

# Gamification in Business

An Coppens



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Gamification in Business

1<sup>st</sup> edition

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The advertisement features a large image of the De Vere Beaumont Estate, a grand white building with a central fountain in the foreground. Below this, a collage of four smaller images shows conference activities: a panel discussion, a woman speaking into a microphone, a large audience seated in a hall, and a man presenting at a screen.

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# Introduction

It may seem odd to start a book with a few infographics, but I guess as they say a picture paints 1000 words. I also believe some of the statistics speak for themselves and I hope they will encourage you to explore the book in full.



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We are based in London, UK and have a European customer base.



## Employee engagement crisis, IS GAMIFICATION THE ANSWER?

GLOBALLY WE ARE FACING AN EMPLOYEE  
ENGAGEMENT CRISIS MAINLY THANKS TO



bad hiring



poor management  
practices



low engagement  
among managers



**13%**

Engaged  
employees



**64%**

Not  
engaged



**24%**

Actively  
disengage

### 4 elements influencing employee engagement

1

What do I get from this role?

2

What is the perceived value of my contribution

3

Do I belong here?

4

Do I have the ability and freedom to learn, grow, innovate  
and apply my ideas?

(SOURCE: GALLUP STATE OF THE GLOBAL WORKFORCE REPORT 2013)

### What can gamification help with?

- ➔ Acknowledge and reward contribution
- ➔ Feedback mechanisms
- ➔ Create a community spirit
- ➔ Actively encourage participation
- ➔ Seek innovation input



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We are based in London, UK and have a European customer base.

My aim with this short book is to give you a flavour of what gamification is and isn't, where it applies and where it is better not deployed. I have tried to give you a very balanced view with both positive and negatives. As a gamification practitioner I have come across some great examples and have tried to assemble a good selection of examples, so you can actively make your mind up whether this is a strategy you would also like to pursue.

I hope you enjoy the read and follow the links provided to learn more through video and download additional materials. I would love you to share your thoughts on Twitter with the #businessgamification and include my alter ego @GamificationNat.

I look forward to reading your thoughts.

An Coppens



# 1 What is gamification?

When I go to networking events or speak to friends and I introduce myself as a gamification designer, immediately the response tends to be: “What is that? You said gam-i-fy...what?”

Gamification is indeed a relatively new term and draws its origins from the increasingly popular industry of games and gaming. Effectively, the definition of gamification used in courses all around the globe is developed along the following lines: Gamification is the application of game techniques and game elements to non-game situations.

Personally I would already add in game psychology and a purpose for which you would engage in this practise at all. So in my working definition for this book, I will define gamification as follows:

Gamification is the application of game psychology, game mechanics and techniques to non-game situations to improve results and engagement.

In my business I would even go a step further and say that we design gamification solutions, which encourage winning behaviour and business results in sales, HR, training and productivity. For the purpose of this book however, we can stick with the definition in the box above, which will also allow us to illustrate how this works in other areas of business.

(Try level 1 of our gamification mini-course: <http://gamificationnation.com/about-us/free-mini-course-on-gamification/>)

## Why?

I often hear the question “why should we bring games and game-thinking into the workplace?” as well as “Isn’t business supposed to be serious? Playing doesn’t belong in work”, and “Our business is too serious to even contemplate gaming.”

The reality is that there is a new generation of workers permeating industry today, and they have grown up with games. In fact, an average 20 year-old coming out of university would possibly have spent more hours gaming, whether it is on a computer, tablet, smartphone or video games console or other devices, than they will have spent engrossed in their studies. Their expectations of reality have changed compared to those of previous generations.



Even generation X, those of us born between 1966–1977, has become used to bite-sized information snippets thanks to broadcast media and online information streaming. This generation is turning to games in their masses as well, especially social games, which are a growing market for the ladies. I personally played a lot of games when I was studying for my first degree. I was so involved in the game SimCity that the late nights inhibited the next day's performance and in fact I nearly slept it out for an exam. I was and am equally passionate about sports, I played up to national level basketball, raced in sailing and completed a number of marathons and triathlons. Currently I play daily on one or more online devices and this usually involves games such as Candy Crush, Angry Birds, Carcassone, Heartstone, Ticket to Ride, Sudoku and others.

The whole stereotype of the boy gamer, locked in a dark bedroom playing multi-player online games, is becoming outdated. In fact, the average age of a gamer is now 30+ and the split between men and women is becoming closer to 50/50 with a 55/45 balance in 2013 based on US figures. The reality is also that most people play with friends and family or online fellow enthusiasts. With smartphones and tablets as a part of nearly every family unit, playing games on these devices even tops television watching by a marginal percentage. This second screen prevalence is something the broadcast industry is actively tackling with, and guess what with: games, gamification and interactivity on social media.

In the book "Reality is broken" Jane Mc Gonigle explains a lot of our every day situations no longer work for us. We have been promised in advertising that we can have it all, yet most of the time we don't even come close. We have learnt that we should be positive and act positive, yet at work, most of us only hear about certain things when they fail or when mistakes are made. A lot of us are turning to games to gain a positive buzz or simply escape from reality.

#### Employee engagement crisis

The Gallup Corporation has done extensive research in employee engagement and they discovered that a shocking majority of workers is disengaged from work most of the time and a small percentage are actively fighting the system and possibly damaging the organisation. Only 13% of workers they found are actively engaged in the workplace, based on a study carried out in 2011–2012 in 142 countries with adults of 18 and over. This is a small increase from 11% in the period 2009–2010.

63% of the global workforce is not engaged and there is a slight improvement on the actively disengaged group between 2009–2010 when this group constituted 27% and in 2011–2012 this has dropped to 24%. The disengaged group would probably be neutral in any project you are trying to launch or stimulate and they do what needs to be done to keep their job. However the actively disengaged group may do things to damage the organisation with intent.

(<http://www.gallup.com/poll/165269/worldwide-employees-engaged-work.aspx>)

If we look at the breakdown on how this employee engagement disaster is happening by region, the US & Canada are the most positive group with Australia and New Zealand closely behind them, but as soon as you hit Europe, Asia and Africa engagement numbers are coming down significantly. The Middle East and North Africa have by far the most disengaged workforce. For the full breakdown by region I sincerely recommend that you download “The state of the global workforce report 2013” from the Gallup website itself. In summary what I would say is that we have serious situation on our hands.

So how does this relate to gamification?

What the gaming industry has done well is that they have captured our attention and for most games we stay involved for a length of time. The larger the amount of friends and family members we have playing, the longer we will continue with a particular game. Now, look at work processes and how a lot of game elements could enhance our work experience. The nature of work tends to evolve around teams and people, which again can stimulate some similar set-ups as we can find in games.

What engaged employees and passionate gamers have in common is a drive to succeed and a motivation that seems to come from inside. Gamification as explained in our definition applies game dynamics to tap into people’s nature to want to do a good job and contribute based on strengths, knowledge and experience. Most of us want to work in area we are good at and feel recognised and valued for our contribution, now this is where games have worked it out.

Games give us

- Instant feedback
- Praise when we do well
- The player makes the decisions
- Challenges at different levels of difficulty
- Full overview to enable decision making
- A journey that progresses from beginner to mastery
- A path to follow with levels

In stark contrast most workplaces give

- Feedback on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis
- Mistake feedback more often than praise
- Bosses make decisions mostly
- Lack of information flow hence stifling decisions and innovation
- Monotony in some jobs or lack of challenge
- In some roles, challenges of varying difficulty do exist
- Often unclear career paths
- Limited progression opportunity

Having been both a motivated and engaged employee as well as a disengaged one, and on a rare occasion even actively disengaged, my stress levels usually indicated where I sat on the continuum. With stress related illnesses at their height and increasing, we really need to bring some fun and play related elements back into the work environment. In my view, current structures are no longer sustainable in the long run.

### **Does that mean that we should make work one big game?**

I don't think that it is necessary to go that far, saying that in some situations a game can give the most valuable lesson, but for business processes to improve gamification may well be sufficient. Commonly it is also assumed that introducing game elements will instantly make work fun, however most of the time this will not be the case, but merely a process improvement, which may increase efficiency.

If I could do it however, I wish I could make business fun again. In my experience, working to my strengths, sharing my knowledge and experience, and seeing them contribute to results is a satisfactory experience. Whenever I have had a massive challenge and managed to overcome against all odds, I have found it a lot more fun. But that's just me.

The reality is what most CEO's are afraid of is that work becomes a playground instead of a workplace. Most people remember play from their childhood days, which effectively was unstructured and usually had a lot of energy applied just for the fun of it. However gamification by its origins is based on games, which have rules and guidelines as well as achievement, which is much more aligned with corporate objectives.

