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Response: [Black Mesa Documentary](#)

Black Mesa is a modern remake of the Valve's popular Half Life game, released in 2020. This game was developed by a small studio over the course of eight years and was meant to stay true to the original plot, aesthetic, and gameplay of the original title while revitalizing the experience with modern-era graphics as well as improved gameplay and expanded narrative. I put a few hours into the game after seeing the documentary, and this was my first time playing any Half Life title, official or not. Although I did enjoy my time playing the game, the experience did not live up to my expectations for a game that spent nearly a decade in development.

Due to the delicate nature of the project, I can understand how the development process moved at such a slow pace – the game was extremely successful in surpassing the expectations of the franchise's most die-hard fans, and this is no easy feat. A remake game requires careful design in all aspects. Assets must be designed to resemble those of the original game but still have a polished, modernized look. Dialogue must sound and play out as it did originally, and this makes expanding the narrative a difficult process. Puzzle and level design should reflect that of Half Life without suffering the same design flaws as its parent game.

These are all obstacles I will not have to worry about in my development process. However, I do not have any other designers, developers or artists contributing to my project (aside from store-bought 3D assets). One main take away for me from the development of Black Mesa is that pacing the development process is key to shipping a game on time. This is a lesson that the Black Mesa developers learned late in the game and could have saved them years. Most of the studio members who worked on this game had just left school before starting work on the project and

lacked the industry experience necessary to take on a project of this scope. Although I do have industry experience, I understand that I still have a long way to go before I am a seasoned professional, so I have set my scope to be ambitious yet feasible with contingency plans and room for downsizing aspects of my game if necessary.