



Project Title: Council of Coaches

Introduction

The “Council of Coaches” is a new concept of virtual coaching. Multiple autonomous, virtual coaches form your personal council that stands at your service. Each coach has its own area of expertise; each coach has its own personality and style of coaching; they might not always agree with each other; but they all share a single goal: to support your health and well-being. Whether your concerns are related to your physical well-being, your social life, your cognitive-, or your mental health, there is always a council member for you. Are you having specific problems related to chronic pain, or managing your diabetes? A specialized virtual coach will look after your needs. Take some time to sit down and join a council meeting with those coaches relevant to you. The council members are here to listen to you, inform you, to help you set personal goals, and to inspire you to take control of your health. Give the council your thoughts, or listen and observe how the individual coaches exchange their views on numerous issues.

Goal

The goal of the HMI Project “Council of Coaches” is to create an interactive demonstrator that allows the user to participate in a virtual council meeting. In case you are familiar with old video games, think of the High Council in the Civilization video game (see picture) that advise the player on how to run their empire. For this project, the application is a little more serious, and a little more relevant: the aim of the council of coaches is to inform about health and wellbeing related issues, such as physical activity, weight-loss, or cognitive training. The objective of the demo is to show that a number of different virtual characters that discuss your health with each other (i.e. perform an interactive drama) are able to keep the user engaged, and will draw him into the discussion. With the ultimate aim that the user will learn about health, and will be inspired to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

This project will be supervised in collaboration with Roessingh Research and Development (RRD) and the UT Centre for Monitoring and Coaching (CMC).



In short:

- Define a “healthy” topic and write some interactive dialogue (may involve a bit of research).
- Build a graphical, interactive demonstrator that teaches the user about your healthy topic, and challenges him to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- Design and execute a user evaluation studies to show that the interactive drama keeps the users engaged (perhaps compared to a single virtual ‘coach’?).
- Any other idea around this topic and own input can be discussed at the start of the project!

Supervisors:

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Website

More information about the research project can be found here: <http://council-of-coaches.eu/>

Further reading:

André E, Rist T. Presenting through performing: On the use of multiple lifelike characters in knowledge- based presentation systems. Knowledge-Based Syst. 2001 Mar;14(1–2):3–13.

Traum D, Rickett J. Embodied agents for multi-party dialogue in immersive virtual worlds. In: Proceedings of the first international joint conference on Autonomous agents and multiagent systems part 2 - AAMAS '02 [Internet]. New York, New York, USA: ACM Press; 2002. p. 766–73. (AAMAS '02; vol. 21). Available from: <http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=544922&dl=>

Battagolino C, Bickmore T. Increasing the Engagement of Conversational Agents through Co-Constructed Storytelling. In: Intelligent Narrative Technologies and Social Believability in Games: Papers from the AIIDE 2015 Joint Workshop [Internet]. 2015. Available from: <http://relationalagents.com/publications/int8-2015.pdf>