To quote some of the academic work of Deterding, Dixon, Khaled and Nacke, they clearly make a differentiation between play and games, which I find sums up and clarifies the differences and hopefully also lowers the resistance barriers from management echelons towards gamification. (Read more in their paper “From game design elements to gamefulness: defining “gamification”)

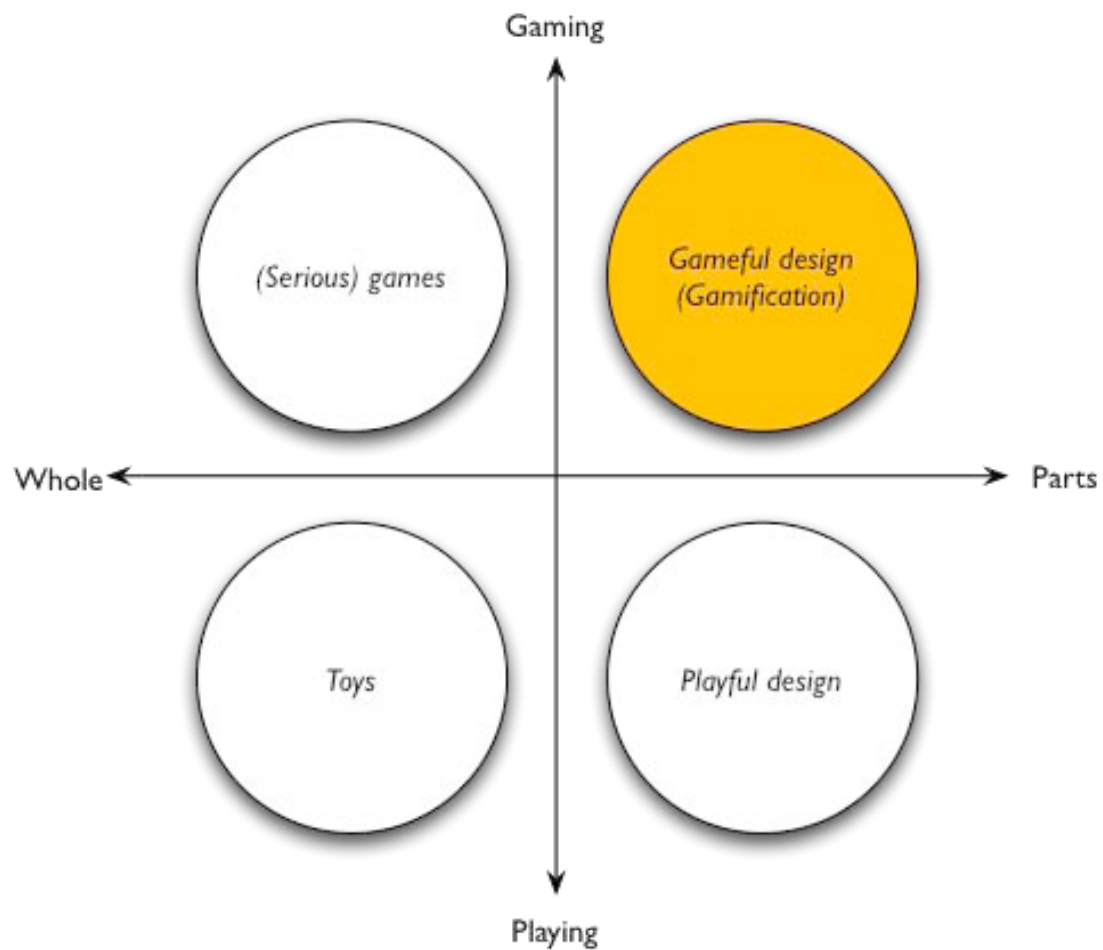
Their definition:

To summarize: “Gamification” refers to

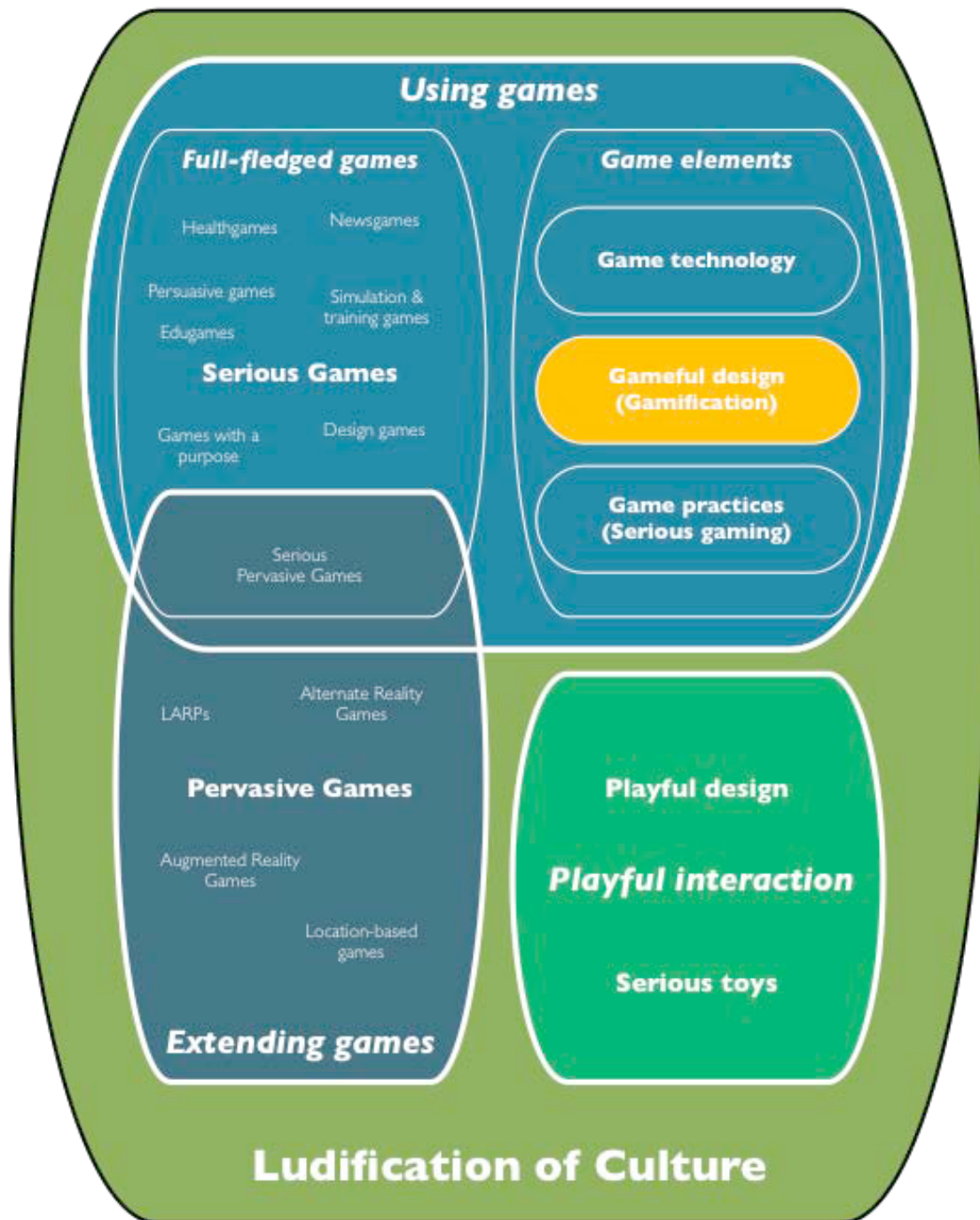
- the use (rather than the extension) of
- design (rather than game-based technology or other game related practices)
- elements (rather than full-fledged games)
- characteristic for games (rather than play or playfulness)
- in non-game contexts (regardless of specific usage intentions, contexts, or media of implementation).

This definition contrasts “gamification” against other related concepts via the two dimensions of playing/gaming and parts/whole, which is probably better understood with the graphic they designed to explain the differences.





They also bring in the dimension of ludification of our culture, which is a term based on the Latin term *ludus* – games. Effectively they position Gamification in the larger context of the way our culture is evolving and entertainment and games taking more and more central stage in a variety of activities. The model below again quoted from the same paper illustrates the subtle variants well.



It comes as no surprise therefore, when I explain what I do to people at networking events, or in client pitches, that they often misinterpret that I make games. In fact, I can if that is the right solution for the challenge at hand, but more often than not it is rather applying game design to an existing business process to make it more engaging and with a very specific business outcome in mind. Some of these solutions are not necessarily fun, but a mere process improvement, which is why so many large consultancies are offering gamification as part of their business process improvement, change management and/or strategy practices.

What the paper also points out in its conclusion that gamification in its above definition allows for variance in the way it is implemented. This means that starting from an experience-building point of view various methods of engagement can be applied. And depending on the situation this can work out as applying a few mechanics or going as far as deploying a full process journey.

Personally, I don't believe it even has to be a technology implementation. For years I have been designing gameful interactions as part of training and coaching, most of which were absolutely no-tech. For television I used very visual gamified exercises to bring home points for the candidates and all of them were based on what we found in the environment of the individuals such as pen and paper or whiteboard, stones, etc. Technology is making some of these experiences easier to create, but the player and the purpose of the exercise remain the number one focus point for design.

### **Who is implementing gamification?**

According to the research organization Gartner, 70% of Global 2000 organisations will have at least one gamified application by the end of 2014. 25% of day-to-day business processes will use aspects of gamification and by 2015 50% of organisations that manage innovation processes will gamify them.

The earliest to adopt these practices have been IT companies such as SAP, Salesforce and Oracle, who have implemented elements of gamification internally to encourage internal knowledge sharing and collaboration across continents as well as in their customer facing solutions. Deloitte is often quoted for their application of gamification in learning. L'Oreal and Formaposte engaged applicants through gamified HR solutions.

Quests and challenges have often been part of marketing, HR and probably day-to-day material in project management and operations. But planning and designing for engagement with the player or user at the center is the differentiator, which gamification brings to the table. Gamification seems to bring together a blend of user-experience designer, who were typically found in web and software development, behavioural economists and psychologist as well as game designers. It is this mix of viewpoints that makes this an exciting field to explore, but it also shows up challenges to ensure solutions work for all parties in a process.

