

POWER SKILLS TRAINING

Why VR is Best for ~~Soft~~ Power Skills Training





What Edstutia is All About

Edstutia is one of the world's first fully-immersive campuses in Virtual Reality. We are leading the disruption of traditional learning by combining the benefits of experiential learning with the latest in immersive technologies.

We deliver a variety of data-driven VR experiences and simulations to catapult learner engagement and retention in a fun, collaborative way —led by a team of teaching and training experts that focus specifically on the skills and mindsets that are in demand in the workplace today.



Soft skills training is among the most important programs companies can offer employees. Employers today say the top qualities they look for in new hires are related to soft skills, such as communication and problem-solving. As technology becomes more adept at automating the “hard skills,” work is shifting to focus on human-centric skills and mindsets. A recent Deloitte report on soft skills forecasts that soft skill-intensive occupations will account for two-thirds of all jobs by 2030.

Work is Changing Machines are Handling More Hard Skills

Computer speed and memory have nearly doubled every one to two years for the past 50 years. With this high-computing performance came Artificial Intelligence (AI), or the simulation of human intelligence by machines—especially computers. Excel, the most commonly used spreadsheet tool worldwide, is

now capable of interpreting what you enter in a cell and making recommendations that apply to the entire sheet. It does this by understanding not only your usage patterns, but how they relate to the patterns of others.

In manufacturing, robots have been used for decades. Processes continue to become more automated, resulting in higher output, fewer mistakes, and less need for human personnel. In some industries, such as manufacturing and agriculture, most human jobs involve keeping robots running as intended. Even tasks often attributed to creative minds are being assigned to artificial intelligence. A couple of examples are writing and graphic design.

Copywriting

Today, the revolutionary AI chatbot, ChatGPT, can write articles, music, product descriptions, complex essays, and more.



of recruiters say that when a new hire doesn't work out, it's usually a result of lacking soft skills.

[Business.linkedin.com](https://www.business.linkedin.com)

The latest version released in March 2023, ChatGPT-4, is more advanced than other AI technologies— understanding human language better than ever and requiring minimal user input. GPT-4 can translate languages and summarize text more accurately and quickly, among other improvements. Microsoft is a prominent investor in ChatGPT, driving Google to counteract by developing its own AI chatbot technology called Bard. Compared to ChatGPT-4, Bard is able to deliver faster responses with the most current research pulled from the internet.

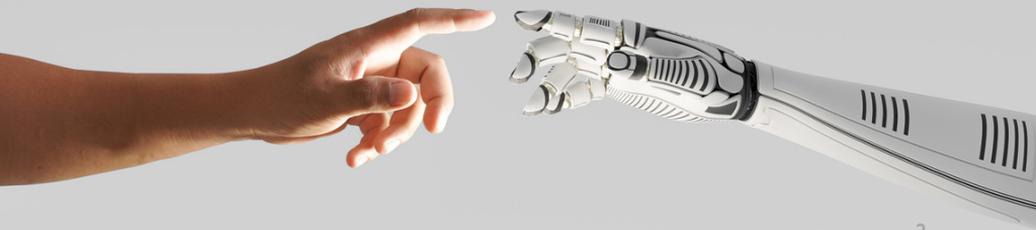
Though AI writing tools like ChatGPT and Bard are gaining popularity, they can't be relied on for the entire writing process. Users still need to edit and add to their AI-written content, because computer-generated writing often lacks context and human emotion. ChatGPT can't produce emotionally-moving content like a human can, because it doesn't have thoughts and feelings.

Graphic Design

Today's graphic design professionals also leverage AI technologies to eliminate manual tasks and speed up their creative workflow. AI design tools like DesignsAI and Tailor Brands can design logos, videos, and other creative assets. However, these tools still rely on users to input information like color, style, text, and other elements to create a final product that's close to their vision.

Machines Can't Handle Soft Skills

Regardless of how powerful machines are at processing hard data, they can't replace human interaction due to their inability to think with context and human emotion. For instance, they can't listen to another employee's reason for not coming to work or determine the best course of action to handle a customer complaint based on that customer's mood. Therefore, soft skills have become one of the most important components of achieving job success.





63% of employers say they would be willing to hire someone with transferable soft skills and train them on the technical aspects of the job.

[TrainingIndustry.com](https://www.trainingindustry.com)

Soft skills include but are not limited to:



Empathy



Communication



Problem-Solving



Decision-Making



Time Management

Power Skills are the Key to Job Success

A recent LinkedIn [study](#) on global talent trends found that 89% of recruiters say that when a new hire doesn't work out, it's usually due to a lack of soft skills. LinkedIn also released its annual [report](#) for the most in-demand skills in 2023, and the top four are management, communication, customer service, and leadership—all soft skills!

