to do their job effectively, they rely on the donations of everyday people.

So RNIB needed a twofold creative solution – one that simultaneously built empathy for people with sight loss, while also inspiring them to donate to the cause.

The Solution

Virtual reality is tremendously powerful for generating empathy because it effectively allows the user to see the world through someone else's eyes. It was the ideal medium for RNIB's objectives.

Working with the RNIB team, we produced an unforgettable virtual reality experience that explores The Little Things for use by street teams, corporate fundraising events and via Google Cardboard direct mail. The experience featured a fictional character Hannah, a young woman living with sight loss.

As the user takes on Hannah's point of view in an immersive 360-degree video, they experience what it's like to lose their vision and discover how much more difficult common, everyday tasks become.

We raised cultural visibility for the charitable cause of blindness, and reminded people that this is a deeply human issue, one of connectivity and power.

Through demonstrating the little things, and how the visually impaired accomplish them, we illustrated to people how their contributions - however small - are part of a much bigger picture. These little things are what connect us to the reality of the cause and are what will inspire people to get involved.

About Nucco

We are communication and experience experts that change behaviour and perspectives. We use powerful creative and emerging technologies to create projects ranging from film and animation through websites and deeply immersive VR and AR experiences.

Nucco is part of UNIT9, one of the world's leading creative, digital and content production groups.

If you'd like to find out how Nucco can help you develop immersive technologies please get in touch at contact@nuccobrain.com.

Find out more about Nucco here

Research notes

We surveyed a UK and US group of 250 upper level managers and C-suite execs about the extent to which they had used VR solutions, particularly with training and professional development in mind, during the summer of 2021.