**Where can gamification be applied?**

If there is a process involved, technically it can be gamified. I have worked on applications in training, e-learning, coaching and HR. Most traditionally you will find gamification in loyalty programs and customer service facing operations, which lend themselves ideally to gamification. Marketing has an opportunity to rise beyond just game based ideas and build a strategic gamified approach to increase communities and involvement. In sales, incentives and leaderboards have traditionally been part and parcel of the nature of the job. In my view sales was gamified before the word existed. Productivity and innovation have seen successful applications. (try level 2 of our mini-course to find out more: <http://gamificationnation.com/about-us/free-mini-course-on-gamification/>)

The thing to keep in mind when embarking on gamification is to think from a holistic and strategic point of view. What can start as a successful campaign in one team, may have serious impact on the next team in the interaction process. Imagine a great gamified marketing campaign with a social buzz and then a non-existent customer service reality, that is setting the organization up for a lot of criticism by a vocal community, which will likely tell you, and at the same time also tell all their friends and acquaintances.

In my view gamification can start with a simple campaign and grow into a strategy, but the wiser approach is to start from a strategic perspective and make the most of it. This means it may take longer to get all the c-suite levels on board, but when employees are engaged, the customer experience improves and as a result business bottom lines are impacted positively! Your job will be to make a compelling business case.



## 2 Benefits and Downsides of Gamification

Gamification as a concept is relatively new, yet in some parts of industry, game elements have long been part of general practice as well as strategy. Owing to the culmination of the popularity of computer and video games, the use of tablets and smartphones, and a general acceptance of the ability of technology, we have created the perfect conditions to introduce gamification to an organization through regular business processes and applications. Although we hinted at some of the benefits in the previous chapter, what are they? And because every coin has a flipside, we will also look at the downsides, or pitfalls, which can be associated with gamification.

With an industry in the very early stages of development, few statistics exist as to the proven effectiveness of gamification strategies and initiatives. Most of the data we have found are campaign related, which will give an indication regarding its potential.

According to M2Research, gamification helps companies to:

- Increase user engagement (47%)
- Increase brand loyalty (22%)
- Increase brand awareness (15%)
- Improve motivation (9%)
- Employee training (7%)

In my own experience, I have seen the successful take-up of e-learning improve when the courses have been gamified. More courses are completed, and when there is a need for compliance, such as continuous professional development for example (CPD), encouraging early completion and progress measurement towards it helps tremendously. In fact, a very simple course progress bar on e-learning, or a time indicator similar to the ones you see on online video's, can actually stimulate completion when someone only has a small percentage of the way to go to complete a task. Psychologically, it aids the respondent to put in the extra effort or simply just stick with it, when you can see the finishing line.

When actual simulation exercises are part of learning, and the learner is left to make decisions as you would in a game scenario, then behaviour changes are also apparent as a result of training. In classroom training, both serious games and challenges throughout a program have had a positive effect on learner experiences and their performance on the day, as well as learning that is remembered after the training finishes.

In other business situations, such as operations and project management, having a visual journey plan of what is current, and what lies ahead of people in a workspace where everyone can see it has often kept things on track. Obviously, normal project and operational management techniques have continued to play their part, so nothing previously used was omitted because gamification was introduced. In fact, it was an additional tool in an already existing toolkit. Actually, a lot of the agile project management techniques ideally lend themselves to gamification and could, in some way, be seen as a gamified technique. Where else but games would you do sprint finishes? The reality is, getting hung up on semantics seems to be rife around gamification, and as long as your introduction of game elements and dynamics encourages more of the behaviour that you want to achieve, then I would consider it mission accomplished even if you give it a different name.

Another positive effects of gamification I have seen, and personally experienced, is higher productivity. I set myself mini quests and goals, which all have a reward attached. Then it is a case of remaining focused on toward the reward and maintaining progress. For me the reward is the motivation and it increases the satisfaction level for completing a task. I actually don't recall having ever worked any different way.

I have seen extremely high levels of productivity and innovation at hack fests and game jams where a group of people with different skills comes together to tackle a specific problem or to come up with an innovation. In the IT industry this has often been a method used to solve problems, and in telecommunications and broadcasting innovation it has been the main theme. In my view it can work in more industries once you have a common dilemma; volunteers with specialist knowledge coming together to delve into a topic for a short space of time. When I took part in a game jam, there were actually no prizes to win apart from special honours such as most innovative, best game and best team, yet we all worked as hard as possible for 48 hours and designed complete games.

I have seen more feedback and more input in innovation projects, or other projects where input was actively sought, and participation was encouraged through gamification. In recruitment I have seen better cultural- and job-fit selections, because a simulation of real life decisions on the job became part of the recruitment process. In recruitment assessment centres have existed for a long time, which are fundamentally built on similar principles, in my opinion at least, to gamification.

In call centres and sales organizations, I have seen fun rewards drive behaviour, something as simple as an ice cream competition for the team that answers the most calls on a hot day drove call answering rates one day. In most call centre environments, leaderboards and other metrics such as calls waiting, and call duration are often displayed visually, and will have an impact on how people behave. The more people know the impact they can make as an individual, the more you create the sense of the game to allow the 'player' to feel they are in control of the game. Record keeping, which tends to be a big problem in sales and customer service environments, has been substantially improved as a result of gamification.

Every Wednesday I blog about campaigns and initiatives I love in gamification through <http://www.gamificationnation.com/blog>, and as a result of actively researching and following efforts of what other companies have achieved with gamification solutions, here are some of the core benefits.

**Increased customer and employee engagement**

The research from Gallup suggests that engaged employees enhance the customer experience and they care about outcomes for customers. By encouraging employee engagement, you are also raising service levels delivered by both client and non-client facing employees.

**Motivate participation**

I am sure most of us have participated in a sweepstake, lottery, a draw, or participated in something for a reward. Sometimes the reward, or potential win is the driver; sometimes it is the activity in itself that is rewarding. Charities have used gamification extensively to get people participate in fundraising challenges. The decision to take part is usually the easiest step, but then sticking with the behaviours necessary to complete the challenge, as well as achieving the fundraising targets, is the hardest part.

**Influence behaviour, learning adoption of behaviours**

One of the core benefits I have seen in a learning environment is that gamification can influence behaviour. Recent studies have shown that if the encouragement is towards a natural behaviour, then a higher success rate can be achieved. An example I came across is that people are less willing to ask for feedback and more willing to give it, so the most productive option would be to gamify the giving of feedback, because this is a more natural behaviour that people are willing to perform.

**Drive loyalty**

Loyalty cards have been in existence longer than gamification, and a lot of them have tier structures, points earning, rewards, and recognition built in, playing on the status that comes with receiving a new recognition of loyalty and spending. A sense of belonging and status are two factors that play heavily when looking at loyalty. Games have the ability to subtly capture people, which a lot of loyalty programs can only wish for, but gamification has helped to improve the customer experience, and with that their loyalty to a brand or service.

**Improve quality of service**

In general, motivated employees tend to deliver a better service, as we mentioned in an earlier benefit. Gamifying core business processes can help to create accurate records of achievement while at the same time ensuring a lower failure rate in the delivery results. In a manufacturing setting, both gamification and serious games have first of all helped employees to understand how the production process worked, and secondly how their work impacts it.

**Reduce time, costs**

Gamification can help organisations tap into internal and external talent, inviting them to take part for a short period of time can save costs and time. In an example I recently used in my blog, a company chose to invite employees to suggest website improvements instead of outsourcing it to an external provider, they made a significant cost saving, and had more improvement suggestions than they would probably have received from someone else, because staff know what customers tell them, and often that feedback goes no further than an individual employee, or potentially their manager.

**Drive profits**

When all the above benefits come into play, the natural side effect is that profitability will improve, which I believe brings home the need for gamification to be strategic in nature, especially when one of the objectives is indeed increasing profits and business results.



## **The pitfalls of gamification**

Every positive story has a flipside and a trend like gamification is no different. Misconceptions about what gamification is and can do, is already a starting point for debate. Often, people think it is a game, or it is all hyper fun and high energy, but the reality is some of the gamification techniques are actually more like a business improvement process instead of being a game or even fun.

### **So what are the pitfalls?**

I'm going to discuss a number of them and how they could badly affect a business. It is something to consider and to make sure of, that when you are choosing a gamification designer or a gamification system, you work out how to counteract all of these pitfalls, or create a plan of action for what you're going to do if they do occur, and if they do rear their ugly heads.

### **Gamification is superficial**

The biggest criticism towards gamification has been that it is very superficial; that it is just about points, badges, and leaderboards. They are simply a cosmetic exercise to have people perform harder for meaningless statistics. When I hear this comment I always immediately think that either the gamification process hasn't hit the true motivators, has been poorly communicated, and the perception of value is missing. Let's take an in-depth look into all these aspects.

### **Leaderboards are demotivational**

Early gamification may be exactly that, demotivational, just purely leaderboard-related. Now, leaderboards have a very positive psychological effect for the top players in any field, so if you're actually the best at something, you want to be listed at the top of a leaderboard. However, if you're nowhere near the top, leaderboards can be extremely de-motivating, and again, being included or excluded from those can have a very negative impact and actually counteract what your company is trying to achieve.

So the key with a leaderboard, if you're going to use it, is that it needs to be all-inclusive and only show what's relevant to the person in question. If I'm an average player, I may want to jump two or three places, so I want to see who is the closest neighbour to me relatively speaking – so if I'm somewhere in the top 100, closer to the 80s, and I want to make it into the 70s, I want to see who's ahead of me. How can I achieve that, as opposed to seeing myself as #70 out of 100 people?

A leaderboard is a very subjective and a very motivational, subtle thing. The top 10 know they're in the top 10, and they want to definitely measure, and probably will be actively measuring, their progress within that. Beyond the top 10, be careful with leaderboards and how you portray them.

If they're team-based, make sure that there may be other rewards you need to build into a gamification platform to encourage those who are just at the bottom or middling, to keep encouraging them. Because if the gap between the top and the middle can often be quite big, and if there is a big difference in numbers between you and those at the top, you could potentially lose a group of good workers who simply can't be bothered because they are nowhere near achieving the same targets as the top performers.