Now that we understand the importance of soft skills, it's time to remove the stigma attached to them. The assumption for years was that soft skills were somehow less useful than hard skills. Hard skills were associated with the skills businesses needed because they were directly related to measurable business results (i.e., sales). If your top salesperson is a superb conversationalist who never makes customers feel pressured to buy, but instead becomes the person they want to do business with, is it not his soft skills (communication) that lead to the sale?

Because of this stigma, along with how important soft skills are when working in combination with hard skills, corporate L&D expert, Josh Bersin, coined the term "[power skills](#)" to shift how we view soft skills. Regardless of how much hard skills training and education you've had, soft skills are powerful enough to make or break your career success.

“I hope we can throw away the idea of ‘soft skills’ and come to accept that developing Power Skills is hard, takes investment, and is now key to the future. Yes we need lots of engineers and scientists to succeed, but they need Power Skills too.”

—Josh Bersin

Marketing guru and ultimate entrepreneur, Seth Godin, calls soft skills “real skills.” This is what he said on his website regarding the topic:

“Let’s call them real skills, not soft...Real because even if you’ve got the vocational skills, you’re no help to us without these human skills, the things that we can’t write down, or program a computer to do.”

—Seth Godin

Power Skills are Human

If hard skills are moving toward artificial intelligence, leaving human beings to focus on power skills, then power skills can accurately be defined as human skills. Let’s not stigmatize human skills. Instead, let’s focus on them and develop employees who can better understand other human beings. The question is, then, how do we accomplish this?

Power Skills Training is Best in VR

At Edstutia, we emphasize power skills across all of our corporate training. A virtual reality environment is one of the best solutions for effective power skills training. Second to training under hazardous situations, power skills training is the most common form of training requested in VR. Here’s why...

Challenges of Traditional Training Methods

In-Person

For generations, this was the only way to conduct training. You gather people in a classroom to discuss the topic and give them the lesson. The benefits of meeting together in a physical space are not only training many people at once, but it also provides the ability for people to collaborate and socialize. Of course, by training in person, you need to hire trainers in multiple locations to

teach employees located across the country or even the world. The other option is to bear the costs of bringing everyone to the same location. Even then, achieving your training objectives may take several sessions due to scheduling conflicts and logistics. As work becomes increasingly global and virtual, companies struggle to provide in-person training in an efficient and cost-effective way.

Online

eLearning has become a go-to strategy for global and remote organizations. Online learning modules often include videos, games, and tests, all inside a learning management system. The flaw with this approach is that it uses modern technology while relying on an outdated teaching model. Under this method, most learners are only engaged enough to hear or read the material (maybe), and they only need to memorize the information long enough to take some sort of assessment at the end of the lesson.

Another option is to get on Zoom or another online meeting platform. You could do this in small classes and create breakout rooms or hold a webinar to get the lesson across to everyone at once. In these training scenarios, Zoom fatigue can set in and audience engagement may be low. While an instructor speaks for several hours in Zoom, learners may be tempted to open another

browser window, get work done, or reply to emails, in which case they won't be absorbing and retaining the learning material.

Immersion Becomes Reality

Once inside a carefully crafted virtual experience, you leave your physical space behind emotionally. Because a VR headset transports you from your physical environment to an entirely new dimension, your brain can disassociate and embrace a new environment. Interactions with other participants become natural, and you behave and communicate as if you were in the same room—when in reality, participants can be located in every corner of the globe.



of companies have
already integrated VR
or are in the process.

PwC 2022 U.S. Metaverse Survey

In the case of power skills training, your interactions with other avatars become equally natural. Problem-solving scenarios become more

engaging than when presented via a 2D computer screen. You can practice delivering bad news to a lackluster employee. This realistic, immersive training experience helps employees not only build skill sets, but also confidence, so they can in turn apply their skills to real life.

The Metaverse is a Safe Space to Make Mistakes

Because VR power skills training occurs in a neutral environment, participants can make mistakes without fear of negative repercussions. Experimenting and making mistakes are encouraged. For example, how can you refine your public speaking skills without practical application and refinement? This is where VR comes into play. Edstutia [modules](#), for instance, enable people to practice skills such as public speaking and pitching in a realistic, yet low-risk, environment, which tends to reduce anxiety and pressure.

Also, everyone learns differently, and asynchronous learning simulations in virtual reality help employees learn at their own pace. For example, employees can go through a VR learning module at their own speed or repeat VR simulations until they understand the material. This puts less stress on the learner, especially when building emotional or social skills.

