

# FIRST 90 DAYS

## Managing Your First Performance Conversation

### FIRST 90 DAYS

Designing a Scenario-Based Leadership Simulation

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# Executive Summary

Learning becomes meaningful when practice looks and feels like the work itself.

## Project Overview

**First 90 Days** is a scenario-based eLearning module designed to help newly promoted managers develop the confidence and skills needed to conduct effective coaching conversations.

Developed in Articulate Storyline 360, the module emphasizes experiential learning by allowing learners to practice authentic workplace behaviours in a safe, low-risk environment.

## Business Problem

Organizations frequently promote high-performing employees into management positions based on their technical expertise. While these individuals understand their roles, many have limited experience conducting coaching conversations, addressing performance concerns, and guiding employees through constructive feedback.

Without opportunities to practice these leadership skills, new managers often:

- Delay difficult conversations.
- Rely on assumptions rather than evidence.
- Struggle to balance empathy with accountability.
- Lack confidence when coaching employees.

This project addresses that performance gap by providing realistic, guided practice before learners encounter similar situations in the workplace.

# Executive Summary

Learning becomes meaningful when practice looks and feels like the work itself.

## Learning Solution

The module uses a scenario-based learning approach that mirrors the decision-making process of a first-time manager. Learners progress through a structured coaching scenario where they:

- Review workplace evidence and employee information.
- Prepare for a coaching conversation.
- Select appropriate coaching responses.
- Develop an employee action plan.
- Reflect on their leadership decisions.

By focusing on workplace behaviours rather than knowledge recall, the module encourages learners to apply critical thinking, communication, and coaching skills in an authentic context.

## Target Audience

The primary audience is newly promoted supervisors, team leaders, and first-time managers transitioning into leadership roles. These learners typically possess strong technical expertise but have limited experience managing employee performance or conducting coaching conversations.

# Executive Summary

Learning becomes meaningful when practice looks and feels like the work itself.

## My Role

I independently completed the instructional design and development of this project, including:

- Performance and learner analysis
- Learning objectives and action mapping
- Scenario writing and dialogue development
- Visual design and user experience
- Articulate Storyline 360 development
- Graphic asset creation and image editing
- Quality assurance and usability testing

## Project Outcomes

The completed module demonstrates how scenario-based learning can bridge the gap between leadership knowledge and workplace performance.

This project showcases my ability to apply instructional design principles to create engaging, performance-driven learning experiences that align business needs with measurable learning outcomes.

# Needs Analysis

The best learning solutions begin with understanding the problem—not designing the course

## **Project: First 90 Days – Scenario-Based Leadership Simulation**

### **1. Business Need**

Organizations frequently promote high-performing employees into supervisory positions based on technical expertise, but many have limited experience leading coaching conversations. This results in inconsistent feedback, reduced employee engagement, and lower leadership confidence.

### **2. Performance Problem**

The gap is behavioural rather than informational. New managers struggle to gather evidence, prepare for coaching conversations, communicate constructively, and develop improvement plans.

# Needs Analysis

The best learning solutions begin with understanding the problem—not designing the course

## 3. Target Audience

Primary audience: newly promoted supervisors, team leaders, and first-time managers. Learners possess strong technical skills but limited leadership experience.

## 4. Desired Performance

Managers should review evidence, prepare appropriately, conduct supportive coaching conversations, develop action plans, and reflect on leadership decisions.

## 5. Root Causes

Lack of coaching practice, limited safe opportunities to rehearse conversations, low confidence, and cognitive overload during real workplace discussions.

## 6. Instructional Recommendation

A scenario-based eLearning simulation provides realistic practice, guided decision-making, authentic workplace context, and structured reflection.

# Needs Analysis

The best learning solutions begin with understanding the problem—not designing the course

## Gap Analysis

| Current State          | Desired State                | Gap                     |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Reactive conversations | Evidence-based coaching      | Coaching practice       |
| Low confidence         | Confident coaching           | Experience              |
| Corrective feedback    | Development-focused coaching | Leadership mindset      |
| Limited preparation    | Structured preparation       | Decision-making process |

# Learning Strategy

People learn best when they practise the decisions they'll make in the real world.

## Learning Goal

Prepare newly promoted managers to confidently conduct supportive coaching conversations by practicing leadership decisions in a realistic workplace scenario.

## Learning Objectives

After completing this module, learners will be able to:

### 1. Analyze Workplace Evidence

Review employee information, emails, and performance indicators before making coaching decisions.

### 2. Prepare for a Coaching Conversation

Identify appropriate discussion points and develop an evidence-based coaching approach.

### 3. Demonstrate Supportive Leadership

Select coaching responses that balance empathy, accountability, and employee development.

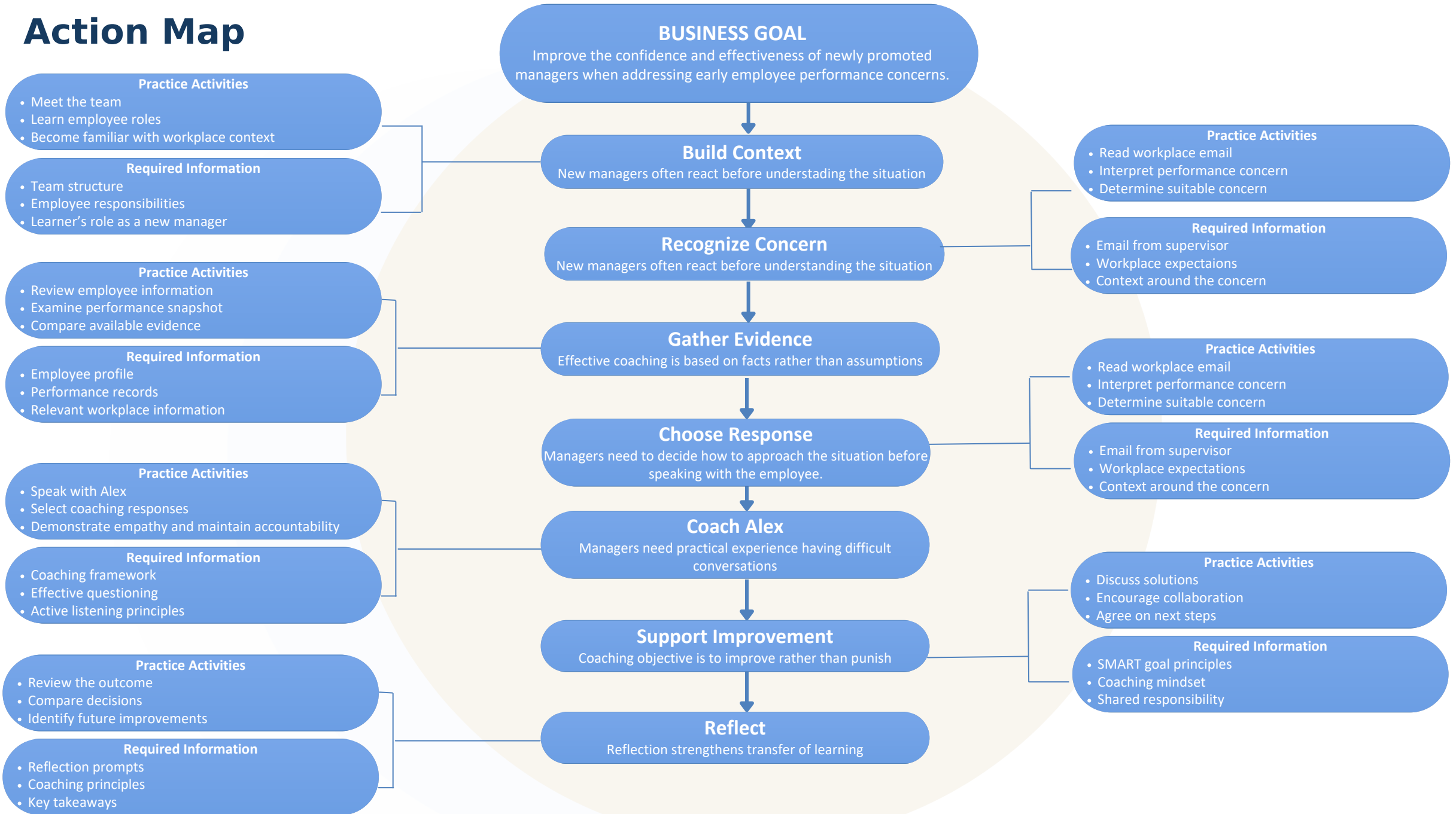
### 4. Develop an Employee Action Plan

Collaborate with the employee to establish realistic expectations and next steps.

### 5. Reflect on Leadership Decisions

Evaluate coaching decisions and identify opportunities for future improvement.

# Action Map



# Project Snapshot

The goal was to show how I think, not just what I built.



First 90 Days is a short scenario-based eLearning experience that helps newly promoted managers practise a difficult performance conversation before facing one at work.

**Audience**

Newly promoted managers

**Format**

Self-paced eLearning

**Duration**

3-5 minutes

**Tool**

Articulate Storyline 360

**Role**

Instructional design, visual design, development, QA

**Focus**

Coaching conversations and manager judgement

# The Challenge

The hardest conversations are rarely about performance alone.

## New managers are promoted for what they know then asked to lead conversations they have not practised

This project addresses a common leadership gap: managers often understand expectations, but struggle to apply them when emotions, uncertainty, and performance concerns collide.



### Policy

Managers may know the expectations



### Reality

The conversation is emotionally complex.

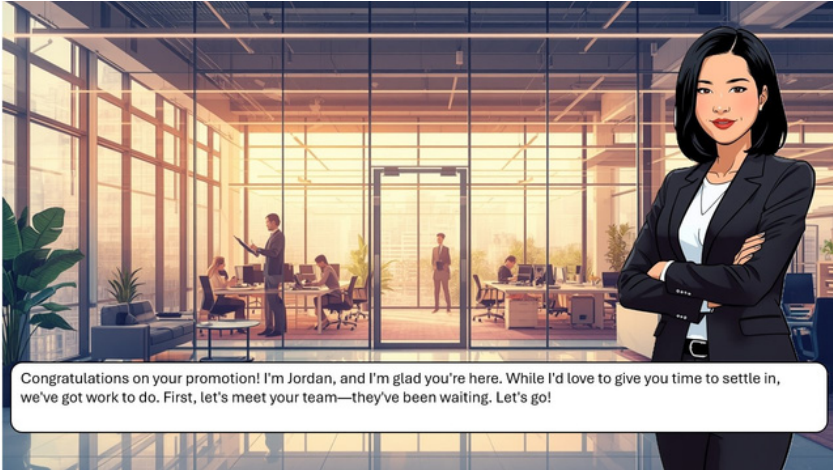


### Need

Practice judgement before workplace pressure.

# Understanding the Learner

Every design decision becomes easier once you know who you are designing for.



## Representative Learner

### Newly Promoted Manager

A strong individual contributor who has recently become responsible for coaching, feedback, and employee performance conversations.

#### Goals

Build credibility. Support the team. Handle conversations professionally.

#### Pain Points

Worried about saying the wrong thing. Unsure how to balance empathy and accountability.