So you need to build strategies in to increase the performance of the guys that are in the middle or at the bottom of the list. Effectively, you may be talking about 3 different approaches to improve the bottom feeders and enable them to climb to the middle, a mid-field approach to help them make the extra mile to reach the top, and a top of the table strategy to keep these people on their toes.

### **Pointification**

The next pitfall that has been mentioned with gamification in mind, is pointification. That is just purely about points. Now, the core design of gamification is very much a case of building experiences and letting users gain experience points. What's most important in this is actually the experience, it is not all about the points, but if it becomes purely a game system in generating points, what you're effectively inviting people to do is to play your point system. And players will do that, users will do that, customers will do that, employees will do that, so you want to make sure that you monitor your system quite closely to make sure that once you discover that someone is playing the system, you can take corrective action and tweak it.

I saw an example of a retail chain, which had basically implemented a points system for their sales staff. Once the salespeople figured out which were the activities that drove the points and got them to the top of the list, they basically adjusted the measurements and tweaked it so that whatever points were winning one week would have different effects the next week, so they encourage the right behaviour overall, as opposed to just earning points.

So the key to building good gamification and to not fall into the pointification pitfall is to make sure that it is building an experience first, and then ensure you measure results using more than one set of metrics as opposed to just one. That will move and change, and be tweaked over time, so it will involve monitoring. Gamification is not a one-size-fits-all type of solution; you may need to adapt it to what you want to achieve, and it should be seen as that.

Experience points should be built around behaviours that come quite naturally, that people are willing to perform as part of the process in dealing with your company. The behaviours displayed will create an experience, either positive or negative, and it is the positive experiences which is what you are looking to emulate time and again. So when you start with thinking about the positive experience, break it down in a set of behaviours and only then look at allocating experience points. Then you are creating a sustainable gamification system, though it still means you should monitor the system.

### **Badges are just gimmicky**

Another criticism that is often directed to gamification is that it's just a gimmick, that it's just another way to do something equally superficial as, for example, promotional material. The risk is that with badges, for example, they can appear gimmicky, that they're not actually promoting a real sense of achievement, a real sense of joy or experience, but that they're just "Oh great, lovely, I've got another doodah." It is something that, again, you want to think through.

When creating badges, 'less is more' is a good philosophy to go for, and you should only allow badges for what's important. To distance yourself from the gimmicky feel of badges, you should be assigning badges based on effort and create a value proposition on them.

You can also have some fun badges to keep people intrigued with the system, which is how the original Foursquare worked as a badge system. It has now been split into a Foursquare and Swarm app. The Foursquare part is aimed at finding places you may like near you, such as restaurants for example. Swarm is for checking in and noticing which friends might be near as well as collecting badges. Foursquare allowed you to check in to places you visit and depending on the number of times you visit you can earn the right to be the major of a place, I am not sure if this is still the case with the divided app, but it sure was fun to rein as a major in your favourite place together with friends. I checked in on old Foursquare at London Heathrow airport and became part of a swarm, and the message Foursquare sent me was to start a flash-mob, which made me chuckle.

One organisation which has used badges to great effect is the Scouts and Guides, where serious effort is required to earn a badge. Even the badge handover is a ceremony of achievement, and most scouts will wear their badges on their uniforms with pride. What they do well is that they assign value based on effort to each badge, and also through their communication at a ceremony. Pride in wearing it publicly is actively encouraged.

I've heard of organizations where people can give badges to one another. Now, in some organizations, this was abused in the sense that people were giving badges so randomly and so frequently that it became more of a gimmick rather than something of true value. So it's the value and the perception that you attach to your gamification efforts that will in some way drive behaviours and also drive perceptions. So, it is very much communication management, perception management, and tapping into what motivates people, what makes them laugh and what they are willing to do naturally and reward those to make sure that you achieve the right things.

### **Exploitation**

Gamification can be seen as exploitation. One story that has been in the news is workers at Disney, who have been measured on their break times, their return from breaks, their timeliness, and how some of the employees started playing the system by not taking breaks, and skipping lunch, to earn more points, and to actually be seen as a model employee in the system.

Seeing that caused uproar, and in some of the European markets, this may also cause serious issues with workers' unions, and worker councils, especially in highly regulated environments where unions or councils have a big say. You definitely want to make sure that gamification does not encourage exploitation of the workers and that basically only the right kinds of behaviours are encouraged around wellbeing as opposed to very punitive practices when not showing up on time. Basically, you want to make sure that you're coming from the right place.

Gamification can be seen as manipulation; it can be seen as exploitation. So you want to make sure that you successfully counteract this by making sure that the employee is at the centre of your design, and that employee wellbeing is first and foremost.

What, for example, in the Disney example could work well is that there becomes a minus situation, that if you actually don't take breaks minus points are awarded, and that only those who are timely and do the right kinds of activities are rewarded. By actually skipping breaks or by staying late, for example, or putting pressure on others, you actually counter affect achievement, that you lose credibility over time; you have to look at both sides of the fence.



How you can counteract it will come out in testing. So you want to make sure that you have some people in your test group who will definitely play the system, and you may set them up to do exactly that. You have natural behaviours that workers do, and then you have natural behaviours that workers will do once they know what the game is. In every game, you'll have game players, and that's a fact of games. In gamification, you will encourage some of that behaviour also, so you want to make sure that you avoid this pitfall by structuring and designing it well.

### **Cheating**

The next pitfall is cheating. People can cheat the system. In gamification, you are effectively, relying on people reporting the right kinds of things, and that they're actually real things that they have achieved. Now, depending on how your gamification is structured, with some digital solutions, for example, it's easy to trace who's doing what, and it can be verified. Thus the input comes from more objective systems information.

Saying that, an example that always stuck in my mind is the virtual world Second Life, which is, I guess, old news these days, but it was a very interesting concept, and actually closely related to what can be achieved with gamification. In some cases, a virtual world is exactly what people are implementing, especially for me, with some of the clients I work with in the learning environment. We do create learning worlds.

In Second Life, you had an opportunity to earn Linden Dollars, which was the virtual currency used in the virtual world. To do that, you had to take up a job. Now, there were people that cheated the system and basically had their little avatar, which was their alter-ego in the virtual world, coded into doing a continuous loop of whatever job they had taken on to earn those Linden Dollars. So, once they figured out how to work the system, people will also find ways to cheat it.

Again, the only way to counteract it is a good design and monitoring what is happening. If some player really leads up your system leaderboard, or some employee really shoots up, or a customer really shoots up, go check what have they really done? What is their real contribution? Are they really as good as they claim? Maybe they are. Maybe you've just shown them how to achieve the best in their work area – or they have just figured out and broken down the system rules, and now they're playing the system.

So, cheating is something to be wary of, and where possible, find the loopholes in the testing phases of your gamification rollout, and ask people to actively try and cheat the system to see if you can spot it? Cheating is something you definitely want to be aware of.

### **Manipulation to get people to do things they don't want to do**

The next criticism is that gamification manipulates people to do things that they don't want to do. Now, what I would say is if that's the way you're going to gamify, or if that's the reason for your gamification, then stop right there, drop your campaign, and just basically forget about it, because this kind of approach will be short-lived.

What you really want to do is encourage the most likely behaviours that people want to perform, but will not necessarily do because of, for example, it's perceived as you're being a goody two-shoes or perceived as something that could be potentially go wrong, or maybe it takes courage to do.

I'll give you an example that I've also used as a benefit, and that is giving feedback and asking for feedback. An organization wanted to improve how they gave feedback in their company. They originally tried to encourage people to ask for feedback, but found that this only marginally improved the feedback approach. So they decided to flip it around and instead rewarded giving of good feedback with badges and kudos was rewarded to the receivers of the feedback. Giving feedback is something everyone was willing to do and very often, in my experience of working on projects, having constructive feedback that you can work with, and therefore improve the project, is brilliant. As they say feedback is the breakfast of champions. So the real behaviour that you want to encourage is the actual giving of good feedback. It may require training on structuring good feedback, giving and receiving it gracefully, and communications on how the organisation sees this as important to improving delivery outcomes.

When looking at rewards for feedback two elements come to mind; it's not just feedback, but there is also a beneficial aspect which requires an element in the rating of the feedback. It requires the giver to have a good solid case for giving feedback, either in the moment, or based on facts. Secondly, by placing a reward giving ownership at the side of the recipient of feedback, you should also be asking them "Did the feedback give you real points on how to improve what the feedback was about and how it impacts the team, the project, the company, etc.?" So you're basically measuring more than just one item.

What this example also illustrates, is that gamification is often the start of a more elaborate process behavioural change and not just a quick fix. Saying that, I also don't see why a feedback loop exercise, like in the above example, should take a long time to design and roll out.

To summarise, if you take what you want to gamify, and you want to avoid the whole manipulative aspect of it, then look at what the natural behaviours are that can be encouraged and that we want more of, instead of what we need people to do, but they just don't like to do.

Another good example of this mindset is that most people don't like filling in forms, yet most of us have completed our LinkedIn profile. Why? Because it said it was only so many percentages complete. Just a simple task bar showed us what percentage complete our profile was, yet 60% of us went back and filled in more data in order to have a complete profile, whereas if you just measured completion, or you said "Actually, your form is not complete. Please go back and fill it in again". People would go "Jeez, I don't know what I'm doing wrong here," whereas the progression bar with clear indications of what needs to be filled in was a good driver of behaviour. Gentle prodding with feedback, maybe?

Is it manipulative? It can be perceived that way. But I believe if you drive a behaviour that people are willing to do, the chances of it being called manipulation are probably lower. But yes, in any situation where you are encouraging behaviours, the words "manipulation" or "exploitation" are never far away, so be aware on how you frame it, how you introduce it, and how you sell the campaign to people.

