

# Project Fusion: The Tech Services Challenge

*A Commercial Acumen Simulation for Sales, Project Managers, and Delivery Teams*

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## The Brief

A global technology consultancy faced a disconnect between their Sales and Delivery functions. Sales teams were "throwing deals over the fence," winning contracts that were impossible to deliver profitably, while Delivery teams struggled to articulate the commercial impact of scope creep.

**The Goal:** The firm needed to instil "Commercial Acumen" in new hires, moving them from technical thinking to commercial thinking. The simulation had to force participants to experience the entire "Bid-to-Delivery" lifecycle, realising that a signed contract is a liability, not an asset, until it is delivered.

Five primary learning objectives were established:

1. **Commercial Impact Awareness** — Instinctively ask "What is the commercial impact of this decision?"
2. **Bid-to-Delivery Lifecycle** — Experience how sales promises create delivery constraints
3. **Resource Optimisation** — Balance utilisation against capacity risk and quality
4. **Client Relationship Management** — Recognise how scope decisions affect both satisfaction and profitability
5. **Strategic Investment** — Understand when to invest for long-term capability versus short-term margin

The brief specified a 3-hour format for 20 participants organised as 4 competing teams of 5, with defined cross-functional roles driving natural debate.

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## The Solution

Teams run competing tech consultancies, managing a bench of physical Junior and Senior Consultant tokens. They must navigate the tension between winning work in the Market Phase and executing it in the Delivery Phase, all while managing Utilisation Rates and Client Satisfaction.

## Core Mechanic: The Bid-to-Delivery Lifecycle

The game strictly separates "Winning" from "Doing." Teams who over-promise in the bidding war face an immediate resource crisis in the delivery phase. If you bid for a massive integration project but your Senior Consultants are already committed, you default on the contract — damaging your reputation permanently.

## Key Feature: The Utilisation Trap

Profit requires keeping staff busy (billable), but 100% utilisation leaves no slack for crises. Teams must balance the "Bench Cost" of idle staff against the "Burnout Risk" of overworking them.

## Strategic Capabilities

As the game progresses, teams can invest cash reserves to unlock AI and Cyber capabilities, allowing them to bid on higher-margin "Specialty Projects" in Year 3 — but only if they survived the cash-flow pressure of Year 1.

## Engineered Role Tension

Role Cards assign conflicting "Primary Questions" — Sales asks "*Can we afford to lose this?*" while Commercial asks "*What's our margin?*" — organically generating the cross-functional debate central to the learning outcomes.

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## Assessment

### Independent AI Assessment Score: 92/100

Dimension	Score
Mechanical Quality	22/25
Strategic Depth	24/25
Educational Value	25/25
Playability	21/25

*Scored by Gemini (Google) using a structured playtest methodology: the AI independently played the full simulation, calculated scores using the documented rules, and evaluated across four standardised dimensions.*

## Alignment with Learning Objectives

The simulation successfully engineers the desired behavioural shift — moving participants from technical thinking to commercial thinking — through interconnected mechanical systems. The "Bid-to-Delivery" lifecycle forces teams to physically experience the consequences of upstream decisions: over-promise in the Market Phase and you face

immediate resource scarcity in the Delivery Phase. The bid strategy system compels explicit trade-offs between aggressive strategies (+20% win rate, -15% margin) and premium strategies (-15% win rate, +10% margin), ensuring that every win is a calculated commercial decision rather than random chance.

## Facilitation Design

The Facilitator Manual provides minute-by-minute scripting and "Analysis Paralysis" troubleshooting, enabling general trainers to run the session confidently. The progressive complexity architecture — single-phase projects in Year 1, multi-phase projects and investments in Year 2, high-stakes specialty projects in Year 3 — ensures participants master fundamentals before facing complex strategic trade-offs.

## Mechanical Rigour

The simulation was independently playtested by AI, confirming that every bid strategy, staffing decision, and event response produces quantified, unambiguous outcomes. The Client Satisfaction Gauge creates a powerful reputation mechanic where delivery failures mathematically reduce future win rates, linking short-term operational decisions to long-term strategic viability. The scoring formula's weighted balance across margin (40%), satisfaction (30%), utilisation (15%), and strategic capability (15%) prevents any single-dimension strategy from dominating.

## Structural Excellence

The decision to use physical tokens for cash and consultants transforms abstract numbers into visceral limitations — when a team runs out of blue "Junior Consultant" tokens, the capacity crisis is immediately visible and felt. This tangible scarcity drives the resource optimisation behaviour requested in the brief.

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## Summary Specifications

Attribute	Detail
<b>Duration</b>	3 hours
<b>Participants</b>	20 (4 teams of 5)
<b>Complexity</b>	Medium (Physical Economy + Card System)
<b>Key Mechanic</b>	Bid Strategy & Resource Allocation
<b>Facilitator Requirement</b>	General Trainer (Detailed Scripting provided)

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*Project Fusion: The Tech Services Challenge was developed as a demonstration simulation to showcase The Sim Smithy's capability for translating complex commercial environments into engaging, competitive learning experiences.*