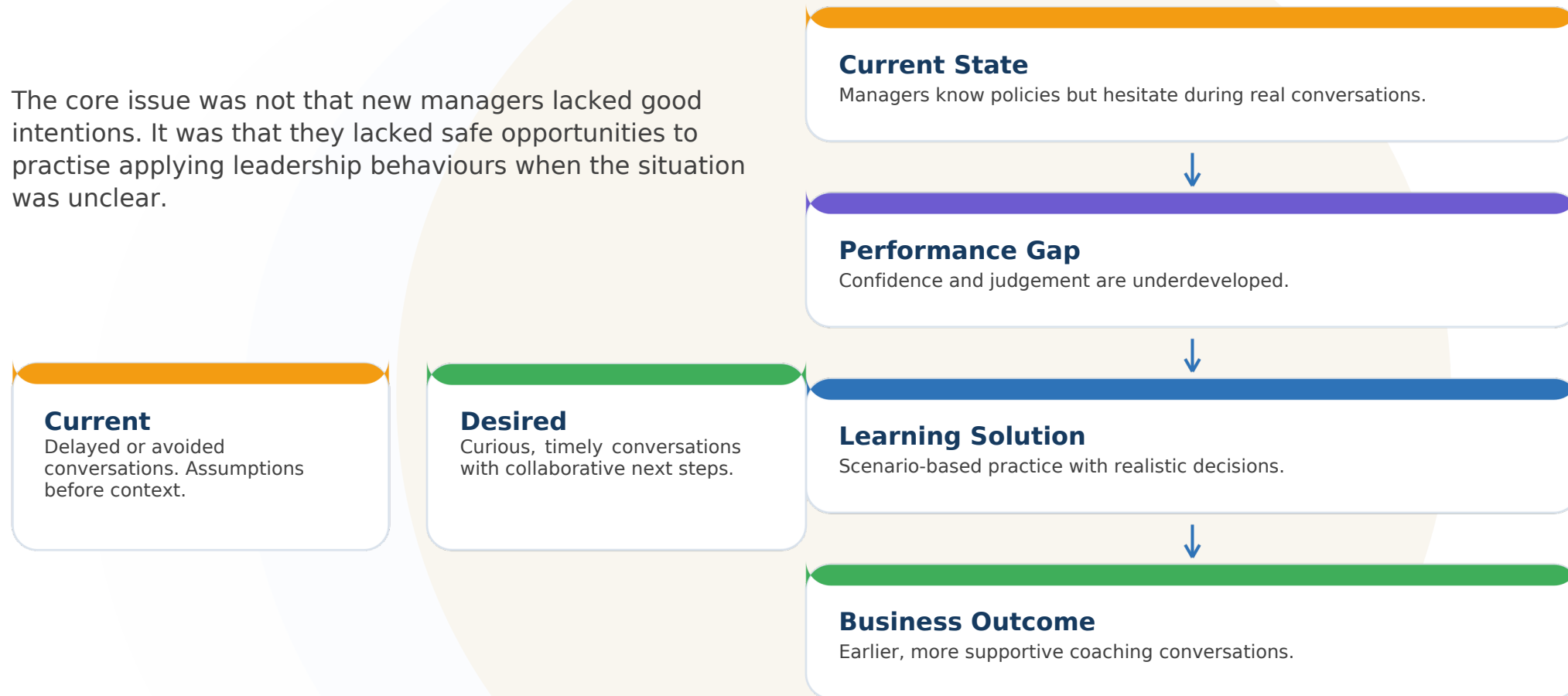
#### Needs

Realistic practice, low cognitive load, and feedback that supports reflection.

# Discovery & Analysis

I started by defining the workplace behaviour—not the content.

The core issue was not that new managers lacked good intentions. It was that they lacked safe opportunities to practise applying leadership behaviours when the situation was unclear.



# My Design Philosophy

## Performance First

Begin with what learners need to do at work.

## Authenticity

Make the experience feel like a real workplace moment.

## Decision Making

Let learners practise judgement, not recall.

## Reflection

Give learners space to think before feedback.

## Simplicity

Remove anything that does not support the task.

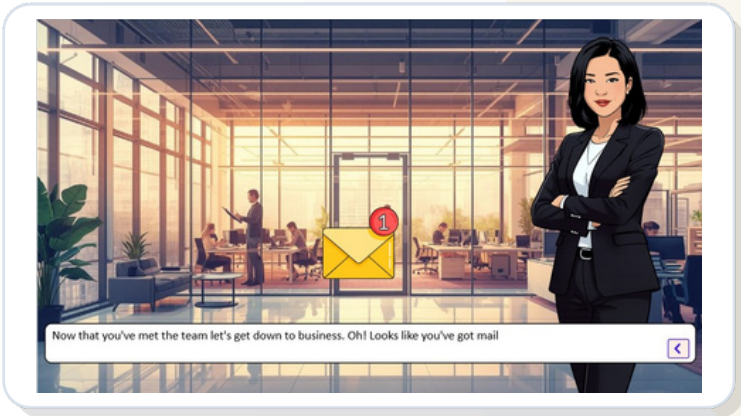
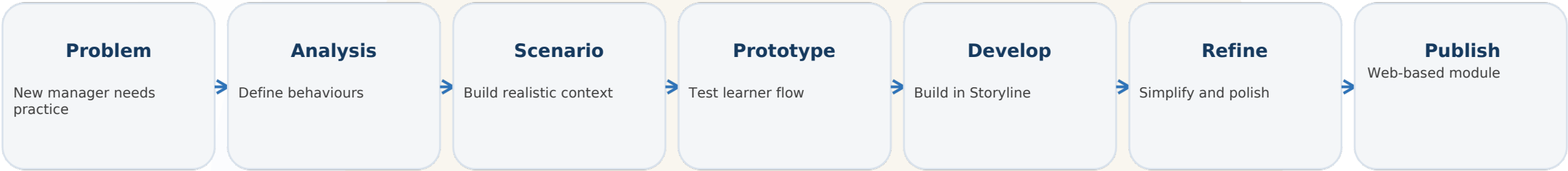
## Storytelling

Use narrative to create relevance and emotional context.

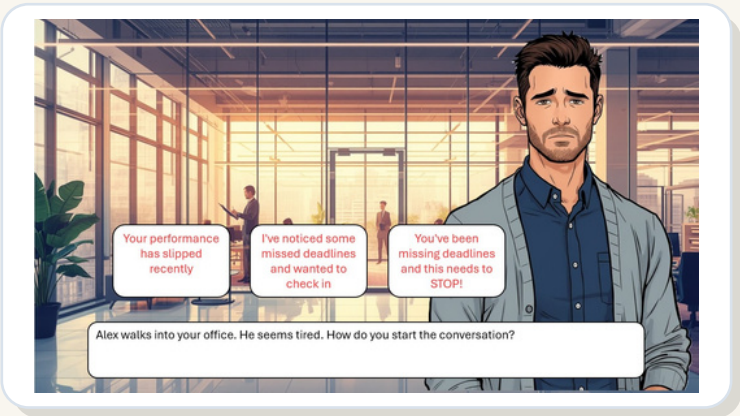
**Design takeaway: I wanted learners to practise being a manager, not read about being one.**

# Designing the Experience

The module follows the same sequence a manager would experience at work.



Context before decision



Conversation practice



Reflection and transfer

# Why These Design Decisions?



## Jordan

Scaffolds the learner before major decisions.

Design Rationale



## Alex

Creates an emotionally realistic coaching challenge.

Design Rationale



## Branching Dialogue

Lets learners practise judgement in context.

Design Rationale



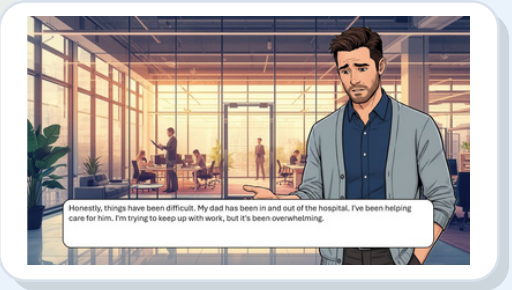
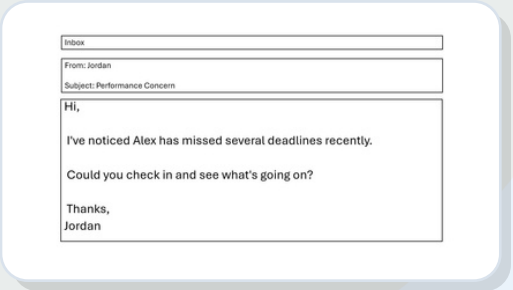
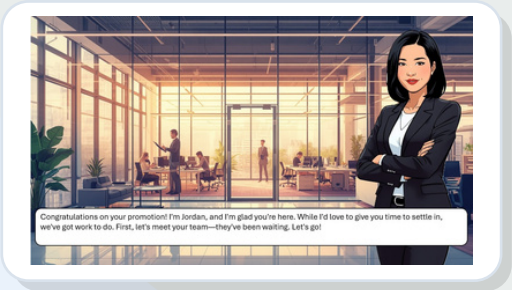
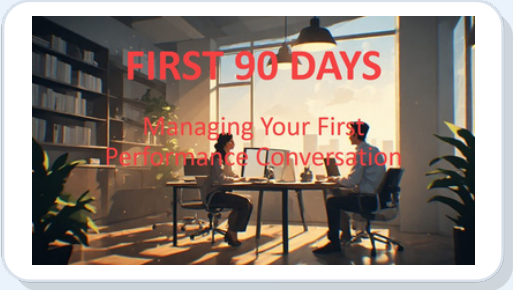
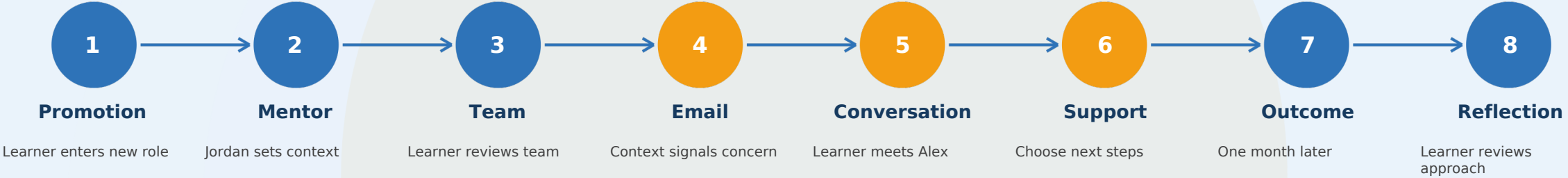
## Reflection

Encourages learners to evaluate their own reasoning.

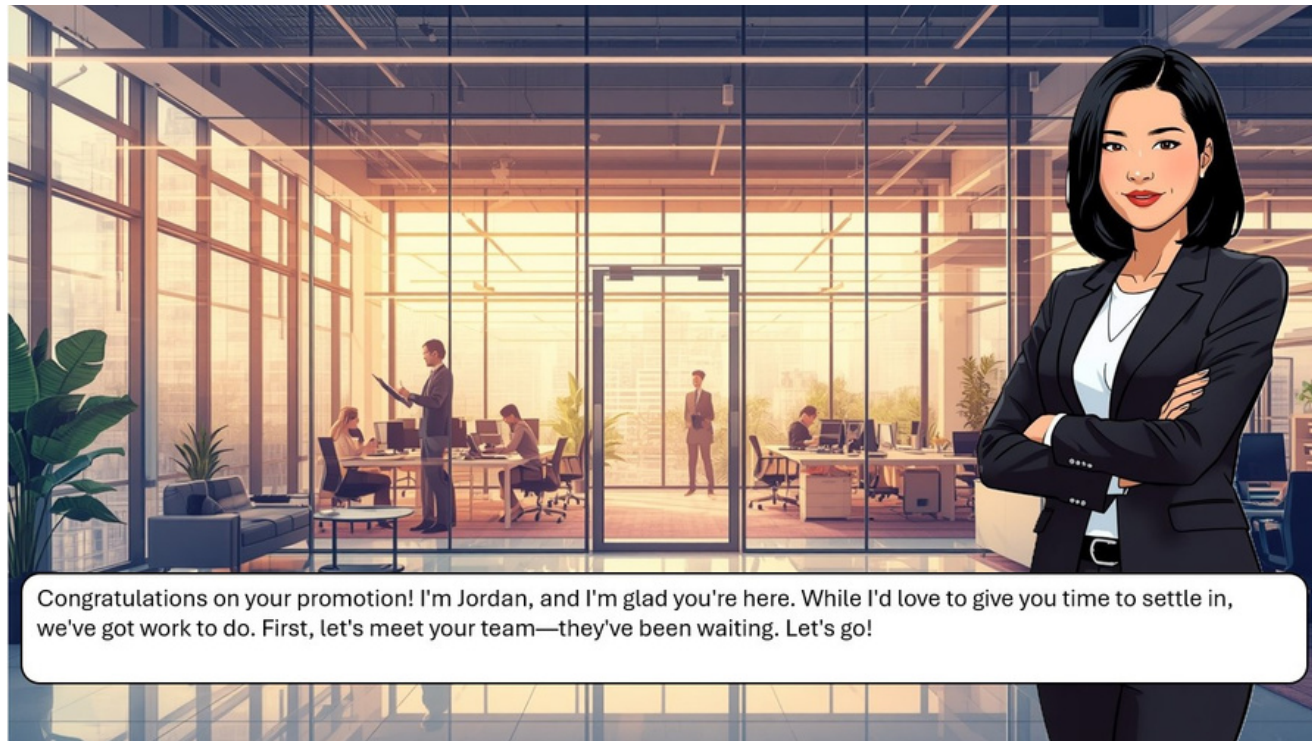
Design Rationale

# Learning Experience Flow

The flow mirrors how a manager prepares, responds, and reflects.