### **Thinking campaign instead of experience or strategy**

Gamification has also been called ineffective, and in my view that is because a lot of gamification efforts start as a campaign, but haven't been fully thought through on how they contribute to a customer or employee engagement strategy. Lot of campaigns can be seen as being just for fun, with nothing at the end to follow on with.

First of all, they haven't set business objectives where you measure what you actually want to achieve from it, and they were more sort of a sparkling of gamification dust that people threw on top of it, "Let's pop in a game element or a game dynamic here and there" but there is no real encouragement to think anything all the way through.

Here are some questions to consider:

- What is it that you want to create as an experience?
- What is it that you want to achieve with your gamification?
- How will you know whether it is a successful campaign?
- Have you set success measures for your campaign, and for your design?
- When do you know it's working?
- What will people say at the end?
- How will they feel and engage throughout?
- What do the people you want to engage with enjoy doing naturally?
- How can you encourage them to do this more often?

To ensure that if you have a long-term gamification strategy, and you want it to work, and become effective, you ought to make it an iterative process, which includes multiple revisions, multiple tweaks, and that you monitor it all along the way to make sure that it actually works for you, your organization, and that it does exactly what you want it to do. And the most important thing is that it creates the experience you want it to create, whether that it is a fantastic workplace to work in, or whether that it is a brilliant customer experience. You decide what it is, but effectively, you've got to manage the process, otherwise you may risk falling into the trap of being ineffective.

**Bad design**

In fact, the research organization, Gartner, says pretty much about all applications and inventions, that 80% of gamification efforts will fail, and that this is due to bad design. Hence, we will be dedicating a whole chapter on how to think about gamification design and how to do it well. But let's touch on pitfalls here though we will be addressing it in greater detail in the next chapter.

You want to make sure that you've looked at all aspects of gamification, from psychology to game elements, from internal business culture to customers, from employees to whoever the experience is focused towards, and what their core behaviours are. This is because as I said earlier, it is important to design gamification, to work with the players that you have, and to encourage the behaviours that they're willing to do and that you want them to do more of in a fun and structured manner.

You're basically facilitating the good that is inherent in people as opposed to unnecessarily facilitating negatives or bad behaviour, or things you want to avoid as a business, so you want to think the design through. There are a number of tests or a number of steps related to good design, which we'll go through in the next chapter.

**Gamification is yet another trend that will pass by and die**

Another downfall or pitfall is that gamification is often portrayed as a "it's a one-off and it will die a quick death." Now, gamification, if it is just merely a campaign, and yes, it will often start as a short campaign, but can evolve into something longer-lasting and bigger.

In marketing, I see a lot of gamification campaigns that create a great buzz, but then nobody does anything with it. Nobody actually follows up with the engaged customer base that might've been reached, and a lukewarm effort is created and nothing gets done with it. It can be a criticism, but some gamification efforts only set out to be a short-term campaign in order to get, for example, innovation input.

Good examples are game hacks or hack fests, or game jams, where you have a very particular problem in mind. You want that solved, but you have a very short timeframe in which you get a whole bunch of people together to work on this team, and to present their feedback back at the end of a set timeframe. That is a campaign that is very short-lived, yet the output from such an event, such a campaign, can have very long-lasting effects.

What would be an important exercise to complete would be to ensure that the people involved in the hack fest at its origins are given feedback of what is done with exactly what they contributed, to give them a real sense of pride in achievement, pride in seeing implementation of their work and to say "Hey, I contributed to XY innovation because we, in a very short space of time, came up with this." So if you are engaging in those types of events, those types of campaigns, what you do, how you communicate after is essential in order to keep the longer-term buzz going, because left to its own devices, it will die.

So it is a very true and a very real criticism: if you do nothing more with whatever the campaign was, well then, obviously it's going to die. What gets no attention cannot be sustained. You need to nurture it in order for it to be sustainable.

Most games will have a short timeframe. For example, I've downloaded tons and tons of games on my iPhone and iPad, and only played some of them for a very short space of time because they didn't really catch my fancy, or didn't really motivate me to continue, or I didn't feel very good at it.

Gamification, in some senses, can have similar effects. It's short-lived and people get bored with it. If it is tweaked, measured, and monitored on a regular basis, and given a value, then people will continue to play with it. So, in an enterprise situation or in a business scenario, most systems risk dying or risk people getting bored with it, if it is not maintained, or if it is not a genuine part, and parcel of the effective everyday way of working.

It comes back to some of the earlier points; that if you do not set out what the behaviour is that you want to encourage, what something is that's intrinsically part of your business process, you can risk people getting bored with it. An innovation campaign is typically a campaign, which has a set start and a set end date. However, having a monthly innovation campaign is not so easy to maintain.

I've seen this, for example, with innovation inboxes, or innovation portals in an organization, where it involved a lot of effort in order to keep a stream of innovations coming, even with rewards, even with good incentives to get people to submit ideas, and prizes for all submissions. People that are natural innovators may tend to still give you contributions, but then comes down to just a handful of people.

Where, for example, an innovation hack fest may give you more and give you lots of things to work with, but you do them once a year or once every two years, when you are looking at a particular problem to solve. This may have better effectiveness in terms of getting the input you want, and the quality you want, as opposed to regular ongoing systems, where it isn't part and parcel of someone's job, and it is not truly part of a working routine people have to do.

It is true, some gamifications will not be exciting, will not necessarily even be fun; they will just be a business process improvement. And yes, people will have a tendency to get used to it, just like all rewards, it will become boring over time. If you earn a reward for the first time, you say, "Wow, great, fantastic." If you get it the second time, the return on the happiness factor is a lot less. So if you get the same rewards every single time, get them three, four, five times, and I can guarantee you, the fifth or sixth time, you are likely to say "I don't really care. It doesn't appeal to me anymore", so you definitely want to build in innovative elements, surprise factors, and change and tweak your system consistently.



Gamification is not just something you design once and it will remain; it's designed once, you constantly have to monitor, tweak, and revise it a bit like a software system. If any of you are on smartphones or Androids, the amount of times your apps and software are updated is indicative of exactly what needs to happen in gamification, in that it will regularly be updated, that it may need regular reviews to make sure that it is still delivering what you've set out to do with it.

**Legislation**

An additional consideration I would urge you to look into is legislation. Depending on the market that you work in, legislation in relation to employee HR and productivity, and what you can and can't encourage or measure people on, can have a significant impact on what you are actually able to design.

I know, for example, coming from a learning and development background, that some of the things that we wanted to do would work in the U.S. no problem, but when we were looking at European rollouts, we needed to seek approval and justification from the unions, especially in the Benelux, France, and Germany, where you have more structured employee regulations and legislation that is telling you exactly what you can and you can't do.

So you need to be aware of these regulations and to be aware of the law, and you may need to seek legal counsel to make sure that depending on where you live, you are not impinging on actual rights that people have earned. In any case, exploitation, and manipulation are some of those topics that would immediately make alarm bells ring and are potential causes for strikes, and all sorts in parts of the world. So you definitely want to make sure that you are in line with global corporate legislation, and employee legislation, so that all your systems work for everybody. It may mean that you have to phrase rollouts or seek agreement upfront. So have some fun with that, but be mindful of it.

The other aspect of legislation is regulations in relation to the gambling and gaming industry. Because of its close relation to both those industries, you want to make sure that if you have gambling-related elements in it, that you are following legislation that is in tune with what's possible in your market. Again, some markets are restrictive; in some markets, gambling is absolutely outlawed, so you want to make sure that you are within the boundaries of what's possible.

Sweepstakes, competitions, even just Facebook competitions, are restricted based on what Facebook allows you to do or not to do. You need to make sure that you know what the regulations are, and you might need to seek expert input to make sure that everything you do is correct.

What you don't want to create is a situation where people are gambling in the workplace just to gain extra rewards, extra points, or extra money, and especially when it comes to money and money rewards, be careful, because the impact it can have on people gaming the system is quite large, and its effectiveness isn't necessarily proven to be great. So I would say seek experiences rather than money rewards.

### **Some final thoughts**

I think what I have shared so far is a comprehensive list of some of the benefits, as well as the things that can go wrong with gamification. In the following chapter, what we will do is look into a good structure of game design so that some of those pitfalls we have mentioned here can already be overcome at source and that your design is up to scratch to deliver the results you are aiming for. With other pitfalls, it is very much a case of inform yourself, research, and where necessary, involve legal counsel, or look up regulations to make sure that you are working to the letter of the law.

Every good innovation has downfalls; every good innovation has benefits. I hope I've given you a rounded approach and a balanced view, because I think it's important to go into any improvement process with your eyes wide open and as an educated decision-maker. Rather than thinking "Oh wow, this is the greatest buzz. We've got to jump in," and just follow the trend. The key is to actually think things through and create something that works for all of your business objectives and everyone involved.

# 3 Getting your Gamification Design Right

Gartner, the research organization, said that 80% of gamification applications would not hit their target because of bad design. In this chapter, we want to dedicate some time to make sure that you won't be one of those, 80% and that your gamification design will actually hit the right notes.

## Think like a game designer

Point one and step one for good gamification design is to think like a game designer to some extent, and to work out what your players, your employee or customer would enjoy the most. What would they like their journey to be like, or you want it to be like? First step, is understanding your customer.

A lot of game designers and gamification designers ask you to start with the business objective. I actually would suggest that you start with the customer in mind. With good business design, if you are in doubt and you are not sure how and what the preferences are of your customer or employee base, then I would suggest to survey and ask the questions: "what is it they like", "what is it they enjoy", "how did they prefer to be motivated". It is like using a behavioural profiling approach to identifying your customers.

