

TLIC PAPER

Empowering Corporate Lawyers: AI-Driven Training for Strategic Leadership and Behavioral Mastery

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ABSTRACT

In the fast-evolving corporate legal landscape, the integration of legal expertise with strategic business acumen has become indispensable. To meet this demand, e-REAL Labs, in partnership with leading legal and management experts, has developed a cutting-edge training program tailored for the corporate legal teams of a prominent multinational company. This innovative program combines advanced AI-driven simulations with an experiential learning approach to bridge the gap between traditional legal training and real-world challenges. Participants engage in immersive, high-stakes scenarios replicating corporate law practice's complex dynamics. The curriculum focuses on building practical competencies, including collaborative business strategies, refined negotiation techniques, effective decision-making under pressure, and strategic foresight. By blending technology and expertise, the program empowers legal professionals to confidently navigate the intricate demands of today's corporate environment. Graduates of the program benefit from enhanced negotiation skills, improved decision-making capabilities, and the ability to anticipate and influence multifaceted legal and business challenges. This transformative training equips corporate legal teams with the tools to excel in a competitive and dynamic global market.

KEYWORDS

corporate lawyers, business acumen, generative artificial intelligence, immersive simulation

1 INTRODUCTION

Modern corporate legal practice has transformed into a dynamic and multifaceted field, demanding a diverse and advanced skill set. e-REAL Labs [1], in collaboration with leading global legal entities and academic institutions, has developed an innovative program to equip corporate lawyers with the tools to excel in this complex environment. In today's high-stakes corporate world, professionals must master a unique blend of leadership and managerial skills (teamwork, hybrid working, cross-cultural communication, systems and strategic thinking, decision-making,

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negotiation, conflict management), legal expertise, psychological acumen, and business strategy to thrive.

To meet these challenges, e-REAL Labs brings together two specialized instructional design teams: the Law & Economics Team and the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Team. In close partnership with world-renowned experts, these teams have jointly created an advanced training program tailored specifically for the corporate legal teams of a major multinational organization. This program exemplifies a groundbreaking interdisciplinary approach to legal training, combining cutting-edge technology with deep behavioral insights.

Leveraging AI-driven simulations and psychological expertise, the program transcends conventional learning methods, immersing participants in realistic, high-pressure scenarios. These interactive simulations replicate the complex decision-making processes that corporate lawyers face daily, fostering the refinement of negotiation techniques, the cultivation of psychological awareness and creative thinking, and the enhancement of strategic business acumen.

Designed to address the sophisticated demands of modern corporate legal professionals, this program goes beyond knowledge transfer to focus on practical, actionable skill development. It delivers transformative results by blending technological innovation with legal and psychological expertise. Participants emerge as more effective collaborators, sharper negotiators, and strategic leaders equipped to navigate and influence today's corporate and legal landscape's multifaceted challenges.

2 THE TARGET AUDIENCE: THE CORPORATE LAWYER AS A BUSINESS PARTNER

The modern corporate lawyer has evolved from being a legal advisor to playing a pivotal role as a strategic business partner within their organization [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7], [8]. This transformation underscores the increasing appreciation of the value they bring to the business's strategic and operational aspects.

Corporate lawyers must deeply understand their organization's overarching strategic objectives and align their legal strategies with these goals. Their responsibilities extend beyond traditional risk mitigation and compliance; they shape the company's direction through strategic planning and decision-making. Evaluating the proposed strategy regarding legal feasibility, regulatory compliance, and risk assessment helps steer the company toward sustainable growth while identifying innovative opportunities. Their ability to integrate legal expertise with a nuanced understanding of business operations enables them to offer guidance on transactions, manage contracts, and negotiate agreements that drive financial and strategic value.

In addition to their legal acumen, corporate lawyers often adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, proactively identifying new business opportunities through a legal lens. They play a key role in developing intellectual property, proposing alternative business models that comply with regulations, and leading initiatives to enhance organizational efficiency and compliance frameworks. This intrapreneurial approach positions them as catalysts for change and innovation within their companies.

A vital aspect of their role as business partners is their capacity to bridge gaps across departments, fostering collaboration and ensuring alignment with the organization's legal and strategic priorities. By working closely with teams such as

finance, human resources, marketing, and operations, corporate lawyers help break down silos and create a more cohesive, efficient working environment. Their ability to facilitate communication and collaboration across these functions is essential for the smooth execution of company-wide initiatives.