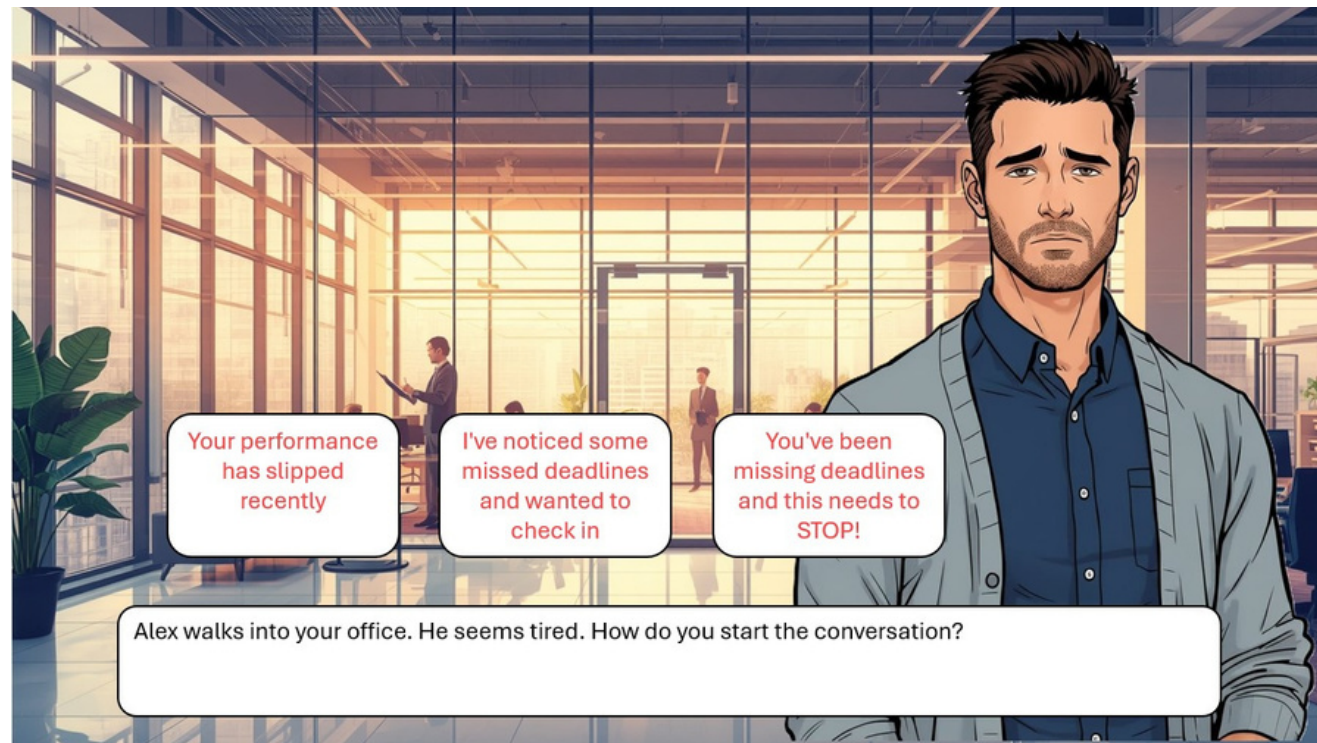
# Annotated Screen: Mentor Introduction



- 1 Mentor character establishes context before the first meaningful learner decision.
- 2 Dialogue introduces the role and stakes without a long instruction screen.
- 3 Office environment keeps the scenario grounded in a familiar workplace context.
- 4 Simple navigation keeps attention on the conversation, not the interface.

**Design insight: I used Jordan as a scaffold - support is present, but the learner still owns the decisions.**

# Annotated Screen: Branching Conversation



- 1 Three response options create a realistic judgement moment rather than a recall question.
- 2 Alex appears visually unsettled, reinforcing the emotional context of the conversation.
- 3 The prompt asks how to start the conversation, matching the actual workplace task.
- 4 Learners practise tone, timing, and empathy through action.

**Design insight: Branching dialogue let me assess judgement in context instead of asking learners to identify a correct answer.**

# Visual Storytelling as an Instructional Tool

## **Staging**

Position characters and choices so learners know where to look.

## **Pacing**

Reveal context gradually to avoid overwhelming the learner.

## **Composition**

Use clean layouts to guide attention to the decision.

## **Emotion**

Use character expression to make the situation feel human.

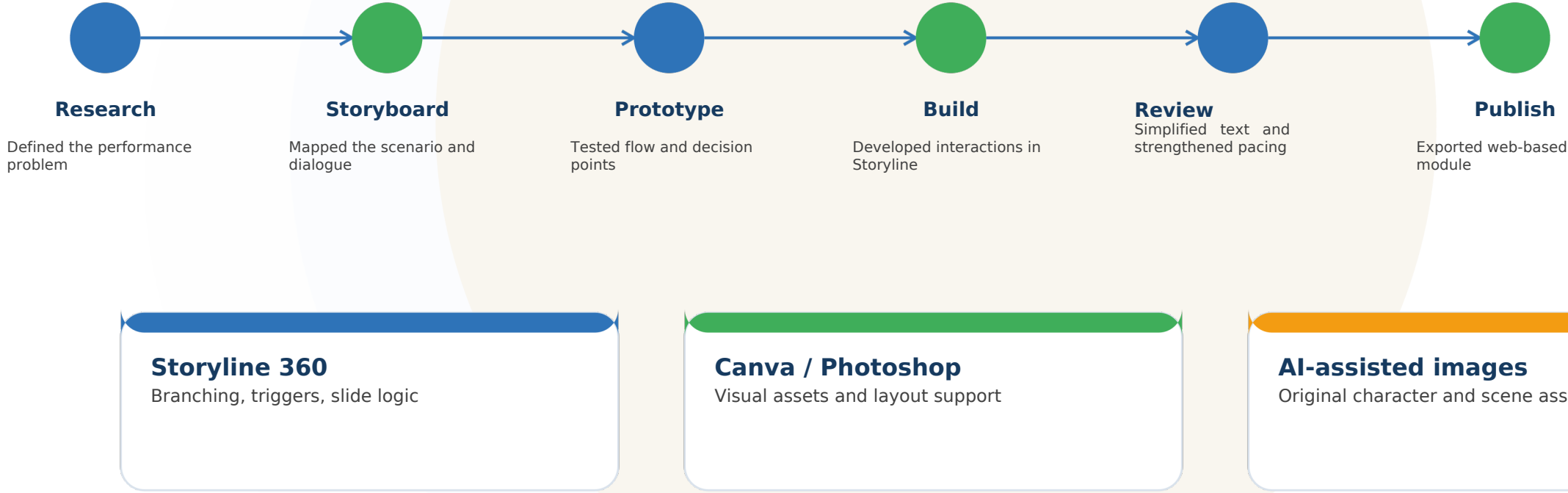
## **Continuity**

Keep the environment consistent so the scenario feels cohesive.

## **Purpose**

Use visuals to support learning, not decorate the screen.

# Development Process



# Measuring Success



## Learning

Learners recognize effective coaching responses and why they matter.



## Behaviour

Managers initiate conversations earlier and ask better questions.



## Business

Teams experience more consistent, supportive performance conversations.

**If this were deployed in an organization, I would evaluate it through learner confidence, decision quality, manager behaviour, and employee feedback over time.**

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 1

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



# FIRST 90 DAYS

## Managing Your First Performance Conversation

The user is presented with the title screen

Reviewer Comments

Add 'START' button

Audio: none

Feedback:

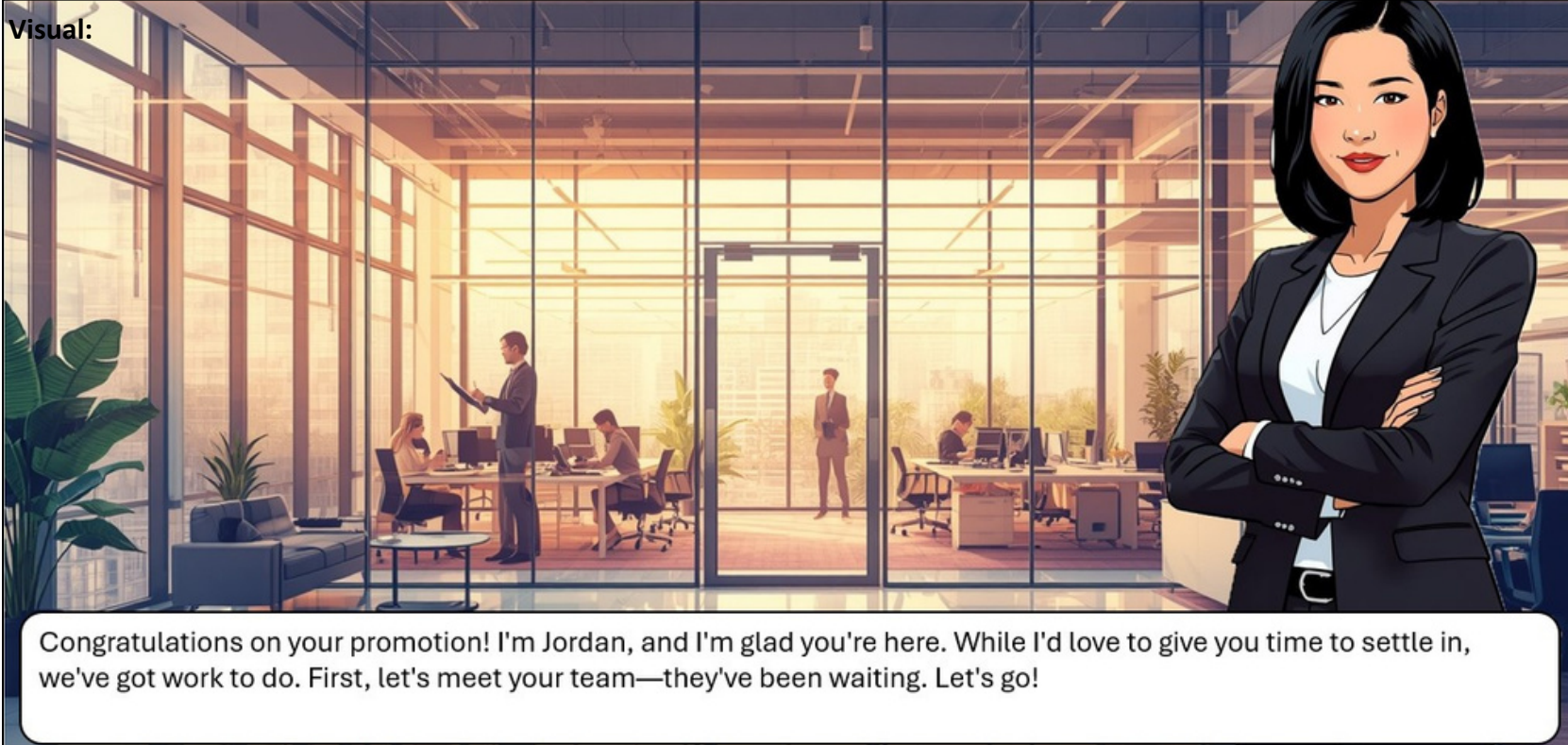
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 2

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



User is introduced to Jordan, who scaffolds the user throughout the module.

Reviewer Comments

Audio: Audio of on screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 3

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



User is introduced to the team members. Clicking on them will allow the user to view more information on both team members

Reviewer Comments

Add on-screen text instructing the user to click on the team members to learn more.

Audio: Audio of on screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 4

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Clicking on Dan Marko will provide the user with more information about him.

Reviewer Comments

Add a “BACK” button

Audio: None

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 5

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Clicking on Alex Morgan will provide the user with more information about him.

Reviewer Comments

Add a “BACK” button

Audio: None

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 6

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan will prompt the user to check their email.