What you want to do is to design a customer profile so that you know the demographics, the age group, where do they have fun, what do they do in their leisure time, where do they hang out, what kind of work do they do, what are their preferences, are they online or offline, what kinds of games do they already play; if they are video games, narrow it down to what kinds of games. Are they male or female? Do they have specific communication preferences? Do they spend a lot of money on particular items? And if so, what items?, what kind of behaviours do they already have? And what kind of behaviours would they develop more if given the choice?

You really want to have a whole bunch of questions answered that would bring you a more complete profile and give you an idea of what your customer or employee base is like, so that you can basically tap into what intrinsically motivates them and reward this more.

## Voluntary engagement

The next consideration to make with good gamification design, also closely related to your target audience, is that you want them to voluntarily engage with your gamification points. Targeting people that are not interested by your service is like basically asking a foodie groups to go and join an exercise application. It just doesn't make sense.

If you want exercise applications to take off, then you also want to target people that are already interested in exercise and potentially doing exercise, even if you know deep down that maybe the obese or unfit people may need to use the exercise app. It is not them that would actually engage with it first off. You want to make sure that you know your target market well enough, and that you target them with things that they are already doing.

In the workplace, what does that mean? If you are using an enterprise software application, for example, for record completion or call monitoring, what can you already do that your users are already using on your system to help them be more complete, more accurate or to complete faster, depending on what is it that you want to drive more behaviour towards? What they already do naturally is what you can encourage them to do the most. These are the first two considerations I would suggest you to make.

## Creating an experience

Closely linked to them, is the kind of experience you are creating. What is it that you want your user to do and experience? What is their journey about? How did they start off? What do they end up doing? What is the reason behind it? At this point, it would be right to go into the business objectives. What is the purpose of the gamification? What are you trying to achieve, and how will you know that you have actually achieved it? This is breaking down your gamification project into a very tangible measurable steps, and if you are looking at gamification for employee engagement, for example, it may be soft measures; it may be elements that you can track the ones that have an influence. For example, absenteeism measures give usually an indication of how easy people find it to just not turn up for work.

Another one is turnover level of staff. How many people drop the job and at what length of time of service have they got by the time that they leave? They will be indicative of some of the elements to do with employee engagement. If you have any internal employee surveys that state happiness at work, for example, the willingness to engage in projects, initiatives, and basically suggestions being made without them being forced on people or being coaxed to deliver, that is a good indication of employee engagement. You may need to break down your softer measurements into smaller steps that can be measured, and actions that can be measured on behave of the employee as well as the manager's team. In most organizations, what you will find, especially if you are trying to influence employee engagement, is that the manager plays a crucial role in achieving this.

Managers have good communication skills, often have better team responses and better engagement responses than managers who basically do not engage with their team, and leave their team to their own devices, which can in some cases be a motivational strategy, whereas it has the opposite result in other cases. It depends on your culture, and it depends on the purpose of the team.

You want to set clear goals. You want to make them measurable because otherwise, how will you know whether gamification has worked or not? You need to have a purpose for the gamification. The purpose of the gamification project will then drive the kinds of behaviours you want to encourage the most. The trick here is to reach a balance of what you want and what your target audience is looking for. Ideally, you design everything from the user experience point of view. Whatever it is that the audience had already told you that they would like to be engaged with or do more of, tap into that. What can help to make their life happier, easier and more productive in the workplace? That's the kind of material that you want to zone in on, and get them actively involved in the whole design process, so that you get something that is workable and that will not have the opposite effect.

From a user experience point of view, you want to have a progression. Your initial stages of the game, as in any game of your gamification activity, will be to onboard people into the activity. It needs to be nearly a tutorial if it is quite a complex scenario. In other situations, it could just merely be an invite to engage with your gamification project. Once you have them onboard, it is teaching them the skills that you want, or the ways of actually portraying winning in behaviour.

If we go back to our exercise application, what is it that you want to achieve? Do you want them to run more, or do you want them to set goals and, based on those goals, track themselves? I would suggest the latter approach is the best approach because it gives them control over their journey. If you are designing gamification journeys inside an enterprise application, give the learner the option to do what it is. It is that effect, that the linked in completion bar of your profile, has on more people actually completing the profile. It is going back to the type of things that will make people take that extra step.

If you are at eighty per cent, the twenty per cent remaining is an easy step to take. If you are only twenty per cent there, then people know they have to really step it up. And this is where you want to make sure that you encourage the right kinds of behaviour that comes natural.

In recent talks at “Games for Good” mentioned the whole idea of creating behaviours that people are willing to adopt. Asking for feedback where you may want more people to ask for feedback is not necessarily a natural behaviour. It requires courage, it requires overcoming a hurdle, it requires a bit of a leap of faith on the part of the employee to actually ask for feedback. However, on the other hand, giving feedback is a behaviour that is more natural to people; most people don’t mind giving feedback. In that sense, it is easier and better from a gamification perspective to go and encourage the “giving feedback” behaviour as opposed to the “asking for feedback” behaviour, and to create a natural feedback loop in your process. It’s thinking about what comes most natural; if in doubt, ask your crowd.

You want a bit of a balance of how creative you want to get, so the next step is to balance what is it that you want to achieve the needs and ability of the system. You want to have analytic tracking ways like what I said about employee engagement. You want to break it down into smaller chunks and smaller steps, so that you can measure them, but they need to still be meaningful, so that it actually has a motivational factor. You also want to link it closely to what the users are likely to want to do, or likely to want to experience. You want to be creative, and you want to have a bit of fun. Think it through.

Think about it: “if my users are saying I do want to learn more on the job, what kind of learnings would they like? Is it e-learning? Is it actually showing mentoring, or receiving mentoring from more senior people in the business? What kind of learning is it? What can I encourage?”



If you are going to provide e-learning as an option, if your user base is looking for those mentors, can you record mentor snippets on different topics, so that you actually have a database of short on the button short sessions where the user can actually go and say “I’m stuck on this project, what would X manager in the company do about this?” and give them the chance to basically look it up and do it their own way as opposed to you imposing a compliance training, or a force learning program where they have to take a lot of material that may not necessarily be relevant to them at that given time or ever? You want a bit of balance of needs and wants at any given time. The more you know what your players and users like, the better you can structure your gamification projects. That’s why I would put the actual understanding of your player and user as the first and the highest priority of the whole project, as that will determine whether you’re going to be successful or not.

Once you know what activities you want to propose, what activities you want to encourage the most, it is time to actually look at how can we make this a creative engaging interactive process. You may want to test out a number of possibilities.

Most games, most software in general, are designed with a number of iterations, so usually you have the idea phase where everything is possible, then you narrow down the idea, which then ends up as a number of features and options that will be built into your game, and then you test whether this is actually working, and whether it is actually achieving what you’re trying to set out to do.

You have a beta version, which, if your first draft, you open up to a select group reflective of your client or employee base. I would also suggest you to have your best and your worst included in a test group, and also make sure that you pay attention to gender divides, that you have both men and women trying it, because the way in which either gender play is really different. In the workplace, that gets manifested very subtly. Competition, and other elements that we spoke about in previous chapters, will have an impact on how men and women play. Bear that in mind if you are including elements of competition.

### **Be prepared to iterate**

Your first beta version is to test does this achieve what I set out to do, if it hits my targets, if it is fun, and whether people find it engaging or do they find it annoying, disturbing, or whatever the case may be. You need to make sure that you listen to whatever feedback comes your way because this is where you can make and break a lot of your design.

A lot of gamification design will be iterative, meaning there will be more provisions and tweaks, and I don't think you will ever be 100% finished, unless you only have a short campaign to deliver. It is very much prototyping beta testing; once you have moved from beta to your next version, you are not nearly at the prelaunch where you are actually ready to get feedback from a larger audience. Make sure you get feedback from a larger audience, make sure, again, that you keep a balanced test group, and here you're testing for bugs, for cheaters, for making sure that you are actually achieving the results still but with a wider group. You want to have a few people in your test group here that would try and break the system, that would try to cheat the system, so that you can avoid this happening when you're going live and for real.

After you go live, what I would suggest you is to monitor, all the time, what happens. I have used game elements in live training, and the feedback is very much instantaneous. You can take corrective actions there depending on how the group functions, depending on how well your goals are being met. Don't be afraid to take a step back. Don't be afraid to redesign or hold an exercise, especially if you are doing it live and no-tech, until you know for sure that you've got all the elements right. If you have lots of people with frowns on their faces in a live scenario, I can guarantee that you have probably lost half your crowd because they have no idea what you are trying to achieve, or what you are on about, and what the objective of the exercise is. You want to go back to plan A.

The best form of gamification is volunteer gamification into the project. This is where you need to take a leave out of the book of creating hype and marketing, or targeting some key figures, key influencers, that will say "this new way of working is amazing", and see how quickly a whole team would take up a gamification element. Having to make it forced or enforced usually means that you will also create some resentment, and some elements of people that will work against you and are actively trying to sabotage, or boycott your system. You want to preempt that by making it so attractive that people just naturally want to do it, and naturally want to play it. The way to do it, as we said earlier, is to actually go after the behaviours that people are actually willing to do, and you want to encourage the most.

My personal belief is that most people are intrinsically good, and they want to do the best for them and the best of the business. If we look at gamification design, I think these are the top things to get right, and we will look at some examples in our next chapter to identify how people have done it, what they have done, and what's possible, because I think what is possible is quite amazing.

Another step in the design process is devising activity loops. What loops of activities do you want people to do, and how can you make them fun? Activity loops consist in the following: if you do an action A, what's action B? what is the result?, and what is the reward? It typically happens if you are trying to get people.