Risk management remains a cornerstone of the corporate lawyer's role. It requires anticipating legal and regulatory challenges tied to operational and strategic ventures. Corporate lawyers provide critical insights that enable their organizations to make informed decisions by carefully balancing potential risks against expected rewards. Furthermore, corporate lawyers are increasingly tasked with cultivating external networks, including stakeholders, regulatory bodies, and industry peers. These relationships are invaluable for staying ahead of emerging trends, understanding evolving regulatory landscapes, and adopting industry best practices.

As the business world continues to change rapidly, corporate lawyers must adapt to new technologies, global trade shifts, market trends, and regulatory updates. Their commitment to lifelong learning is essential for remaining effective and delivering timely, relevant advice.

In conclusion, today's corporate lawyers have transcended the traditional boundaries of their profession. They are indispensable business partners contributing significantly to their organization's strategic direction and success. This multifaceted role demands a blend of legal expertise, business insight, strategic thinking, and the ability to operate seamlessly within the corporate ecosystem. Corporate lawyers ensure legal compliance through these competencies and drive business growth and innovation.

3 A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOCUS IN LEGAL TRAINING

In today's interconnected and highly competitive global business environment, corporate lawyers face unprecedented challenges that require a versatile and refined skill set. The need for a transformative educational model has never been greater. e-REAL Labs' cutting-edge training program addresses this demand by integrating insights from law, economics, psychology, and behavioral sciences, offering a holistic framework that goes beyond conventional legal training.

This program's strength lies in its multidisciplinary approach, which merges legal expertise with economic principles, such as microeconomics and behavioral economics, alongside insights from psychodynamics, cognitive psychology, organizational behavior, and neuroscience. This unique combination enables corporate lawyers to anticipate and influence the diverse and dynamic interactions within their organizations and external markets. By fostering this interdisciplinary perspective, the program transforms participants into strategic thinkers capable of bridging legal frameworks with business imperatives and human dynamics [9], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16], [17], [18], [19], [20], [21], [22], [23], [24].

The program not only equips participants with theoretical knowledge but also emphasizes the development of actionable skills essential for success in today's corporate environment. Corporate lawyers trained under this program gain the ability to effectively handle complex negotiations, mediate high-stakes disputes, and draft agreements that account for both strategic outcomes and human behavior's nuances. Moreover, the curriculum includes specialized modules on managing critical scenarios such as cyber-attacks, regulatory breaches, and industrial espionage, ensuring participants are well-prepared to respond to the high-pressure demands of the modern corporate world.

One of the most innovative aspects of this program is its immersive and experiential design. Participants engage with AI-driven simulations that replicate the intricacies of real-world business and legal challenges. These simulations incorporate advanced research on persuasion, influence, and decision-making, challenging participants to apply game theory and other strategic tools in environments that simulate financial crises, regulatory dilemmas, or operational breakdowns. Through these experiences, participants refine their ability to integrate legal expertise with economic insight and psychological awareness, ensuring well-rounded and effective decision-making under pressure.

The program's multidisciplinary framework also emphasizes fostering cross-functional collaboration within organizations. Corporate lawyers are trained to act as connectors, bridging the gaps between finance, marketing, and operations departments while ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. This approach not only reduces organizational silos but also enhances overall efficiency and alignment with strategic goals. By positioning corporate lawyers as mediators and strategic advisors, the program strengthens their ability to influence organizational culture and drive positive change.

To develop this sophisticated curriculum, e-REAL Labs has assembled a diverse team of leading academics and industry practitioners, each contributing their expertise to create a rigorous and practical educational experience. This collaborative effort ensures that the program reflects the latest advancements in law, economics, and psychology while maintaining its relevance to real-world corporate challenges.

Beyond the technical and theoretical aspects, the program also emphasizes cultivating soft skills such as emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and adaptability. These competencies are essential for corporate lawyers operating in an increasingly globalized and diverse corporate landscape. Participants are encouraged to develop a growth mindset, embracing lifelong learning to keep pace with evolving legal and business environments.