Email icon will pop up on screen to the dialogue

Reviewer Comments

Replace placeholder email icon

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

|                                     |                                                          |                |                          |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Lesson Title:     The First 90 Days |                                                          | Slide ID:    7 | Programming/Interactions |
| Visual:                             | Inbox                                                    |                | Email screen             |
|                                     | From: Jordan                                             |                |                          |
|                                     | Subject: Performance Concern                             |                |                          |
|                                     | Hi,                                                      |                |                          |
|                                     | I've noticed Alex has missed several deadlines recently. |                |                          |
|                                     | Could you check in and see what's going on?              |                |                          |
|                                     | Thanks,                                                  |                |                          |
|                                     | Jordan                                                   |                |                          |
|                                     |                                                          |                |                          |
| Audio:                              | none                                                     |                |                          |
|                                     |                                                          |                |                          |
| Feedback:                           |                                                          |                |                          |
|                                     |                                                          |                |                          |

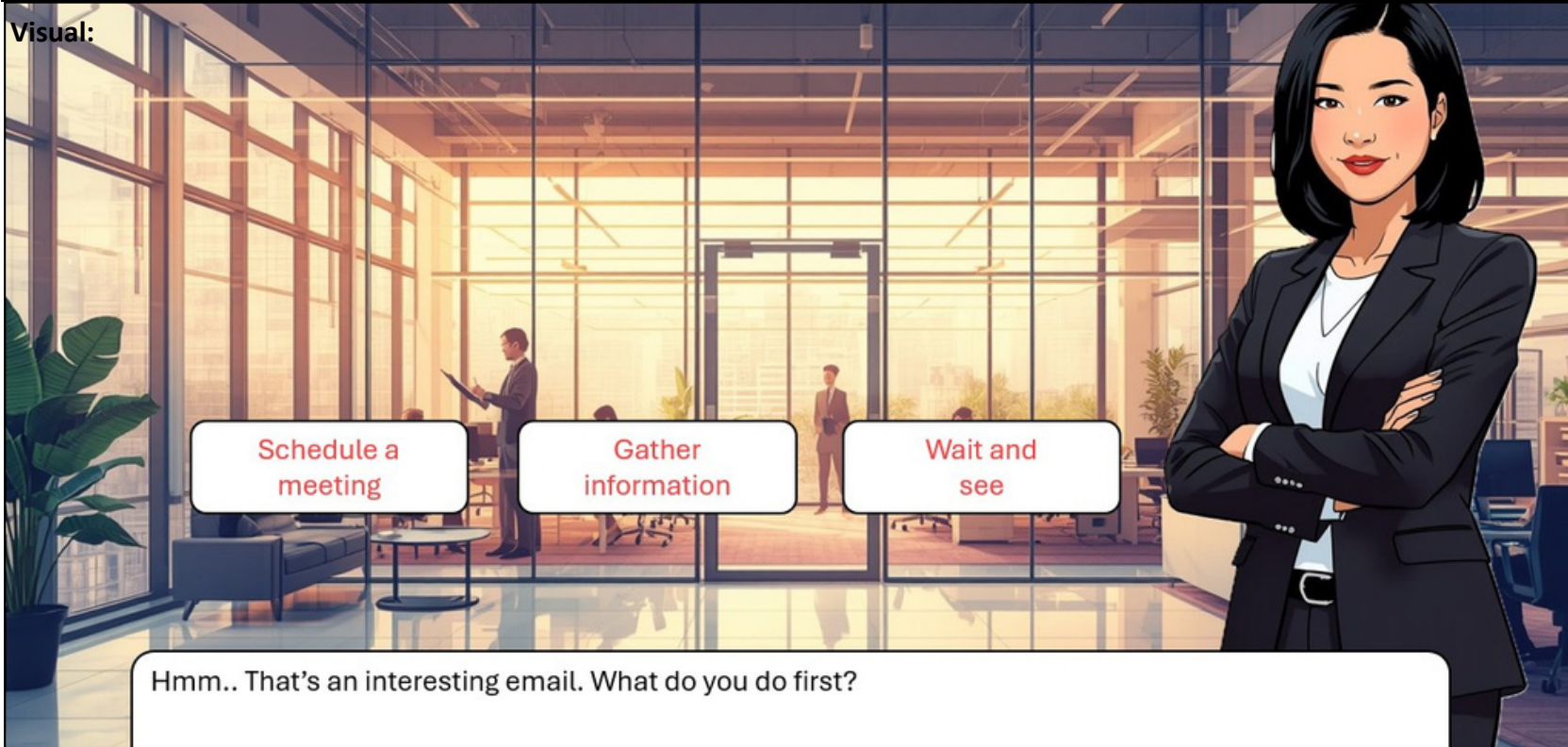
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 8

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan will appear with the on screen options on what the user should do next

Choice boxes will appear on screen after the dialogue has ended

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 9

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan will appear with the on-screen with the right option highlighted in GREEN

Reviewer Comments

Include "NEXT" and "BACK" buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

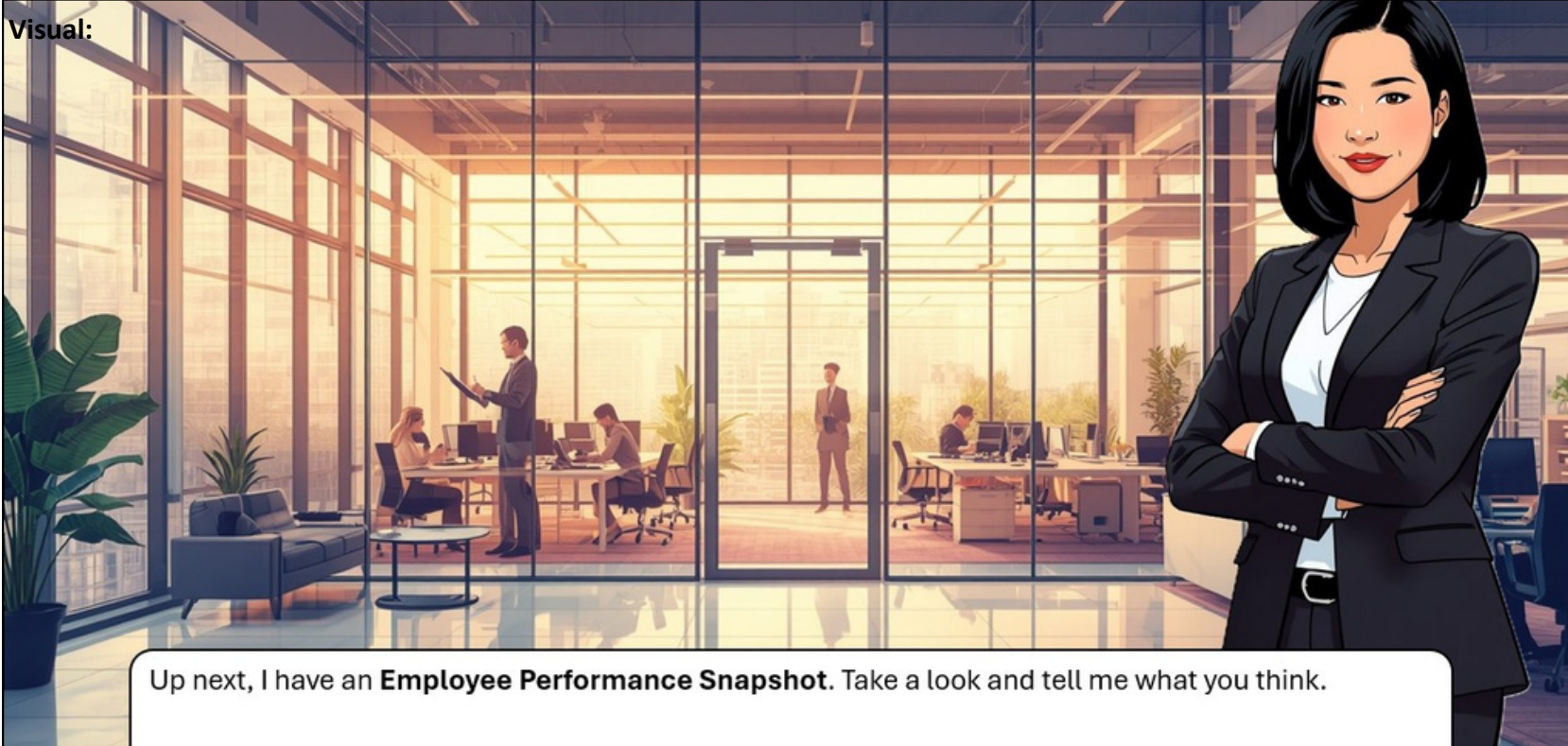
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 10

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Up next, I have an **Employee Performance Snapshot**. Take a look and tell me what you think.

Jordan will appear on-screen with instructions on what to do next.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 11

Programming/Interactions

Visual: Employee Performance Snapshot

Name: **Alex Morgan**

Position: **Data Analyst**

Deadline 1: **LATE**

Deadline 2: **LATE**

Deadline 3: **LATE**

Client Feedback: **POSITIVE**

Overtime Hours: **INCREASED**



User is directed to the 'Employee Performance Snapshot' screen

Reviewer Comments

Include "NEXT" and "BACK" buttons.

Audio: none

Feedback:

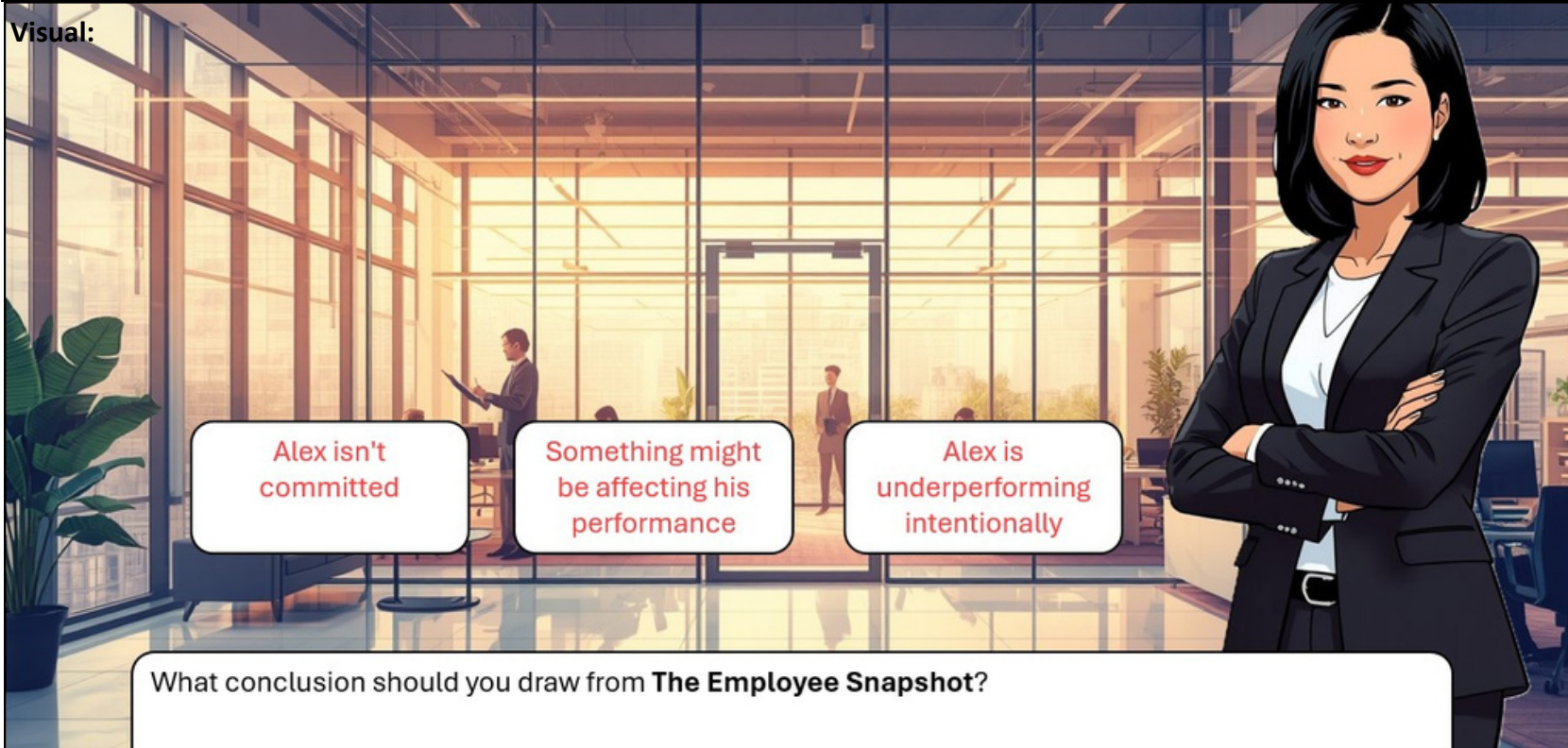
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 12

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan appears on screen with options on what the user should do next