For example, in a call center environment, trying to get them to complete records while people are online with the customer on the call, you want to make sure that they can see how long they are on the phone, how long is it taking, and what pieces are absolutely essential for the call to move forward. How can you make that fun, and how can you actually create actions that lead to rewards? And how will you reward them? If accuracy is your measurement, then you need to build in elements that train people to be accurate, and that could be double-checking the person exists or whatever the case may be.

An activity loop would follow “you have 9 out of 10 points in accuracy”; that means you have now earned your next level of reward, basically could be experience points that go towards an element of company rewards, a company scheme, extra holidays, maybe just a loyalty program, similar to airline programs for example.

Devising activity loops is having a number of steps in your process, which follows the experience people have, so as a new user you may find something really funny. If you get the message 10 times that you’ve done great and you’ve earned a badge, you become tired of the message and you will probably not enjoy it anymore. You want to make sure that there is progression, that there is differentiation, that there are different rewards, a bit of fun, something delightful and unusual happens at different points, and that you could have many wins built into your setup without there being extra work involved.

The final step is: you want to deploy the appropriate tools, so you want to give people the means to make it work. After that, you monitor your tests, you tweak; you monitor and monitor where necessary. Tweak as often as you need to keep encouraging the right kinds of behaviours that you want to make sure that you hit the business objectives. But also you want to watch out for people playing the system, and those people that have figured out what your metrics are that you want to keep them on their toes by changing the metrics occasionally, or the measurements to make sure that people are still engaging with the process, even if it gets harder or tricky along the way.

I think that sums up the gamification design process. Now let's see how we can apply it in reality in various business areas in our next chapter.

# 4 Examples of Gamification in Business

## Gamification World Awards 2014

In May 2014, and coinciding with the Gamification World Congress, the Gamification World Awards took place. It is worth looking at each of the best and most innovative projects to give you an insight as to what is possible, before we delve in to examples of gamification in various business areas.

### Gamification World Awards

- Recycle Bank
- Waze
- Family team

### Most innovative projects

- Duolingo
- Reality Drop
- Sony Evolution UI

Recyclebank : [http: www.recyclebank.com](http://www.recyclebank.com)

Recyclebank aims to create a better more sustainable world for all, by educating people about their environment and how to look after it. When you take part in the program, you take a daily pledge, which can be as simple as turning off the lights.

Gamification components used: Points, Virtual Currency, Achievements, Badges, Missions, Progress Bar.

Waze: [www.waze.com](http://www.waze.com)

Waze is an online community based traffic and navigation app, it is available mainly in the USA. It helps you find your shortest most efficient route to your destination, avoiding traffic jams and road closures. It also shows the nearest and cheapest filling stations. Their ambition is to also to help waze drivers save time and money.

Gamification components used: Avatars, Social Network, Points, Leaderboards, Achievements, Levels.

Family Team: <http://familyteamapp.com/home/en>

Family team is once again an app for phone and tablet, which encourages families to divide up the family chores and then, the family decides also on rewards relevant for each task.

Gamification components used: Team, Points, Real Prizes, Badges, Missions, Progress Bar.

Duolingo: <https://www.duolingo.com>

Duolingo provides free language teaching online, you sign up with your social media account and then Duo the owl introduces you to your learning modules. You earn levels and points based on your activity and the social development of the courses, as well as very social learning is core to the system.

Gamification components used: Avatars, Social Network, Points, Leaderboards, Achievements, Badges, Levels, Progress Bar.

Reality Drop: <http://realitydrop.org>

The ambition of Reality Drop is to link articles published in media, both online and offline, with accurate scientific data to give people the scientific truth as opposed to an angle based on popular politics or other beliefs. They reward people for sharing science, and exposing falsehoods.



Gamification components used: Avatars, Social Network, Points, Leaderboards, Achievements, Badges, Levels, Progress Bar.

Sony Evolution UI: <http://developer.sonymobile.com/2014/04/29/gamify-the-ui-of-the-smartphone-with-the-evolutionui-research-project-open-source-video/>

Evolution UI is an open source research project by Sony and allows users of smartphones to earn additional features as they learn to get to grips with the basic phone functionality first. You earn the right to unlock other parts of the phone and can keep leveling up as you become a more advanced user of the phone.

Gamification components used: Points, Achievements, Levels

These are a selection of the best examples of Gamification in the year to date and, although not all of them actually find a use in business, I urge you to check out the various applications or just the ones that appeal to you. They will teach you how you may be able to apply the gamification components they used in your business setting.

### **Gsummit GAward Winners 2014**

Every year GSummit is held in the USA, this time it took place the first week in June. The event is organised by Gabe Zicherman and his team at gamification.co and Dopamine. The Gamification.co website contains a lot of useful information and links. I did not attend in person, but have been reading up on what people found useful, which thanks to an active blogging community – with groups on both LinkedIn and Facebook and an element of live streaming as well as Twitter – there is plenty of information to find about the event, if you could not make it there in person.

At the event, a number of Awards are given and here are the winners of 2014:

- 1) [Consumer Facing Applications](#) – Winner: Air Canada’s “Earn Your Wings”
- 2) [Employee Training & Development](#) – Winner: Delta’s “Ready, Set, Jet!”
- 3) [Employee Engagement](#) – Winner: T-Mobile’s T-Community
- 4) [Finance](#) – Winner: SaveUp
- 5) [Education](#) – Winner: Class Dojo
- 6) [Media](#) – Winner: TBWA/Chiat/Day’s Nissan “GT Academy”
- 7) [Social Good](#) – Winner: XPRIZE
- 8) Special Achievement Award – Winner: Jane McGonigal

Let’s look into each of the winner campaigns and see what they have done.

**Consumer facing applications: Air Canada’s: Earn your wings**

<http://earnyourwings.aircanada.com/en>

Airline frequent flyer programs are not a new concept and their main aim is to create customer loyalty by offering advantages if you fly regularly.

Earn RaceWings and fly to the top of the leaderboard (RaceWings will help you keep score). To start you off, we'll give you 250 RaceWings just for registering. Earn 200 RaceWings with each take-off, and 200 RaceWings with each landing on Air Canada, Air Canada Express, and Air Canada rouge flights. To earn more RaceWings, you'll need to touch down and take-off from select airports around the world called Pit Stops.

### **Employee Training and Development: Delta's "Ready, Set, Jet!"**

Ready, Set, Jet is a learning program designed by Delta for its employees to learn about their reservation system. It gives learners an insight into the destinations Delta cover and offers a range of games to take part in. I would encourage you to visit the video post about this project, I can't guarantee how long it will be available but you get a "true behind the scenes" view from the learning manager on how they went about designing and launching the campaign internally, as well as its success factors. <http://www.gamification.co/2013/10/29/delta-gamifies-training-ready-jet-set/>

When they started talking about the learning program, they framed it focusing in the fact that both classroom-learning and e-learning trainers would use games already, so why not flipping the balance over and making it a game for learning as opposed to learning with games. They then had their learning designer play as many games as possible, and document their experiences – from feeling at various stages of the game, to playing with people you know in person, and unknown people online, etc. – to come to a game experience that was comprehensive for various learning styles. They also asked their employees what games they were already playing to start incorporating some favourites into the game.

What was key is that the game I volunteered, people could challenge colleagues in their office and other call centre locations to discover a new city, and play a game, which would increase their knowledge on the job as well. They launched it with a fun game day, where life size cut-outs served as additional picture material, and a game trailer. As a result, over 5000 employees have registered and at least played once. They have a leaderboard of the most active players, and track the amount of cities an individual visits, with the aim to go around the globe and learn as much as possible with games to play along the way.

**Employee engagement: T-mobile's T-community:**

T-Mobile implemented gamification elements into their company's social business environment where customer service call centres and company-owned stores employees ask questions they received from clients and subscribers, and they now find answers by collaborating with their peers and by searching for knowledge based articles in the T-Community. Users earn status, and rewards for posting and answering questions, liking content and competitive elements which enable users to compare their progress with that of their peers.

On the Bunchball website (T-Mobile's chosen gamification module provider), we found the following impressive numbers:

"In its first six weeks after launching the gamification module, T-Mobile saw user participation in T-Community increase 1,000 percent. And that's not all:

- Within the first two weeks, more than 15,000 frontline employees completed an array of "Getting Started" missions – far better than historical adoption rates for self-guided tutorials.
- Employees were so active and quick to adopt the new platform that T-Mobile awarded 187,000 achievement badges in the first six weeks.
- The number of "likes" assigned by employees to indicate a helpful response increased a staggering 6,000 percent.

Most importantly, resolution rates and customer satisfaction scores have improved each month since implementing gamification.”

**Finance: SaveUp:** <https://www.saveup.com>

SaveUp is an online app, which encourages users (created for US based customers) to track their financials in one place and to make smarter financial decisions, which result in rewards and savings. It is free to use because of partnerships with banks, credit unions, and financial institutions. They started it with students in mind, who were starting out with a lot of debt, but are finding it hard to get out of debt and build a positive attitude towards money. Obviously, the target market is not only students, thanks to the economic crisis it is much wider than this. They are fully funded by financial institutions.

The simple gamification premise is that when you save, you also earn points, which earn you rewards. So not only are you bringing down your debts, but you are also able to win other rewards thanks to your own better choices.

**Education : Class Dojo:** <http://www.classdojo.com>

Class Dojo is a free tool for teachers to give regular and instant feedback on students' behaviours and is aimed to reinforce positive behavior. The characters, small alien-like creatures in fun colours, assist in handing out rewards.

As a former trainer, energy management in a room is always an interesting part of standing in front of a room. Instant feedback is one element that games have incorporated very well and education has often missed out on, hence I like this solution a lot. It is aimed at the younger generations, but in my view similar solutions will also work for adults, where fun rewards and regular feedback have been completely omitted.

