USC Institute for Creative Technologies

ARL

INOTS

Immersive Naval Officer Training System
2010-present

The Immersive Naval Officer Training System (INOTS) targets leadership and basic counseling for junior leaders in the U.S. Navy. The INOTS experience incorporates a virtual human, classroom response technology and real-time data tracking tools to support the instruction, practice and assessment of interpersonal communication skills.

While the Navy recognizes that communication skills are important, junior leaders often receive little or no opportunity to practice important interpersonal skills prior to deployment. If they do receive practice, live role-play sessions may be used. In an effort to provide a structured framework for teaching and practicing communication skills, INOTS replaces one human role-player with a life-sized virtual human. The virtual human component addresses the issues inherent to live role-play practice sessions that cannot be easily standardized, tracked and assessed following the interaction.
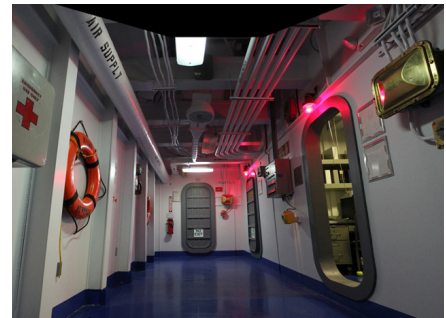
After receiving up-front instruction and example demonstrations on basic strategies for helping a subordinate with a performance problem or a personal issue, one student from a class of 50 is selected to speak to the virtual human, and the rest of the students participate by selecting the option they would choose using remote-controlled clickers. INOTS' instructional framework, interactive response system and visual data tracking are engaging tools to facilitate practice and class discussion, including an instructor-led after action review, before junior leaders reach their first assignments. Ultimately, the INOTS experience provides several interactive case studies and a framework for learning how to employ interpersonal skills related to basic counseling.

INOTS is a partnership with the Office of Naval Research (ONR), Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) and Officer Training Command Newport (OTCN). INOTS was installed at OTCN in August 2011 with a focus to supplement the Division Officer Leadership Course (DOLC) in support of the Officer Candidate School (OCS) and Officer Development School (ODS). In July 2013, INOTS was augmented with additional scenarios for use in the Limited Duty Officer/ Chief Warrant Officer (LDO/CWO) Academy's leadership curriculum.

ICT developed a similar Army prototype, the Emergent Leader Immersive Training Environment (ELITE), which is in use at the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) at Fort Benning, Georgia. ELITE's technology and instructional approach has been leveraged by the USC School of Social Work's Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans & Military Families (CIR) to train Motivational Interviewing with the Motivational Interviewing Learning Environment and Simulation (MILES) effort.

Facts and Figures
INOTS has trained over 12,000 Sailors at OTCN since 2012.