User options will pop up on screen after audio dialogue has ended

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

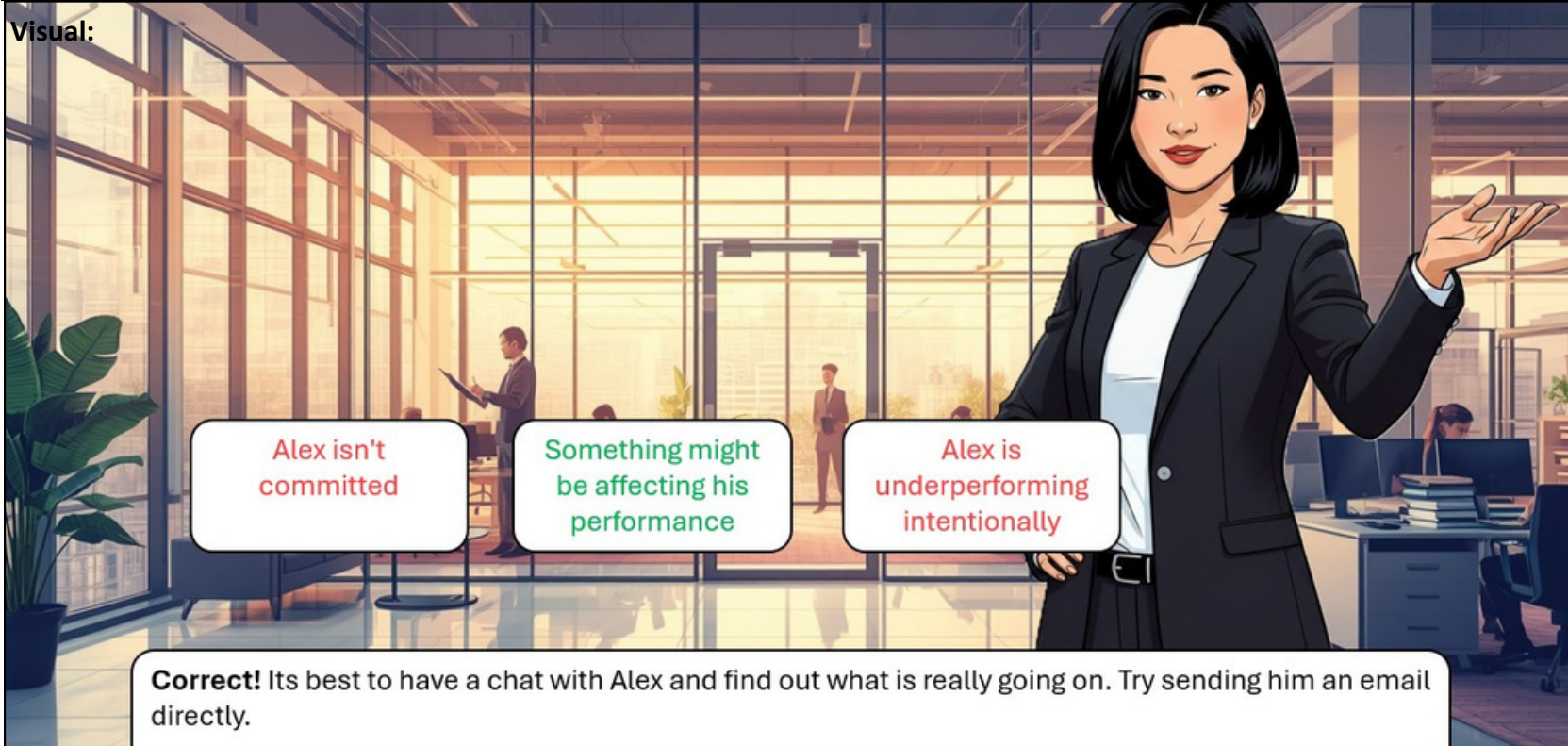
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 13

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan appears on screen with the correct option highlighted in GREEN

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

|                                     |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Lesson Title:     The First 90 Days |                                                                                                                 | Slide ID:   14 | Programming/Interactions             |
| Visual:                             | Inbox                                                                                                           |                | The user is directed to Alex’s email |
|                                     | From: Manager                                                                                                   |                |                                      |
|                                     | Subject: Check In                                                                                               |                |                                      |
|                                     | Hi Alex,                                                                                                        |                |                                      |
|                                     | Would you mind if we connected tomorrow at 3PM? I'd like to check in about how things have been going recently. |                |                                      |
|                                     | Cheers,                                                                                                         |                |                                      |
|                                     | Manager                                                                                                         |                |                                      |
|                                     |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |
| Audio:                   none       |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |
|                                     |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |
| Feedback:                           |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |
|                                     |                                                                                                                 |                |                                      |

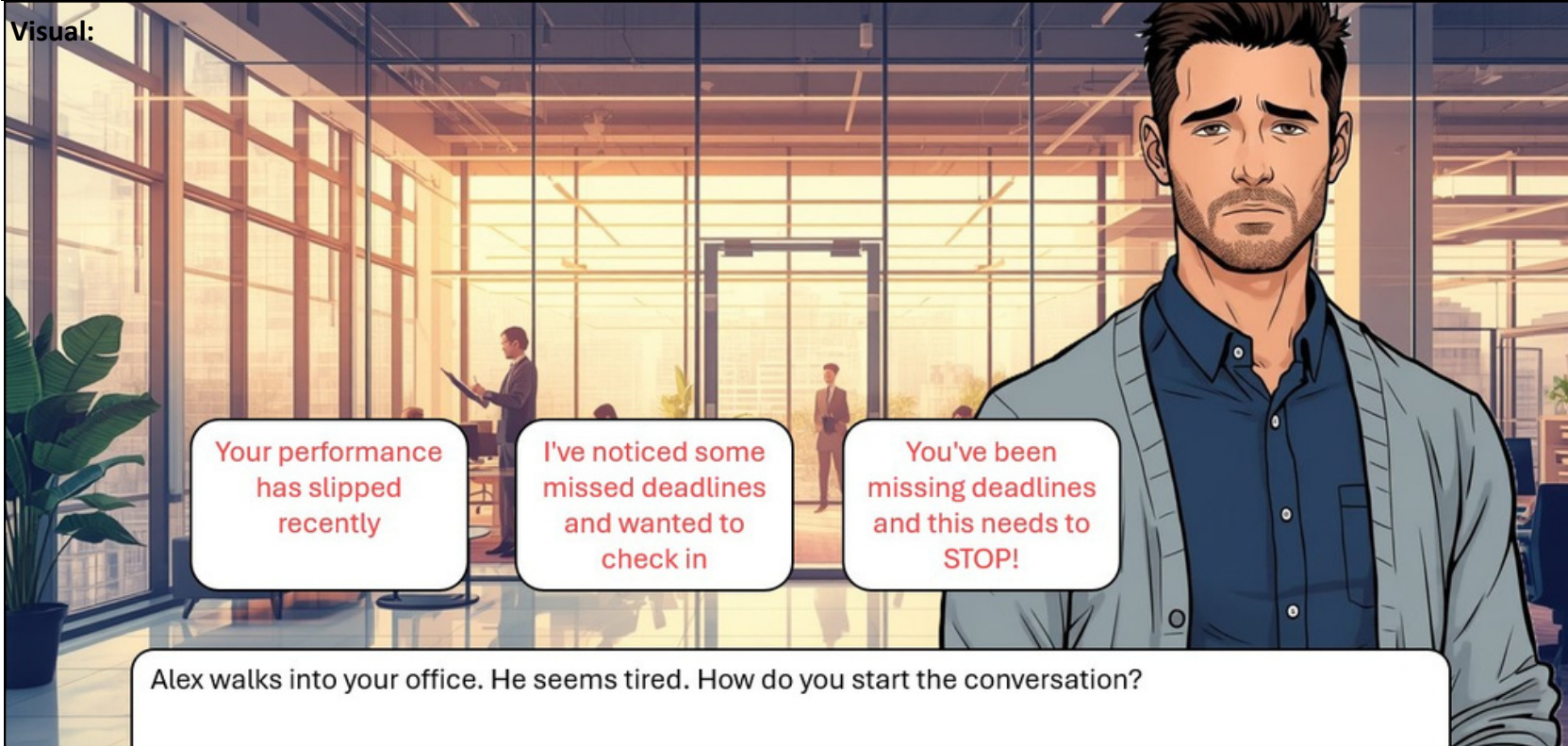
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 15

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Alex is on screen, with a sad expression. The user is prompted to start the conversation with three options. Options will pop up on screen after audio.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

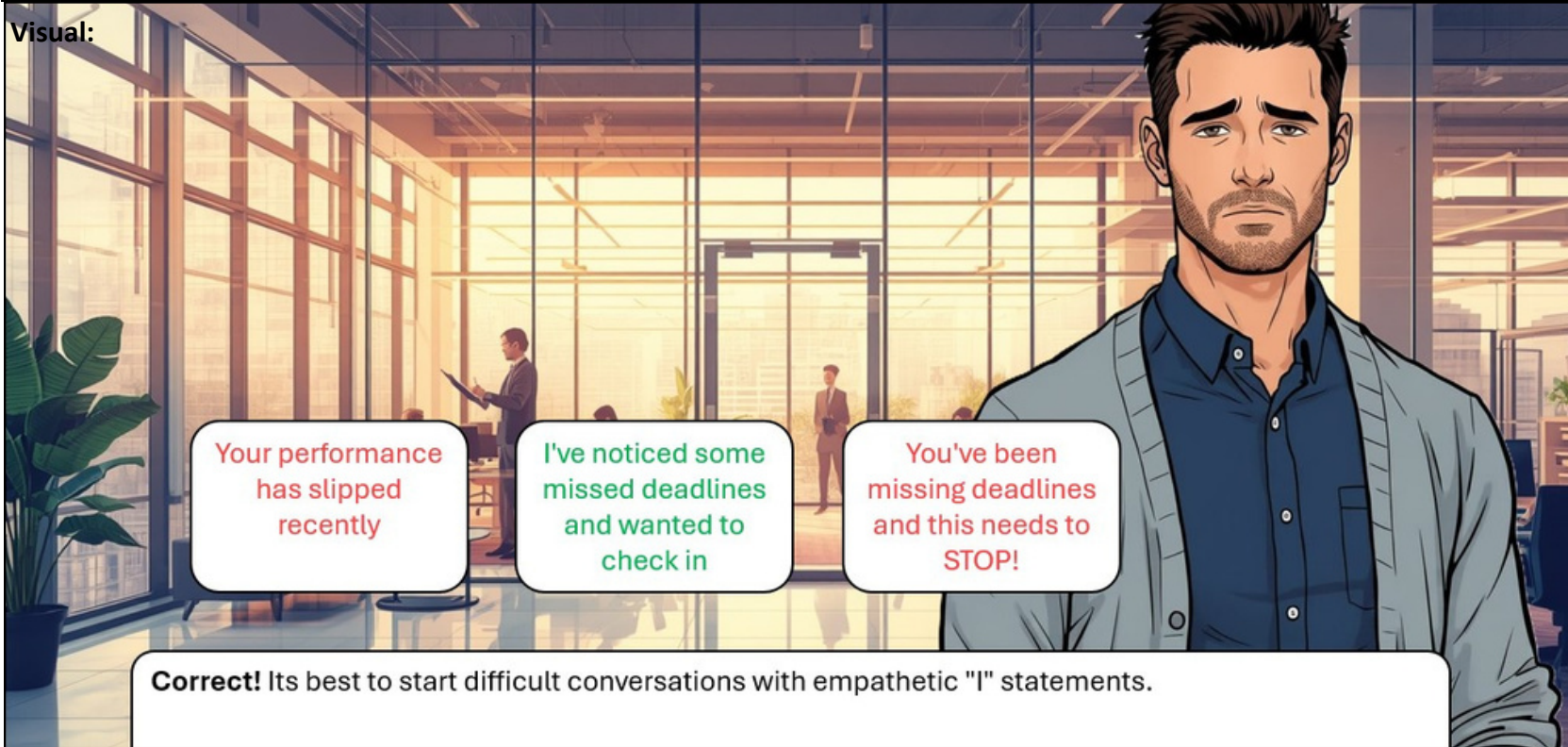
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 16

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Alex is on screen, with a sad expression. The correct option is highlighted

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

**Feedback:** Consider having Jordan in this screen delivering the on screen dialogue

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 17

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Alex is on screen, with a sad expression.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