The ability to practice without fear of failure is why one of the most prominent applications of VR

training is in the medical field. Making mistakes in surgical training on real patients could be disastrous, which is why VR is revolutionizing how surgeons train to perform procedures under pressure. A study at UCLA found VR training improved surgical performance by 230%.

When it comes to power skills training, mistakes may not be life-threatening, but they can be reputation-threatening for your company if an employee makes an insensitive comment when talking to a customer, for example. Confidence is key in building power skills. Humans build confidence by making mistakes, reframing and analyzing them, and putting the lessons they've learned into practice.

VR learners are 275% more confident to apply their new skills after training.

[PwC.com](https://www.pwc.com)

More Efficient Training

Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience model shows learners retain about 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what they say and write, and a whopping 90% of what they practice doing. Virtual reality significantly increases engagement and impact by focusing on practical application rather than reading, observing, and memorizing.

Participants are learning not by being told how to do something, but by actually doing it. Experiential learning, or the “learning by doing” approach, is the key to why virtual reality immersion is the best method of power skills training. Under this learning method, we retain up to 90% of the concepts we practice. Training material “sticks” with the learner and L&D teams avoid the costly effects of scrap learning.

Aside from engagement and retention, learners can also train faster in VR. PwC's study on VR for power skills training found what took two hours to learn in a classroom setting could be learned in just 30 minutes using VR. This is an important point given employees often struggle to find the time in their busy work schedules to complete lengthy training sessions. Not to mention, most people aren't able to focus on a training session for two hours straight.

This is why micro-learning has become so popular in the L&D world. Micro-learning is the concept of short, concise units of learning

that keep learner fatigue in mind. Combining micro-learning with VR, you can deliver much more efficient training when compared to classroom-style learning or e-learning.

Better Learning Experience

The combination of these benefits of learning in virtual reality—immersion, a safe space to practice new skills, and efficiency—creates a more positive learning experience for employees than traditional learning methods. Take a moment to think back to any honest feedback you've received on training sessions. You're likely to think of comments about the content being dry, long, or boring.

On the other hand, after immersive training, employees feel confident and empowered to use their new skills in real life. As trainers and business owners, this employee satisfaction is what we should strive to achieve. Engaged employees will represent your company well and facilitate business growth through

In VR,
employees
can train

4x

faster than
classroom
training on
average

the skills they've learned. They'll also be more loyal to an employer who invests in their learning, helping improve employee retention. LinkedIn's 2023 [Workplace Learning Report](#) found 93% of L&D professionals believe learning creates a sense of belonging.

Expense Drops as You Grow

As with any new endeavor requiring hardware, there will be an initial investment. Some companies don't upgrade their training because of the time, money, and effort involved. It's important to look at the short and long term benefits when reviewing ROI. First, consider the money you could save by cutting training time by 50% or more in some cases. Actually, this may be a conservative number. Wal-Mart has publicly boasted how they cut down a training course from eight hours to only 15 minutes using VR.

Let's address the purchase of headsets and other hardware you

may need. The cost of headsets continues to drop. An Oculus Quest headset will run ~\$400. As your company grows and your training program scales, your investment will continue to pay off, and new purchases will cost less. Play for the long term, and you'll find the expense is worthwhile, especially as you scale your VR training program. VR training achieves cost parity with classroom learning at 375 learners per PwC, and your program is 52% more cost-effective at 3,000 learners.

Power Skills to Train with VR

Communication

Being an effective communicator is perhaps one of the most important power skills to have. Non-verbal communication, active listening, and responding empathetically are all components of being a good communicator. For customer-facing roles, communication skills are even more important.



With virtual reality, you can put employees through difficult conversations with an avatar to improve communication skills by building emotional intelligence, self-awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and more.

One example is Farmers Insurance's infamous VR training for claims adjusters. In 2017, Farmers launched a VR training program to help their claims adjusters learn how to identify, assess, and negotiate claims. Part of their training includes simulations that walk employees through how to navigate the problems adjusters often encounter with clients. Adjusters go through difficult discussions with avatars to build their confidence and negotiation skills. The objective is to develop their customer-facing employees' empathy and self-awareness skills to provide excellent customer service. Farmers claims VR has sped up the training process and reduced the need for adjusters to travel to various offices for training.

“It would take you years to go through what we're able to do with virtual reality.”

—Tim Murray, SVP and Head of Auto Claims, Farmers Insurance

Public speaking is another power skill under the umbrella of

communication. Fear of public speaking affects nearly 75% of us, yet it's a critical skill in the workplace. In VR, employees can give speeches to a virtual audience or practice sales pitches in front of avatars or fellow team members. VR bodes well for topics like this that make people uncomfortable or uneasy, by providing a forgiving environment in which to practice and build confidence. The repetition allows them to correct their mistakes and progress without the pressure that comes with public speaking exercises in real life.

