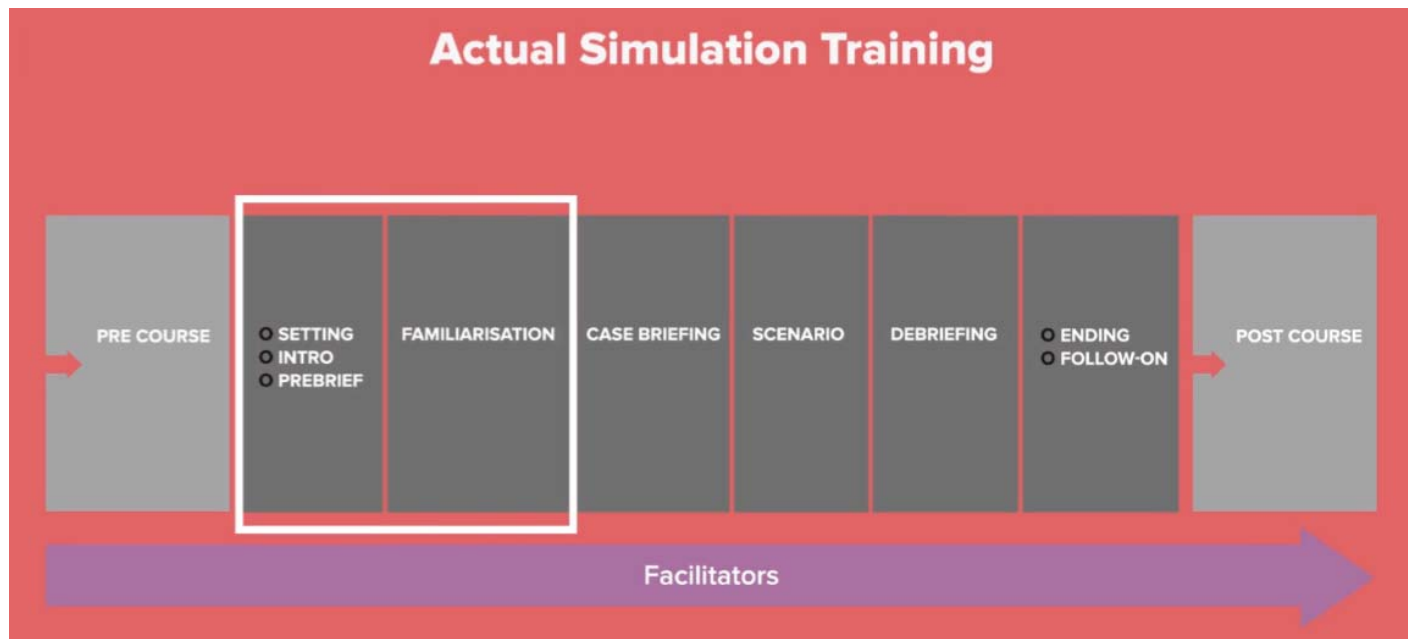


Pre-scenario

So, before the actual simulation scenario takes place, we as facilitators need to set the stage for participants. This is done through a pre-brief, and it's often done in tandem with familiarization, which we'll explore next. The whole point of these pre-scenario sections are to help establish a safe learning environment, as well as to prime participants for a good learning experience.



A pre-brief typically includes a welcome and introduction to the simulation session - we state the expectations of the whole session. So, length of time for learners can expect to be there, and a brief outline of what the education session will entail, as well as Vegas rules - so, what happens in sim, stays in sim - no one is to discuss others' performances outside of the session, unless explicitly granted permission from that individual.

We also state the expectations for the learners. So, everyone must be an active member in some way - whether that be as a participant, or an active observer - and everyone must participate in the debrief. It is normally discouraged for people to simply watch the scenario and walk away, or stay silent during the debrief, as this often leads to other participants feeling judged or on display. We want to ensure we maintain an environment of safety for everyone involved. Everyone should also be reminded of the basic assumption and reminded to maintain respect for all participants.

The basic assumption is the perspective that everyone present in a simulation session is intelligent, capable, and cares about doing their best, and wants to improve. For more information about what the basic assumption is, refer to the Attitudes video, or to the link for the Harvard Center for Simulation.

The pre-brief also describes the role of the facilitator or facilitators. We won't try to trick or test participants in any way. The session is a peer-learning opportunity.

Confederate: an individual(s) who, during the course of the clinical scenario, provides assistance locating and/or troubleshooting equipment.

If there are confederates in the room, who they are and what we can expect from them. For example, if the manikin has a pulse but the person assessing the manikin states that they do not feel a pulse, the confederate will clarify by stating that the pulse is, indeed, present. If anyone is standing behind a one-way mirror, who is behind the mirror and for what purpose?

Familiarization, also known as “orientation”, is an introduction of the simulation environment when we inform participants of the equipment and space functionality. It can be thought of as a pre-brief to space and equipment.

