



Aquanauts

AUDIENCE

Managers, intact teams, and others involved in leadership development initiatives.

Dive in and learn how to perform effectively as part of a complex system

Program Benefits

Aquanauts, from exper!ence it, inc., is a powerful metaphorical business simulation that immerses participants in an underwater world in which they struggle to perform as part of a complex system. The experience is framed as a competition between two organizations, yet it is the obstacles encountered internally that set the stage for participants to gain profound insights. The *Aquanauts* business simulation improves participants' ability to:

- Leverage systems and context thinking
- Foster leadership at all organizational levels
- Better align strategy and implementation with mission
- Maximize teamwork across horizontal and vertical organizational boundaries
- Create effective and efficient communication vehicles

Program Description

During the simulation, Red and Gold Schools are composed of High Command, Pod Leaders, *Aquanauts* and Swimmers. Each school seeks to claim treasure and territory. The underwater world is beautiful, but when a fiercely competitive battle erupts, it is also dangerous. Soon, miscommunication and confusion between leaders leaves the *Aquanauts* and Swimmers gasping for air. Trust evaporates. Confusion reigns. The frontline becomes isolated and is left underwater without enough information or air. High Command members are dry in their land-based office, while the Pod Leaders get pulled in two directions. Neither school will be able to claim victory over the other unless each is first able to understand and operate effectively within its own system. What happens when information does not flow the way the organizational chart said it should? Why are resources going to average Swimmers when the best and most capable are left gasping for air? Where has the trust gone within the system? What happens when the frontline Swimmers discover new and strategically important information? Can the entire school adjust their systems and processes mid-stream and integrate new findings?

This powerful simulation experience leaves participants eager to plunge into a significant discussion on how systems work and affect performance, and how they can move themselves and their organizations forward.

Implementation/Customization

Aquanauts is a 4-hour simulation experience appropriate for 18 to 36 participants. It is used as a stand-alone, half-day workshop for managers or intact teams. It is also used as an embedded experiential learning component of broader development workshops or conference programs. *Aquanauts* is one of five simulations that can "snap together" in combinations of two to five as part of the *Confederacy of Stars* leadership series. This series is often used across multiple days for more immersive and intensive leadership development programs.

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