Mindful Leadership

A good leader should be competent in delivering feedback effectively, leading group discussions, managing conflict, thinking critically, managing remote teams, and more. Mindful leaders are also allies for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The possibilities are endless when it comes to building mindful leadership skills in VR.

Gamification, 360-degree video immersion, and role-playing with real-time coaching help leaders develop their skills in an environment where they can emotionally connect to the content. For example, you might use a 360-degree video demonstrating an impactful story on inclusion in the workplace.

Employees can experience the world from another person's point of view to better understand their perspectives and feelings. As opposed to a standard video, a 360-degree video in VR can put the learner in the protagonist's shoes and finally build empathy in a much more authentic way.

Teamwork

A team of employees who can work together seamlessly is crucial to business success. Virtual reality offers an exciting and engaging dimension for employees to go through team-building exercises and explore new collaboration methods. The ability to work effectively with others can be a challenging skill to build, especially in remote or hybrid work environments. But building a workforce of team players is

important to facilitate collective problem-solving in your organization. VR enables teams to meet in a life-like 3D environment that restores the sense of presence that is missing in 2D interfaces like Zoom. Teams can collaborate on projects, gather for virtual events, complete team-building exercises, and play games that create a deeper sense of connection between team members.

Accenture, one of the most prominent consulting firms in the world, developed a virtual reality environment for their global team called the "Nth Floor". The VR space serves teamwork-related needs within the company by allowing team members across the world to meet and build their collaboration and networking skills.



Edstutia's Immersive Learning Solutions

Traditional classroom and online learning environments have significant drawbacks when it comes to engagement and emotional connection. Forward-thinking companies already use virtual reality for more effective employee training and skills development. Developing power skills, in particular, bodes well in an immersive environment where learners can refine and perfect not only their skills, but also their confidence and comfort levels. Not to mention, VR training at scale can save your organization significant amounts of money.

Edstutia can help your team develop and deliver more effective employee training experiences. We offer a variety of learning options to meet the needs of organizations and their employees, wherever they are on the immersive learning continuum.

VR-Enhanced Learning Modules

Edstutia offers turnkey learning modules for a wide range of professional development topics for leadership teams and frontline associates. Learners will participate in a variety of simulations and scenarios based on experiential learning to reinforce and practice

the subject matter. Some of our more popular modules are:



Propelling Diversity



Navigating Change



Mindful Leadership



Cross-Cultural Competence

Instructor Certification in XR

Our XR certification course was created to help L&D professionals, HR/DEI professionals, university professors, and independent trainers and coaches learn about immersive technologies and how to leverage them to deliver more impactful training. Participants walk away from the course with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to create VR-enhanced training modules of their own.

Teambuilding in VR

Edstutia offers a six-pack of team-building sessions from a variety of options, from scavenger hunts to card games and more. Our sessions are designed to connect and engage employees who are working remotely or are geographically dispersed.

White-Labeled Campus

Your team can use the Edstutia campus with all its functionality. We can develop custom learning experiences to take place in your campus that take your training needs, organizational culture, and values into consideration. We can also help your learning leaders take the first steps toward designing their own VR-enhanced learning experiences that can be immediately utilized to launch a pilot program or social event.

Library of Simulations

We also offer a library of simulations whereby learners can practice their skills on their own time. These are solo or team-based exercises and are customized to your organization's specific needs. Whether it be practicing giving critical feedback, negotiation skills, or interview prep, we design simulations that can be recorded, reviewed, and refined. Rinse and repeat until the learner reaches their goal. This is also a great way to integrate real-time coaching.

Sandbox

Edstutia offers another option for organizations wanting to simply dip their toe into the VR water with minimal investment. The Sandbox includes private access to four virtual reality environments, including a main hall, a board room, a classroom, and breakout room. This is a perfect option to begin running pilot programs.

Ready to Get Started?

Eighty-two% of organizations expect the metaverse to be part of their business activities within the next three years, according to PwC's 2022 Metaverse Survey, and 42% of them plan to use immersive technologies for onboarding and training specifically. These early adopters will be one step ahead in leveraging immersive learning to attract, retain, and upskill talent.

Ready to leverage VR for a competitive edge in your training programs and better talent retention? Visit Edstutia's website to learn how your team can get started.



SCAN HERE

"The future belongs to those who learn more skills and combine them in creative ways."

Robert Greene

New York Times Best-Selling Author