So, to describe:

- What the manikin can do, if there's a manikin
- Does it have breath sounds, heart sounds, pulses?
- Can we check its pupils, insert IVs, or pinch it to see if it wakes up?
- If we talk to the mannequin, will it respond? If not, where do I get a response?

Familiarization answers these questions.

It's also about time.

- Is the timeline as real as possible? Do I do CPR for a full two minutes, or can I stop after 15 seconds and say I'm still doing it?
- If I would auscultate heart sounds for one minute, do I do that?
- Can I pause and move forward in time?

If learners are in a new space, for example, a simulation centre, where can they find the equipment they're used to? Where are the supplies? The crash cart? What phone number do I call if I want to page someone? Where do I find lab results or a patient's history? What can we use for real and what do we have to pretend about? Can I crack ampules and vials of medication to actually draw them up? Should the manikin be fully compressed during CPR?

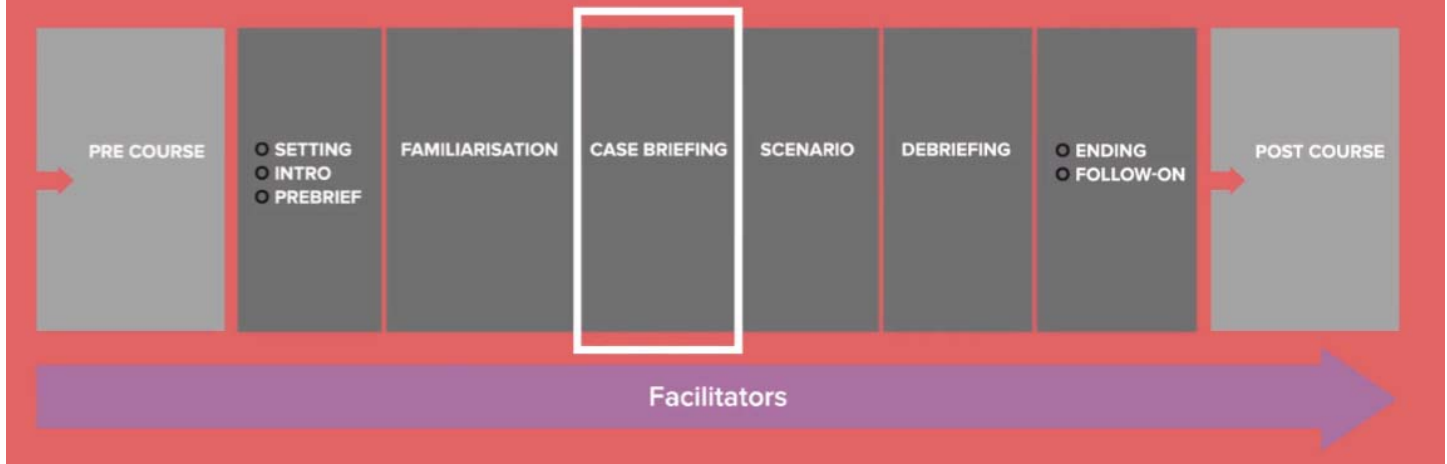
The more time you spend during familiarization, ensuring participants have a good grasp of the environment, the more likely it is that participants will buy into the fiction contract.

Fiction Contract: The degree of engagement that healthcare trainees are willing to give the simulated events; also known as the “suspension of disbelief,” it is a literary and theatrical concept that encourages participants to put aside their disbelief and accept the simulated exercise as being real for the duration of the scenario.

A good fiction contract leads to better learning. That being said, don't overload the learners - there's a sweet spot. This will come with practice, and through preparation and rehearsal of simulations.

So what takes people out of acting “as if”? Most often, it's due to a misalignment with reality or expectations, and people are jarred into reality. They see a plastic doll instead of a patient. There can be a poor pre-brief, leading to a misalignment of expectations. Or it can be misaligned fidelity. Note that people's engagement with a fiction contract can change throughout a simulation. Our job as facilitators is to be quick on our feet, and address the misalignment, which will allow learners to dive back into acting “as if”.

Actual Simulation Training



After the pre-brief and familiarization comes the case brief. This is where the particulars of the simulation scenario are explained to the participants. This may include, but is not limited to:

- A brief description of the patient, such as a handover from paramedics to the emergency department registered nurse, or a mother explaining to the physician why she's bringing her child into the hospital for treatment.
- The case briefing may take the form of a quick handover report of the patient's presenting condition, or it may be a more detailed patient history.

The case briefing is intended to set the stage for the initial interaction between the participants and the simulator, or simulated environment. We recommend asking participants if they have any questions after each of these pre-scenario steps. After that it's on to the scenario itself. What a facilitator must do during the scenario, and afterwards, makes up the bulk of what we'll be doing together face-to-face in the simulation workshop.

After the simulation scenario happens, we get to the debriefing - be sure to watch those videos, as debriefing is often the most important experience, and as a facilitator - takes the most skill to navigate.