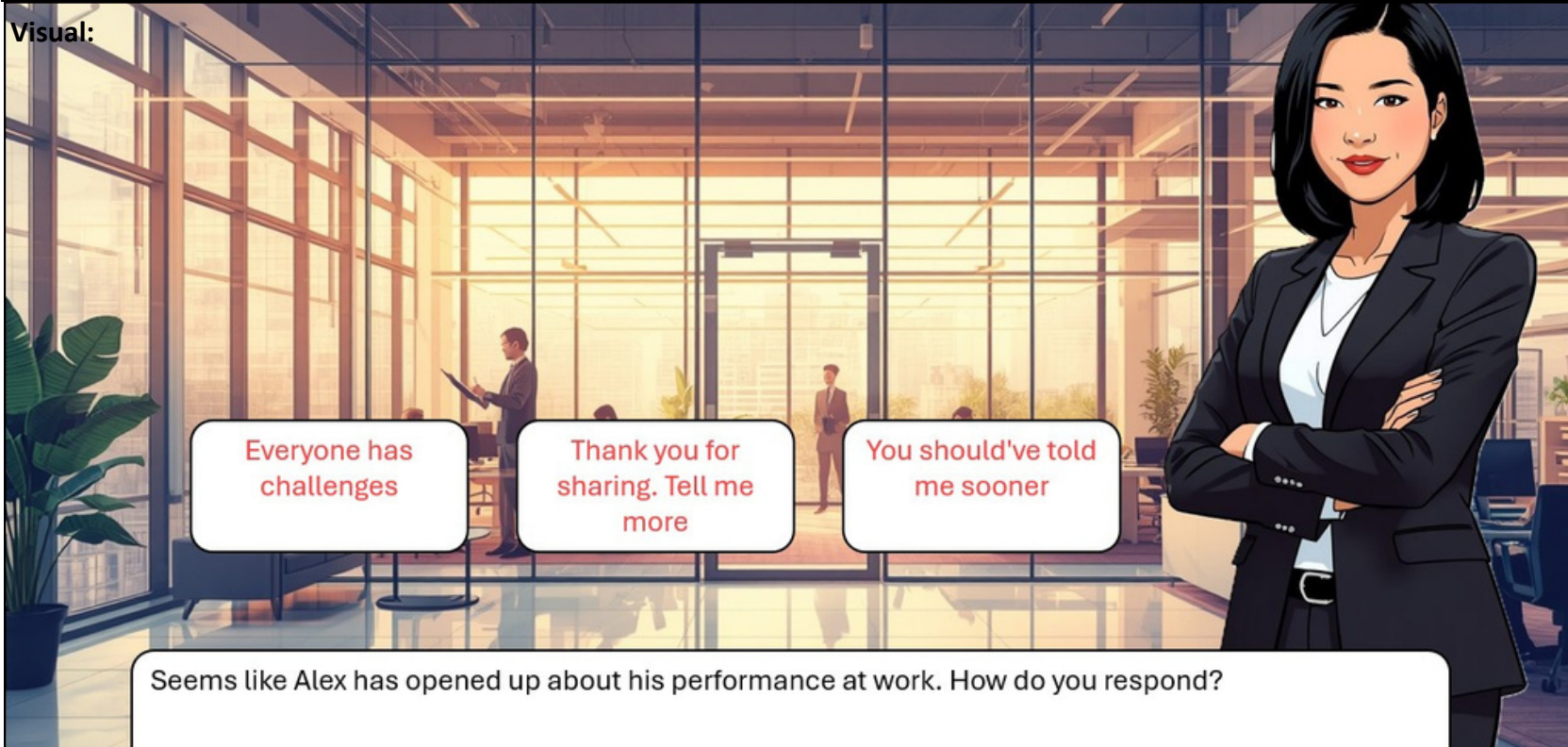
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 18

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan is on screen presenting the user with an option for what to do next. The option will pop up on screen after the dialogue.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

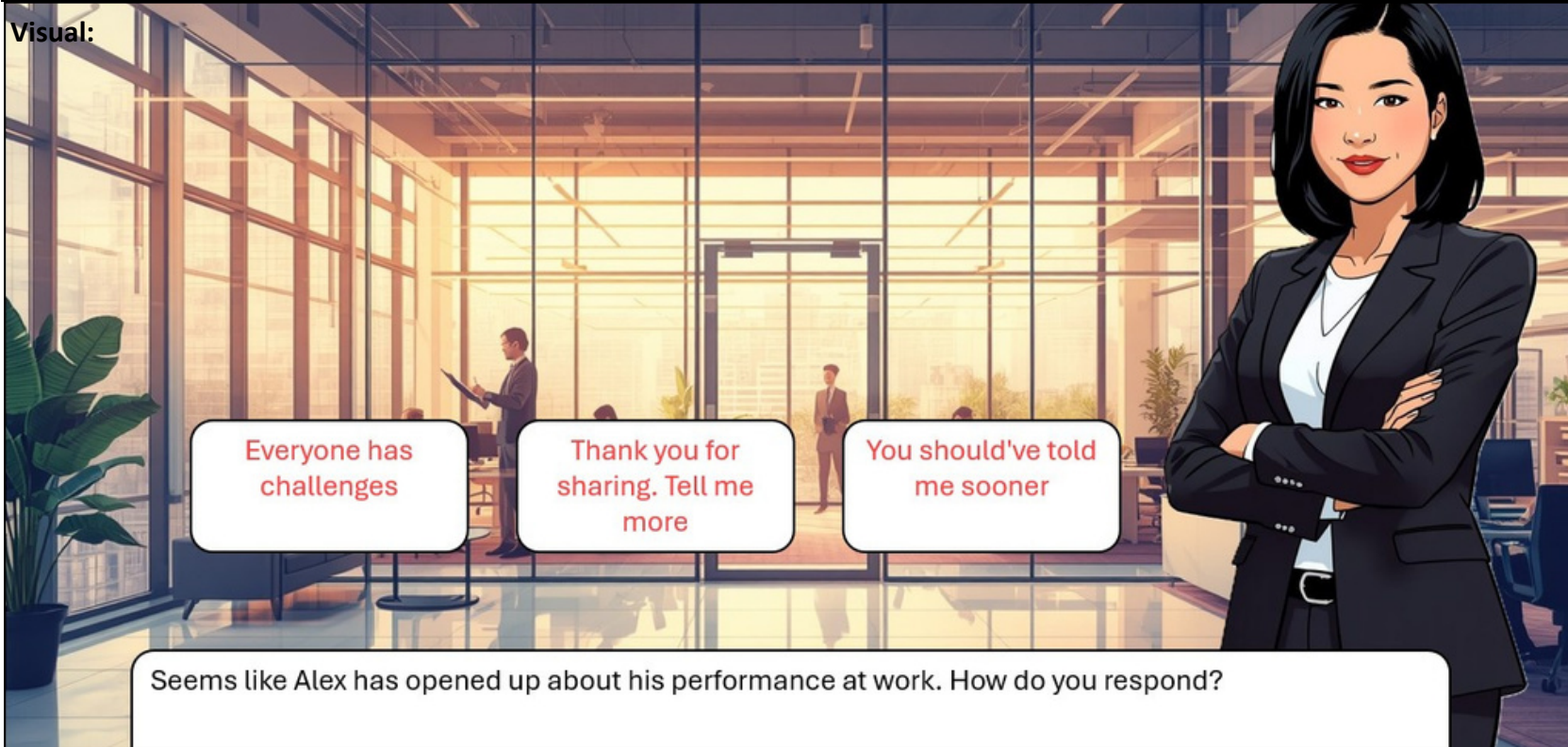
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 19

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan is on screen presenting the user with an option for what to do next. The option will pop up on screen after the dialogue.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

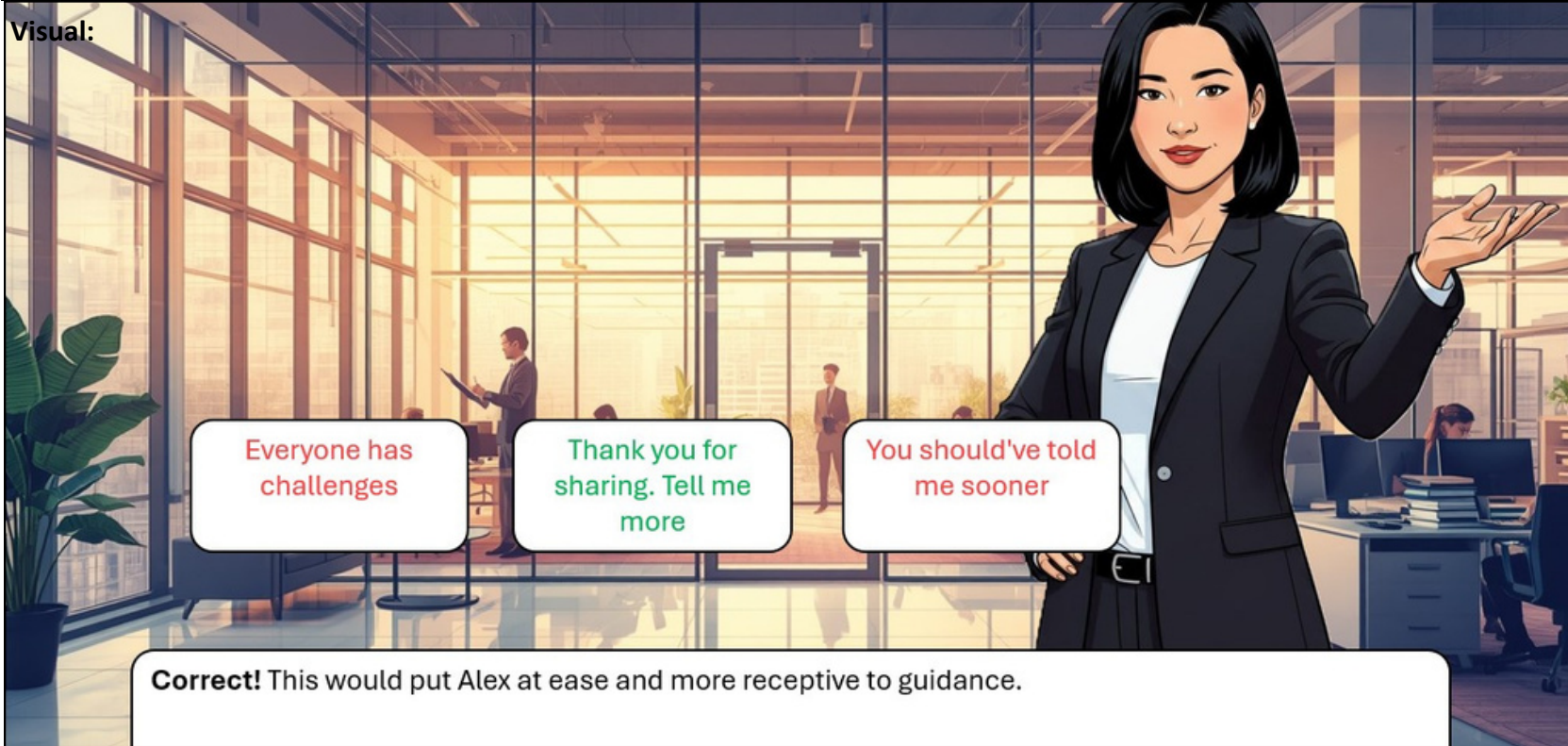
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 20

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan is on screen presenting with the correct option highlighted in GREEN

Reviewer Comments

Include "NEXT" and "BACK" buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