In summary, this multidisciplinary training program is more than just a collection of diverse knowledge areas—it is a synthesis of disciplines designed to produce a new generation of corporate lawyers equipped to meet the demands of a complex world. By blending legal expertise with economic acumen, psychological insights, and advanced technology, the program empowers participants to function as strategic leaders and business architects. These professionals emerge with the skills, confidence, and foresight needed to navigate the intricate intersections of law, business, and human behavior, ensuring their organizations' success in an ever-changing landscape.

4 THE CURRICULUM ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of the curriculum crafted for the e-REAL Labs training program was designed to elevate the capabilities of corporate lawyers to new heights, addressing the increasingly multifaceted nature of their role. The curriculum is composed of several key modules:

- **Role modeling:** The corporate lawyer as a business partner. In recognizing the vital role corporate lawyers play in steering the strategic direction of a business, this module – designed primarily by Fernando Salvetti and Enrico Vergani, jointly with Barbara Bertagni - is dedicated to developing lawyers as business partners. It focuses on role modeling, where experienced corporate lawyers and

business leaders share their insights into effectively blending legal expertise with business strategy. Participants explore case studies – from their own direct experience as well as from the “outside” world – showcasing successful partnerships between legal teams and business units, dissecting the decision-making processes and collaboration strategies that yielded positive outcomes.

- **Negotiation and Advocacy:** This module – designed primarily by Barbara Bertagni and Fernando Salvetti, jointly with Enrico Vergani – is the cornerstone of the curriculum, where lawyers refine their negotiation skills through advanced strategies. Here, the emphasis is on active engagement and practical application rather than passive learning. The module draws upon the latest research and methodologies in negotiation, teaching lawyers how to advocate for their client’s interests while maintaining fair and ethical dealings. To do so, the participants were invited to share detailed descriptions of their own most relevant cases. This module also includes case studies in mediation and arbitration, essential skills in today’s legal landscape where alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are increasingly favored.
- **Economic Reasoning:** Corporate lawyers must navigate not only the legal but also the economic implications of their advice and actions. This segment of the curriculum – designed primarily by Luca Nannini in cooperation with Fernando Salvetti – delves into microeconomics and behavioral economics, providing the lawyers with a robust framework for understanding how market forces and socio-economic realities impact legal decisions. The aim is to enable lawyers to offer counsel that aligns with business objectives while being grounded in microeconomic and behavioral economics principles.
- **Psychological Acuity:** Understanding the psychological elements at play in legal conflicts and negotiations, as well as within a matrix organization such as a big conglomerate with multiple internal and external stakeholders, is critical for successful outcomes. This part of the curriculum – designed primarily by Barbara Bertagni and Fernando Salvetti, also in cooperation with several researchers from LOGOS Centro Studi and other experts – covers key aspects of psychodynamics, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience as they apply to legal practice. Participants learn about the psychological factors that influence decision-making and behavior in themselves and others, leading to more effective business cooperation, negotiation, conflict resolution, and persuasion techniques.
- **Legal Upheaval and Enhancing Client Centricity: Meeting the New Demands of Corporate Law.** A module designed by Michele DeStefano, Founder of LawWithoutWalls, a multi-disciplinary, international think-tank of over 1000 lawyers, business professionals, entrepreneurs, and law and business students that collaborate to hone new skillsets and mindsets and create innovations at the intersection of law, business, and technology; Professor of Law at the University of Miami, and Program Chair and Affiliated Faculty at Harvard Law School – Executive Education [25]. The landscape of corporate law is evolving, with client expectations centering not only on the services provided but on the manner of their delivery. The push for innovation translates to a demand for exceptional client service – one that prioritizes client experiences and necessitates an innovator’s mindset. Drawing on extensive interviews with legal practitioners and their clients globally, this module highlights the gap between conventional legal service delivery and a truly client-centric approach. Participants engage in active discussions to reconceptualize their methods, striving to adopt a more client-focused strategy that enhances relationship management. The session is structured to facilitate a paradigm shift from a traditional service and expertise

model to one that generates experiences that resonate with clients, transforming their perception of value and satisfaction. It accentuates the importance of crafting legal services that not only meet but exceed client expectations. Additionally, the module provides an introductory comparison between Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Client Performance Indicators (CPIs), guiding participants to appreciate the nuanced differences. Through individual reflection and collaborative effort, the group is tasked with developing a CPI plan. This plan serves as a tool to measure and articulate the Legal Department's unique contributions to the broader business context, reinforcing the internal understanding of the value created through a client-centric legal approach. This curriculum component is instrumental in cultivating a forward-thinking, client-oriented culture within the Legal Department, ensuring that corporate lawyers are well-aligned with the modern imperatives of the corporate legal sector.

