



Technology Innovation Center



# Green Ideas, Inc.

Language for Professionals Simulation

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**THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP**

*Creating Global Professionals*



# the language learning experience

Simulations have immense potential to engage learners in meaningful experiences. This vignette illustrates a virtual environment that immerses a language learner in situated, content-rich, and highly contextualized language learning experiences. The simulation described here takes advantage of existing resources in the Flagship community, such as tutors, who can play different roles in the experience, and can be adapted to any Flagship language.



The company website provides resources for learners to become acquainted with the philosophy of the company and its leadership.

Gabi, a sophomore student in international affairs, is an Intermediate High Chinese Language Flagship student. Gabi receives an e-mail in Chinese from her tutor inviting her to take a look at the website of an interesting organization, Green Ideas, Inc., which they will discuss during her next tutoring session. Green Ideas, Inc., is in fact a simulation of a global company with offices in China. The e-mail from the tutor includes a few questions about the organization and instructs Gabi to come to the tutoring session prepared to discuss these questions. One of the questions concerns which position she would apply for in that company, and why. During the tutoring session, the tutor asks Gabi which of the three positions she found most appealing. Gabi expresses interest in the PR position and her tutor encourages her to prepare a résumé and cover letter to apply. After sending in her application, Gabi receives an automated e-mail in Chinese confirming receipt. The following week, Gabi receives an e-mail from a PR office assistant to set up a time for a Skype interview. Gabi and her tutor work on preparing for the interview, researching Chinese websites that offer job interview tips. At the appointed time, two friendly company employees interview Gabi via Skype in the target language, asking questions typical of a job interview in a Chinese workplace.



Job Application Form



Skype interview during pilot in Spring 2016



Self-paced training in pilot

The self-paced trainings on the website are geared to workplace standards and practices drawn from the target community of practice. The global company Green Ideas, Inc. localizes business practices in each country in which it operates.

## Welcome to Green Ideas, Inc.

A few days later, Gabi receives a congratulatory e-mail confirming her hire into a PR position in the company and a welcome letter with employment forms to fill out and return. Once the forms are returned, Gabi receives an e-mail requesting a time for a meeting with the PR manager, Ms. Liu. During a brief Skype meeting, Ms. Liu explains to Gabi that everyone in the PR group is very busy working on a project intended to bolster public confidence in the company. Gabi will be expected to contribute her ideas in a group forum to which only the PR Group has access.

When Gabi attempts to log on to the Green Ideas, Inc. intranet, she discovers two mandatory self-paced trainings required for workplace etiquette and communication basics that she needs to complete before she can gain access to the company intranet. The multimedia trainings explain the issues in the context of the company and culminate with a quiz, which employees need to pass as a precondition of employment.

Gabi passes her training assignments and gains access to the company intranet. She locates the forum and sees four messages from different PR Group employees waiting for her. The video messages welcome Gabi to the group and explain some of the challenges of the project they are all working on. One such challenge arises from the Finance and Accounting Department, which apparently does not get along with PR and has restricted the budget for the project.

Another challenge is that the Marketing Department has requested the PR Group to give them ideas for a possible TV commercial intended to restore the company's credibility after an unfortunate incident -- and they need a fast turnaround. A group member sends Gabi a message with links for her to find out more about the incident. One is a recorded piece of news from the day of the incident, including interviews with the company CEO and people in the community. The other two are a newspaper article and a blog entry, one blaming the company for the incident and the other praising the company for its contributions to the community. The group asks Gabi to become familiar with the issue and to conference with one of the group members as soon as possible. Soon after Gabi accesses these materials, she receives a message from one of the PR Group employees, Song, requesting her availability to chat online about the project. When they chat, they agree on an idea and Song asks Gabi to be the one to share it with the whole group because he needs to prepare for a business trip. Gabi records a video message to the group explaining the idea and posts it in the forum. Most responses are favorable but some request revisions. The group manager asks Gabi to post a brief description in the forum incorporating the revisions. Soon after Gabi posts the description, a group member sends out a poll requesting that everyone vote. The idea is approved and forwarded to the Marketing Department.

Two days later, the group receives a note from the Marketing Manager approving the proposal and asking them to storyboard the commercial and create a "video draft" to share with Marketing Professionals. The group votes for Gabi to be the one to create the draft. They share a link with her with instructions to create a storyboard and suggestions for technology tools to use.

Gabi records a 30-second video mockup of the commercial and shares it with the Marketing group, using a collaboration tool that allows the group members to give feedback. The group gives Gabi positive feedback and also asks questions about the video. The group agrees that she deserves recognition for her efforts, so they let her know they have requested her manager to give her due recognition. Soon after, Gabi receives a congratulatory e-mail message from her manager.

## Reflecting on the Experience

The next time Gabi meets with her tutor, who has seen the video draft she produced, they discuss her experience in the simulation. The tutor agrees to issue the badge recommended by the group, but only after Gabi writes a reflection on the experience. Gabi emerges from the simulation experience with boosted confidence, experiences that will support her in her eventual in-country internship, and a badge that serves as evidence of her learning.

This is an example of a possible project embedded in the simulation. A learner who applied for a different position would get a project that, like Gabi's, would be aligned with his or her content preference.

Gabi's access to the materials generates a system e-mail to an assigned tutor (posing as Song) with instructions to arrange for an online chat with her.

The group manager role could be played by the same tutor.

The poll can be generated by the system automatically.

Existing collaboration tools provide this functionality.

The setup for the environment described here does not require highly specialized technical expertise, since its most complex elements are a front-end website and a secured environment with a discussion forum. This type of environment provides a useful stepping stone to build more sophisticated systems.



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The Language Flagship is a national initiative to change the way Americans learn languages through a groundbreaking approach to language education for students from kindergarten through college. For more information, please visit

[www.thelanguageflagship.org](http://www.thelanguageflagship.org)

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