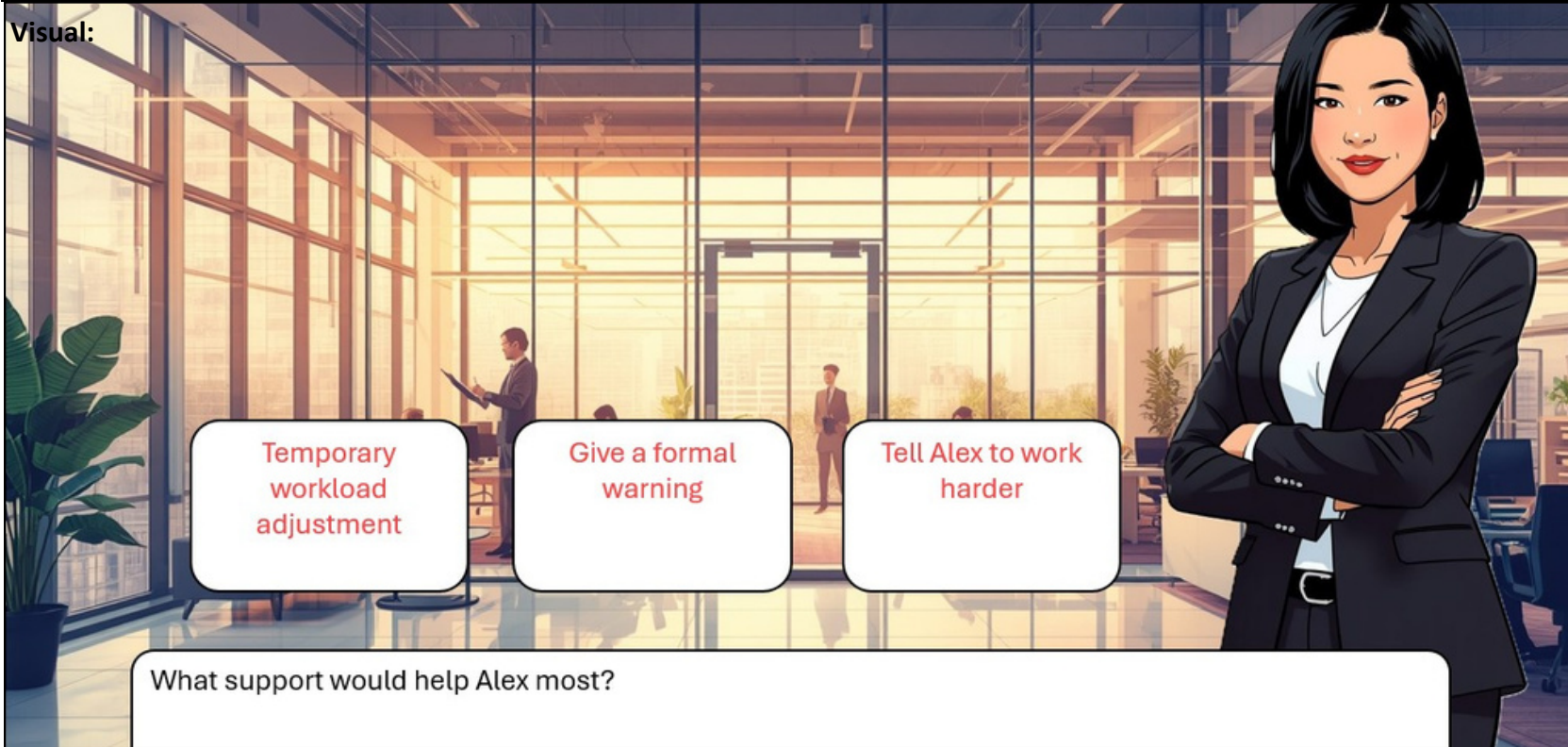
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 21

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan is on-screen presenting the user with options for what to do next.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

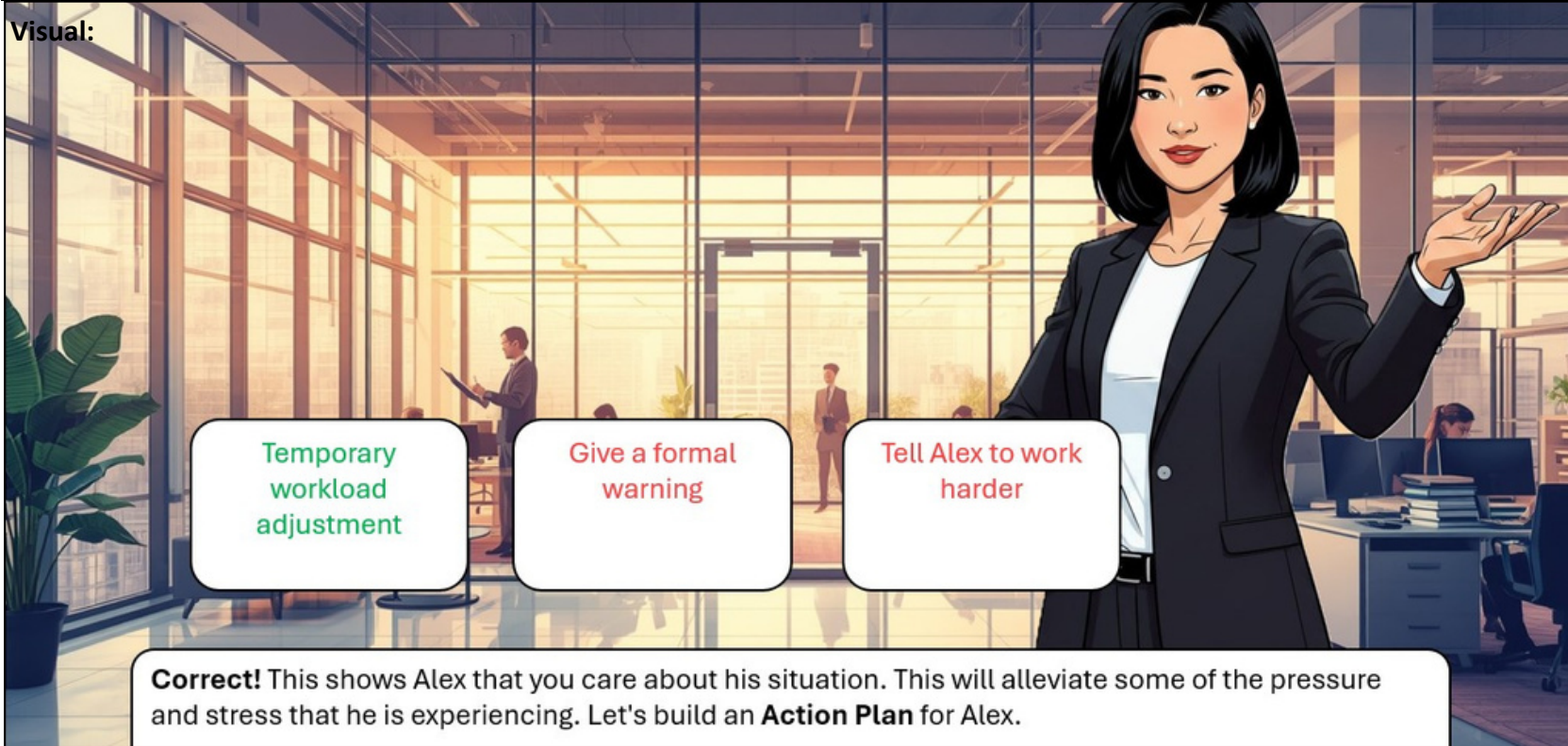
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 22

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan is on screen with the correct choice highlighted in GREEN

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Storyboards

|                                                        |                                                                                                                                                        |                |                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Lesson Title:    The First 90 Days                     |                                                                                                                                                        | Slide ID:   23 | Programming/Interactions           |
| Visual:                                                | Employee Action Plan                                                                                                                                   |                | Employee Action Plan on screen.    |
|                                                        | Name: Alex Morgan                                                                                                                                      |                |                                    |
|                                                        | <div>Select TWO actions</div> <div>Weekly check-ins</div> <div>Reprioritize projects</div> <div>Ignore situation</div> <div>Clarify expectations</div> |                |                                    |
|                                                        |                                                                                                                                                        |                | Reviewer Comments                  |
|                                                        |                                                                                                                                                        |                | Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons. |
| Audio:            none                                 |                                                                                                                                                        |                |                                    |
| Feedback:    The action plan needs to have checkboxes. |                                                                                                                                                        |                |                                    |

# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 24

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Time-lapse screen.

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: none

Feedback:

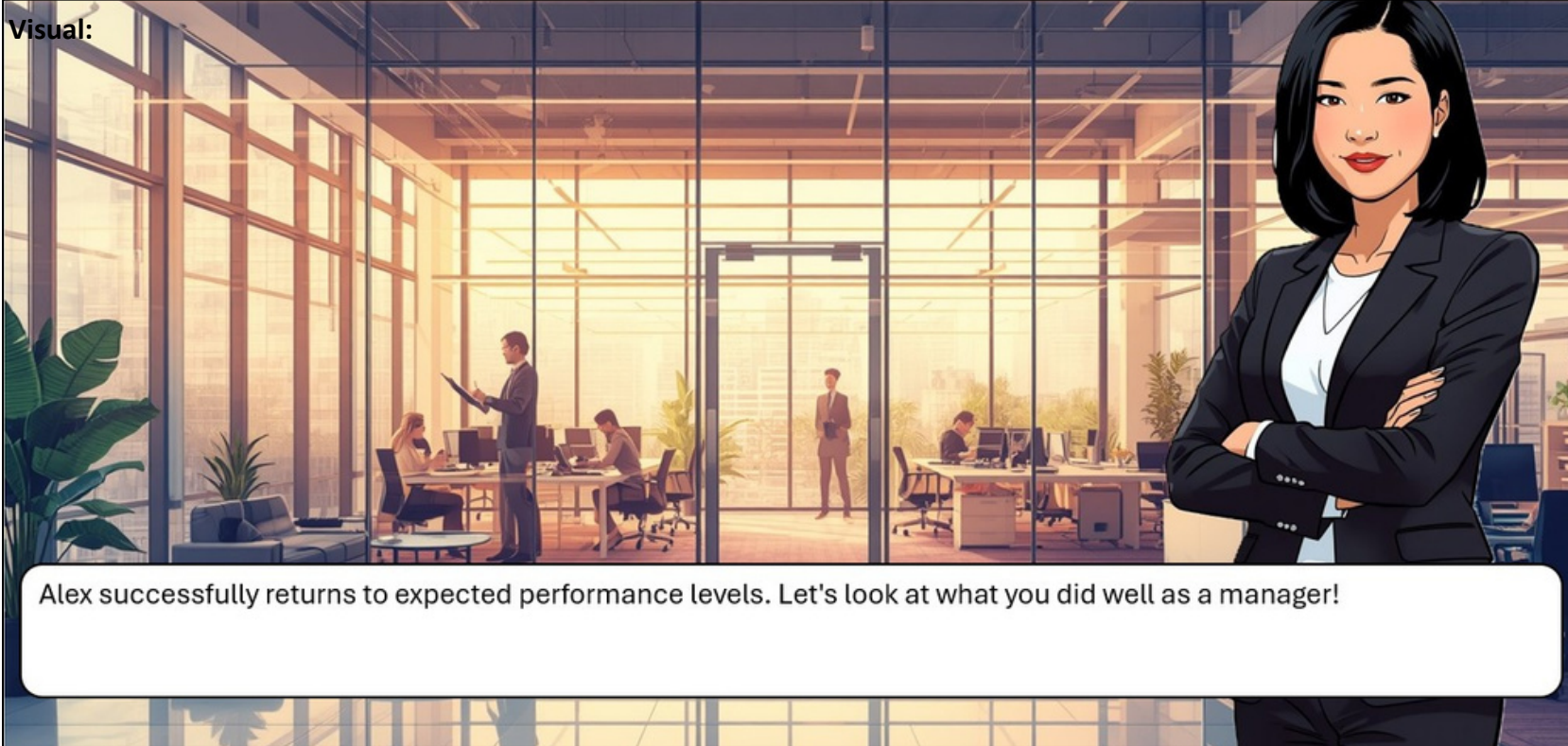
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 25

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Alex successfully returns to expected performance levels. Let's look at what you did well as a manager!

Jordan on screen explaining the outcome of the user's actions in the previous interaction

Reviewer Comments

Include “NEXT” and “BACK” buttons.