Each of these modules combines theoretical underpinnings with practical, hands-on experiences. Simulations, role-playing, and case studies are used throughout to replicate real-world scenarios, ensuring that the knowledge gained is not just theoretical but directly applicable to the challenges corporate lawyers face daily. This structure ensures a comprehensive learning experience that empowers lawyers with the skills necessary to excel as both legal experts and strategic business advisors.

This module also covers the cultivation of skills essential for lawyers aiming to become trusted business advisors. Skills such as communication, leadership, adaptability, and cultural intelligence are emphasized, reflecting the real-world demands of working within diverse teams and with a range of stakeholders. Interactive sessions with digital humans are designed to help participants to refine their ability to act as facilitators and integrators, translating legal concepts into business strategies and guiding their companies through the complexities of compliance, governance, and ethical business practices.

By the end of the program, participants are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to assume the mantle of a business partner within their organizations, driving legal strategy that aligns with overarching business goals and contributing to the company's success from a holistic viewpoint.

5 INTERACTIVE SCENARIOS AND CONVERSATIONAL DIGITAL HUMANS

The interactive scenarios, which are a cornerstone of the e-REAL technology's learning methodology, employ advanced AI-driven simulation technology to create an immersive learning environment. These scenarios are intricately designed to mirror the high-stakes situations that corporate lawyers encounter in their daily practice, offering a practical and engaging form of education that goes beyond traditional lectures.

In these simulations, participants are introduced to digital humans—sophisticated virtual characters powered by generative artificial intelligence (see Figure 1). These AI characters are programmed to exhibit a range of behaviors and personalities that one might encounter in real-world negotiations and legal disputes. For instance, a digital human might represent a challenging client, a tough negotiator on the opposite side of a deal, or a key stakeholder in a complex merger scenario.

The generative aspect of the AI allows these digital humans to respond dynamically to the participants' actions and decisions. They can simulate emotions, demonstrate persuasive tactics, and react in real time to the legal and behavioral strategies employed by the participants (see Figure 2). This enables a rich, interactive learning experience where corporate lawyers can practice and refine their skills in a safe, controlled environment that feels authentic.



Fig. 1. Representative conversational digital humans enhanced by artificial intelligence

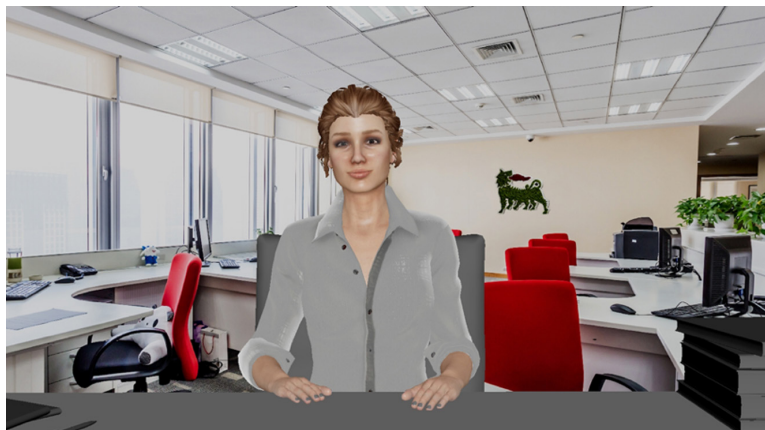


Fig. 2. An AI-enhanced and interactive digital human within a business scenario

Participants can test various negotiation strategies, decision-making processes, and legal arguments to see how these digital humans react, providing immediate feedback on the effectiveness of their approach. The AI-driven simulations can also introduce random events or unexpected challenges, much like real life, forcing the lawyers to think on their feet and adapt quickly.

These scenarios are particularly valuable in training corporate lawyers to deal with the unpredictable nature of human behavior and complex negotiations. By engaging with these digital humans, participants can enhance their understanding of human psychology, improve their communication skills, and learn to manage and leverage the human element in their professional interactions.

This component of the training is designed to ensure that corporate lawyers are not only theoretically prepared but also practically equipped to handle the nuances of their roles as strategic business partners, advisors, and advocates in an ever-evolving corporate landscape.

At e-REAL Labs, we have been creating a new generation of digital humans, or conversational avatars, with social intelligence who are capable not only of presenting a wide variety of topics dynamically and engagingly, but also of interacting with the audience and communicating emotions and moods [26], [27], [28]. At the end of each interaction, timely feedback is provided on essential key performance indicators by the tracking system embedded within the scenario, so learners can work out how to improve their performance (see Figure 3).

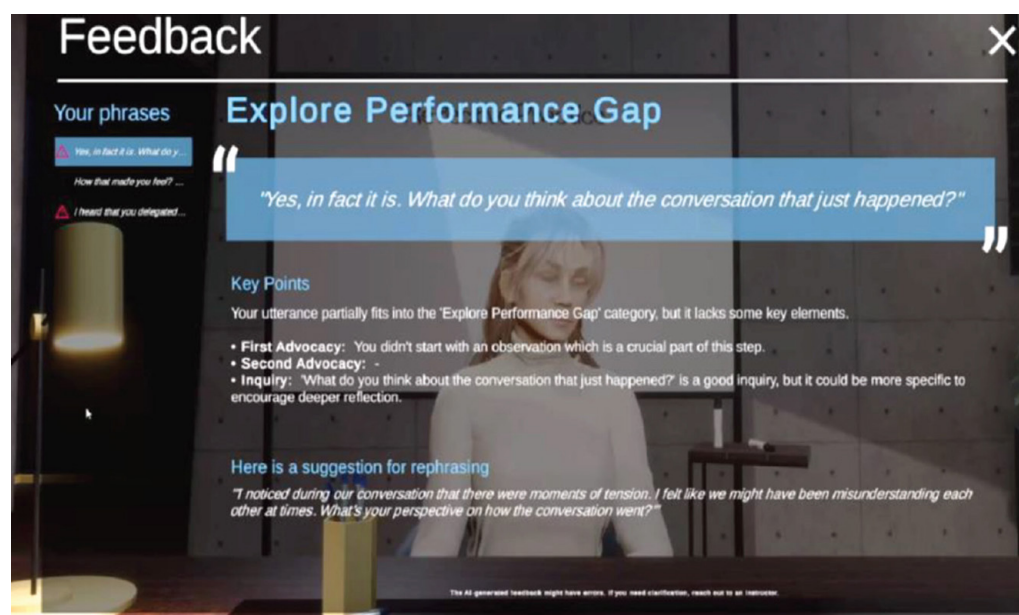


Fig. 3. Representative feedback on KPIs provided by the e-REAL system at the end of every interaction with a conversational avatar

6 THE EVOLUTION OF CORPORATE LEGAL TRAINING: INTEGRATING AI, BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS, AND STRATEGIC BUSINESS ACUMEN

The corporate legal landscape is undergoing a seismic shift. No longer are corporate lawyers confined to the traditional role of legal counsel, limited to ensuring compliance and mitigating risks. In today's complex business environment, they are expected to act as strategic business partners, contributing directly to organizational growth and innovation. The increasing integration of legal expertise with business strategy demands a new approach to legal training—one that equips corporate lawyers with multidimensional skills. To address this need, e-REAL Labs has developed a pioneering training program that harnesses the power of artificial intelligence, behavioral sciences, and strategic business acumen.

Corporate lawyers are increasingly recognized as essential players in shaping the future of their organizations. They now find themselves involved in business strategy meetings, providing advice on market expansion, mergers, acquisitions, and even corporate governance structures. This expanded role requires corporate legal professionals to be well-versed in not only the law but also the financial and strategic implications of their legal advice. As business partners, corporate lawyers must have a firm understanding of business drivers, from financial metrics to operational goals. They are tasked with identifying opportunities for innovation, creating value beyond legal risk management, and fostering a collaborative environment across

various departments. This shift in expectations means that traditional legal training, which primarily focuses on legal theory and case law, is no longer sufficient.

Recognizing the need for a more holistic educational model, the e-REAL Labs training program for corporate lawyers introduces a unique blend of legal expertise, economic principles, and psychological insights. Corporate lawyers are trained to think beyond the law, gaining a comprehensive understanding of how business decisions are made and how legal advice influences business outcomes.