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

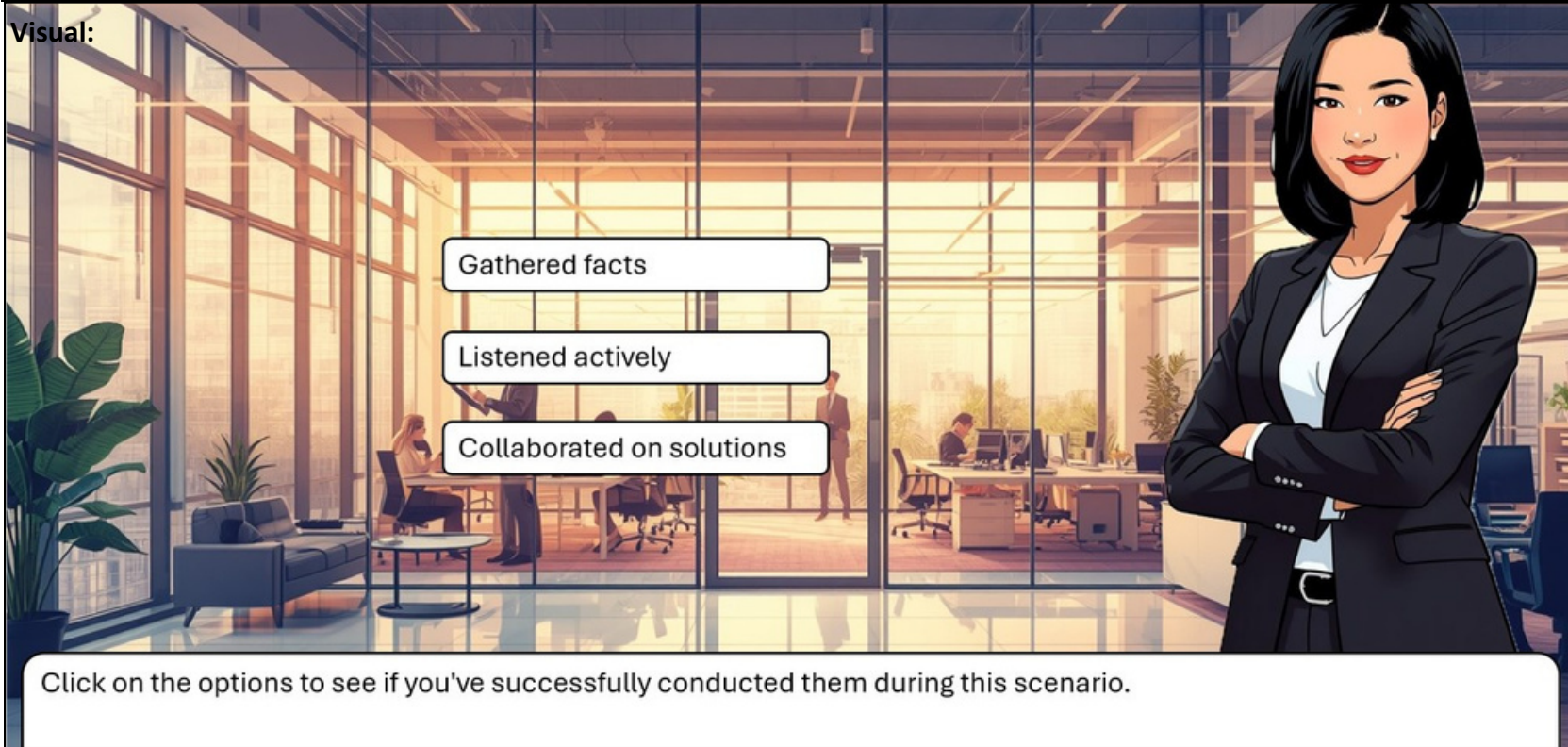
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 26

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan on screen asking the user to click on the options to see if the user successfully completed the task.

Reviewer Comments

Include "NEXT" and "BACK" buttons.  
Options will turn GREEN when the user clicks on them

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

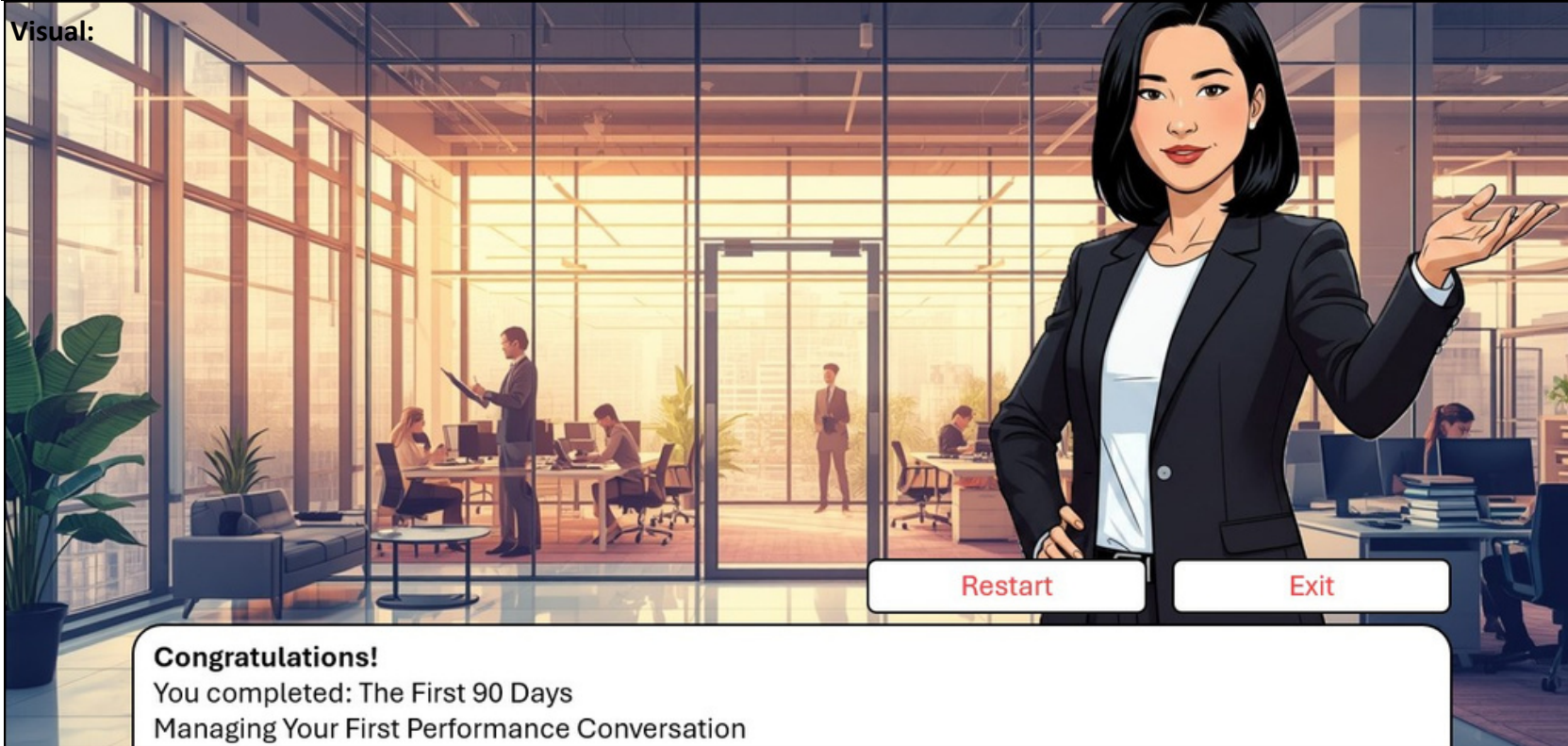
# Storyboards

Lesson Title: The First 90 Days

Slide ID: 27

Programming/Interactions

Visual:



Jordan on screen congratulating the user on completing the module.

‘Restart’ and ‘Exit’ buttons will appear after the dialogue.

Reviewer Comments

Audio: on-screen text

Feedback:

# Lessons Learned

The strongest design decisions often came from removing, not adding.

## Start with behaviour

The project became clearer once I stopped asking what to teach and started asking what managers needed to do.

## Depth beats breadth

One meaningful scenario was stronger than several shallow examples.

## Story supports transfer

A realistic situation made leadership concepts feel immediate and useful.

## Reflection matters

Learners need space to think about why a decision worked.

## Every interaction needs a reason

If an interaction did not support the workplace behaviour, it did not belong.

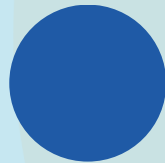
# Visual Design

Colour should guide attention—not compete for it.

## Colour palette

The colour palette was intentionally restrained to maintain a professional workplace aesthetic while supporting readability, interaction, and learner focus.

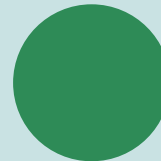
**Primary blue**  
#1F5AA6



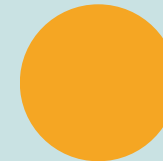
**Accent blue**  
#2D7FF9



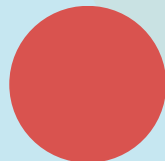
**Success green**  
#2E8B57



**Warning orange**  
#F5A623



**Error red**  
#D9534F



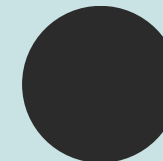
**Cool breeze**  
#F5F7FA



**Surface grey**  
#ECEFF3



**Primary text**  
#2B2B2B



# If I Built This Again

The next version would increase personalization, feedback and evidence of transfer.

## Adaptive Branching

Let earlier decisions influence later feedback.

## More Scenarios

Add different employees and performance concerns.

## Learner Analytics

Track patterns in decision-making.

## Manager Toolkit

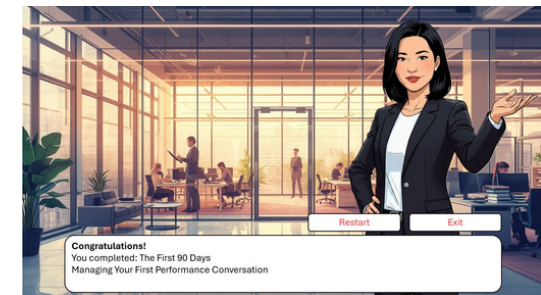
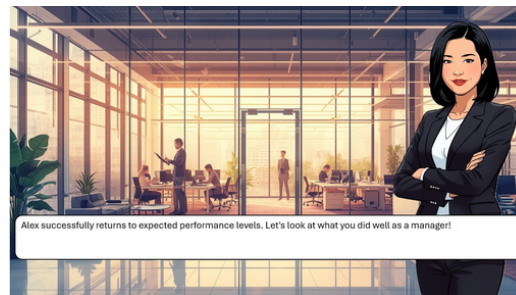
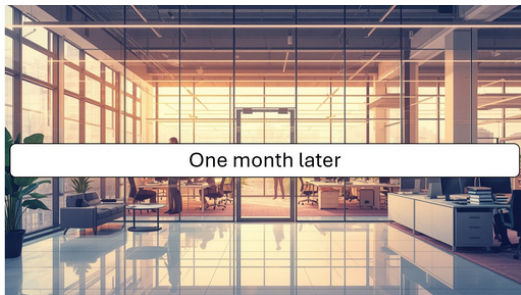
Provide job aids for real coaching conversations.

## Usability Testing

Test with new managers and revise based on feedback.

## LMS Reporting

Connect completion and decision data to learning records.



# Final Reflection

This project changed how I think about design.

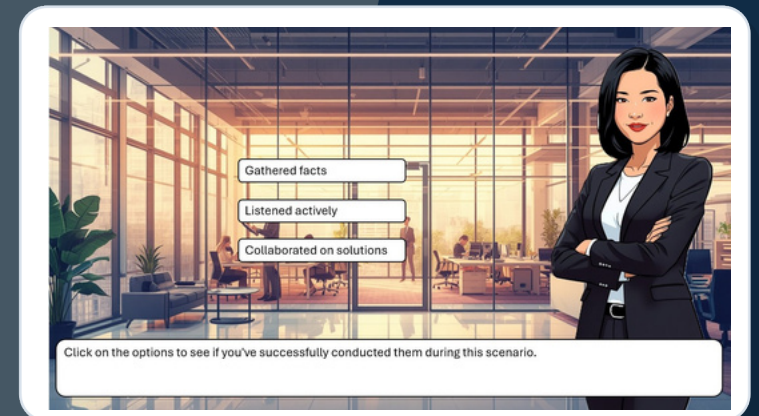
Before this project, I thought about learning design mostly through the lens of visual communication. My animation background helped me understand pacing, composition, and storytelling, but this project pushed me to think more deeply about performance.

The biggest shift was learning to begin with the workplace behaviour. Once I understood what the learner needed to do differently, the design decisions became clearer. The story, interactions, visuals, and feedback all had to support that behaviour.

First 90 Days became more than a Storyline module. It became proof that I can use storytelling, analysis, and interaction design to build learning experiences that help people practise real workplace decisions.

## Design takeaway

**Learning should feel like practice for the work learners actually need to do.**



# About Me

From visual story telling to learning experience design.

I am an instructional designer and eLearning developer transitioning from a professional background in 3D animation and visual storytelling. I design learning experiences that combine clear instructional strategy, strong visual communication, and meaningful interaction.