Law and Economics: Participants are taught to navigate the intersection of law and economics, with a focus on microeconomics and behavioral economics. Understanding market forces and socio-economic realities helps lawyers provide counsel that aligns with both legal and business objectives. This economic grounding enables corporate lawyers to engage more meaningfully in negotiations and decision-making processes that affect the financial health of their companies.

Psychological Insights: Psychological training is another core element of the program. Lawyers gain a deep understanding of human behavior, learning how cognitive biases, negotiation tactics, and organizational dynamics influence decision-making. This psychological perspective is essential for effective negotiation, conflict resolution, and managing complex corporate relationships. Modules covering psychodynamics, cognitive psychology, and neuroscience enable lawyers to act with foresight, anticipating the behavior of key stakeholders.

The combination of these disciplines ensures that participants leave the program with a broadened perspective, equipped to operate at the intersection of law, business, and human behavior. One of the most groundbreaking features of the e-REAL Labs training program is the incorporation of AI-driven simulations. These simulations utilize conversational digital humans—sophisticated AI avatars that engage with participants in highly realistic business scenarios. These avatars simulate real-life behaviors, emotions, and reactions, providing an immersive and interactive learning experience.

Realistic Business Scenarios: The AI simulations replicate the kinds of high-pressure situations corporate lawyers face in their day-to-day work, such as complex negotiations, contract disputes, or crisis management scenarios like cyberattacks or financial meltdowns. By interacting with these digital humans, lawyers can test various legal strategies, negotiation techniques, and decision-making processes, all within a safe, controlled environment.

Dynamic Feedback and Learning: The AI avatars are not static; they adapt in real-time to the participant's actions. This creates a dynamic learning experience where lawyers receive immediate feedback on their performance. The system provides detailed reports on key performance indicators (KPIs) such as persuasion tactics, decision-making efficiency, and conflict resolution skills. This feedback allows participants to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement, making the learning process continuous and iterative.

The Value of Emotional Intelligence: Another critical advantage of AI-driven simulations is their ability to incorporate emotional intelligence into legal training. Digital humans can simulate emotions such as frustration, anxiety, or persuasion, allowing lawyers to practice managing not only the legal aspects of a situation but also the human dynamics. This is particularly valuable in high-stakes negotiations or conflict resolution, where understanding the emotional and psychological states of others is crucial to achieving successful outcomes.

The pace of technological advancement and globalization continues to reshape the legal profession. Corporate lawyers must stay ahead of emerging trends, including advances in technology, changes in regulatory environments, and evolving

market dynamics. The e-REAL Labs training program recognizes that learning must be continuous. With technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and data analytics increasingly influencing corporate governance and compliance, corporate lawyers need to understand how these innovations impact their roles. The program includes modules on emerging technologies, helping participants anticipate legal challenges that may arise from digital transformation, cybersecurity, and intellectual property issues.

The international nature of modern corporations means that corporate lawyers must navigate an increasingly complex web of regulations across multiple jurisdictions. e-REAL's curriculum is designed to provide a global perspective, training lawyers to understand the nuances of cross-border transactions, international trade laws, and geopolitical risks. The program fosters an attitude of lifelong learning, encouraging corporate lawyers to continuously update their skills and knowledge. With evolving business models, regulatory landscapes, and technological advancements, corporate lawyers must be adaptable, using learning as a tool to remain relevant in the ever-changing corporate environment.

The future of corporate legal training lies in its ability to integrate legal knowledge with a deep understanding of business strategy, human behavior, and technological advancements. The e-REAL Labs program provides corporate lawyers with an unparalleled educational experience, combining multidisciplinary learning with cutting-edge AI-driven simulations. This immersive approach not only equips participants with the practical skills they need to excel in their legal roles but also prepares them to become key strategic advisors within their organizations. By fostering a blend of legal expertise, business acumen, and emotional intelligence, this training model redefines what it means to be a successful corporate lawyer in the 21st century. As the demands on corporate legal professionals continue to grow, this multidisciplinary, forward-thinking approach ensures that they are ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Further research is needed to explore the potential of these conversational – and artificially intelligent – digital humans. At e-REAL Labs, we're committed to this research because we envisage generative artificial intelligence as an interesting driver for education and training. A representative conversational digital human to interact with is available by scanning the QR code below (see Figure 4) and then scheduling a meeting online:



Fig. 4. By scanning the QR code, an avatar will appear and after a short self-introduction will provide an online calendar allowing you to book a meeting to directly talk and test a digital human.

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