Here is what the company says the benefits are on their website:

For teachers: in some classrooms, more than 50% of class time is spent managing behaviour rather than delivering instruction; ClassDojo aims to greatly reduce this, so teachers can do more teaching and less crowd control! In addition, for the first time, teachers have a painless way to focus on developing positive behaviour over time, rather than just logging referrals once it is too late to intervene.

For students: research suggests the shorter the time period between an action and feedback for that action, the greater is the effect of the reinforcement. Specific positive reinforcement helps students develop a sense of purpose in the classroom, enhancing intrinsic motivation over time. By giving students visibility and data on their own behaviour, ClassDojo makes class less disruptive and creates a more positive learning environment.

For parents: ClassDojo makes it easy to engage parents in their child's development, by allowing teachers to provide them with realtime data from the classroom – with just one click.

**Media: “GT Academy”:** <http://www.gran-turismo.com/gb/academy/2014/>

The GT Academy is a driver discovery/development program started in 2008 through a collaboration between Gran Turismo and Nissan. Online qualifiers are held on Play Station within the Gran Turismo game, and the top qualifiers are invited to National Finals in each participating country. Those who pass this final will then participate in a Race Camp held at Silverstone, UK, for the final selection. The final winner will undergo an intensive Driver Development Programme designed by Nissan, and will participate in races around the world as a professional driver.

This effectively is incorporating a fully developed game as part of the selection program. Now research tells us that simulation games are becoming closer and closer to being real life like experiences. Reflexes and reactions in a game can be tracked and may well mimic those from real life. In Arcade racing games, I have been physically sick from motion in the game, even though the whole device is static, so our brain feed doesn't clearly distinguish between real and game experiences.

**Social Good: Xprize:** <http://www.xprize.org>

The Xprize program was set up to encourage making the impossible possible as they clearly state on their website. What they aim to do is reward and incentivize specific innovation programs with a clear goal, before they happen. The aim is to capture the imagination of the public and encourage positive change across the globe.

XPRIZES can be developed in one of five different Prize Groups: Energy & Environment; Exploration; Global Development; Learning; and Life Sciences.

In my view what this program does well is combining a real epic meaning for making positive change happen with rewards for specific programs. In research a lot of projects simply don't start, because of lack of funding and a prize fund like this can make a very positive contribution in making it happen.

**Special achievement: Jane McGonigal**

Jane McGonigal is a great contributor to the field of game design and gamification. I highly recommend her book “Reality is Broken”, and also have a look at her Ted Talks to get an insight into why gamification is such a hot topic this day and age.

Ted Talk links: [http://www.ted.com/talks/jane\\_mcgonigal\\_gaming\\_can\\_make\\_a\\_better\\_world](http://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_gaming_can_make_a_better_world)

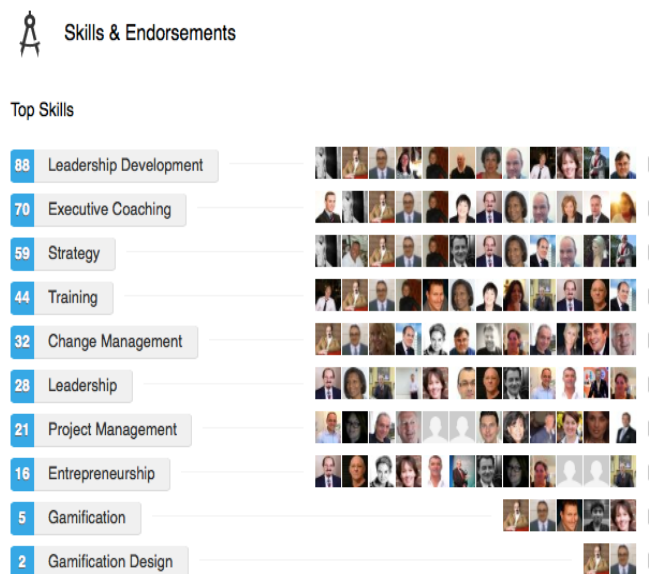
## LinkedIn as an example of Gamification

Most of us have heard of and probably also used LinkedIn. It is a platform where professional people connect with each other. The vision of LinkedIn was to basically create the equivalent of an online Rolodex of your connections, and make it easier to introduce people or find connections through networking.

So let's look at some of the gamification components LinkedIn uses to encourage further participation and effectively has you do more on their platform.

When you join LinkedIn, the first steps it takes you through is the set-up of your profile, and it asks you to invite to your connections based on your email address. It then gives you a completion of your profile progress bar, which tells you how complete it is, and what you can do to further enhance your profile. Implementing this simple progress bar encouraged more people to complete their profile to a better quality.

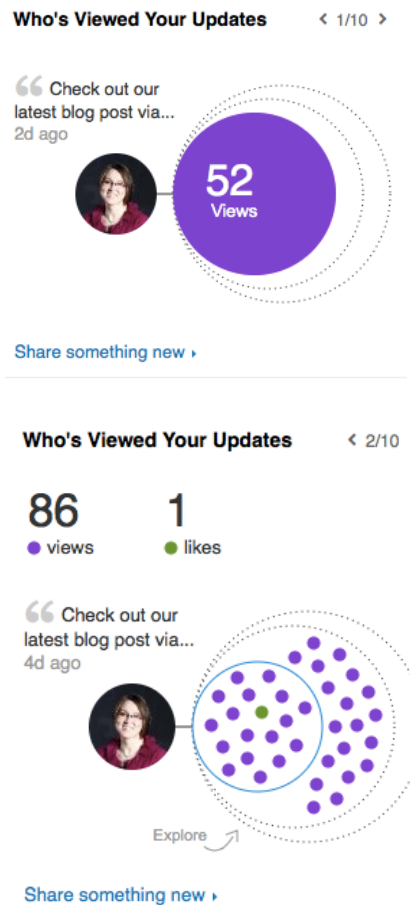
Endorsements are another game element, which gives your connections the chance to give you a ranking. As you can see from the picture below, a lot of my connections still associate me with my previous main roles, I am still looking for more endorsements on gamification and gamification design.



Up until a few months ago I couldn't control what was shown, now I can choose to hide some of the aspects of what I can do and get those I want the world to know about to come up higher.



When like me you share your blog posts or major announcements, LinkedIn has a cool way of tracking your message reach. Your reach is measured by the extend of your network, and them clicking on the link and it is also directly impacted by people liking your post or sharing it forward. So for example, every Monday I will post the Gamification Mechanic Monday blog, on Wednesday it is Gamification Stuff we Love, and on Friday's I post the Friday Feminine Gamification Viewpoint, the pictures below shows the impact 2 posts from this week:



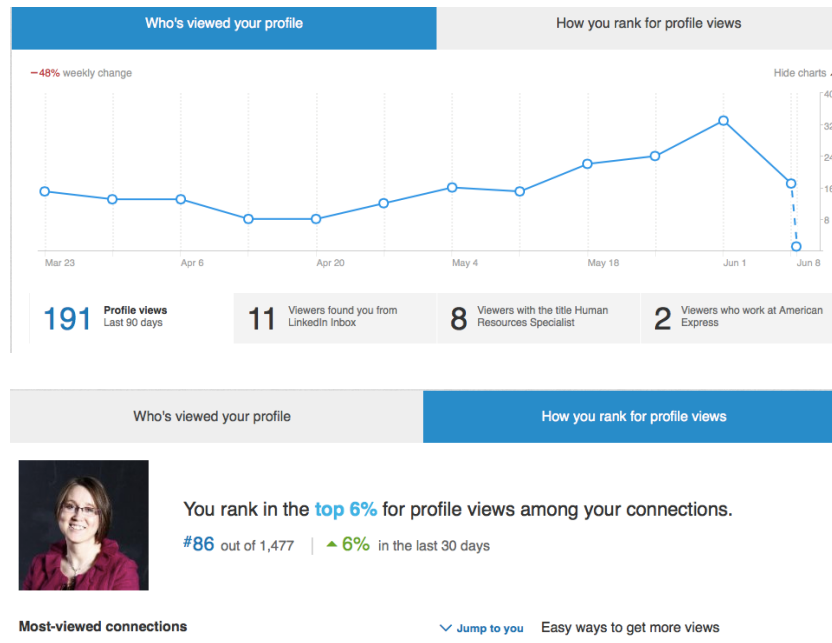
In the first picture you see how many people have read my post and all are in my first connection circle, nobody that is a secondary or tertiary connections would have seen this post, because that would have required either a like or a share. In the second picture, just one like impacted my reach a good bit further. So when you are tracking your impact and efforts it is good to know. I have always been a keen sharer of information and will share something if I think it is useful to other people in my network, or I will like it if it just triggers a personal note with me.

Again it is a simple visual representation of your influence or reach, which in game terms may define the level of power you have in a game for example.

What LinkedIn does very well, and as a rather frequent user of LinkedIn, I can definitely see how they are always tweaking what I see based on where I have spent time looking from recommended groups, to people I may know, jobs I should be interested in and how to keep improving my profile. In terms of keeping the content fresh, your data usage will determine your information stream greatly.

I notice when I research for books or projects that my information on LinkedIn will be adapted accordingly as well.

An area that is worth having a look at – but then I am a curious social media user -, is the area of who viewed your profile. On your home page, you can see who exactly viewed your profile, sometimes it shows their picture and sometimes it only shows anonymous user. Below, you can see my number of profile view over a short period in time, and the big peak coincides with me speaking at The Gamification in HR Summit in Paris, and the Gamification World Congress in Barcelona, so my real life is impacting my online visibility.



LinkedIn also helps me to find out how I compare with the rest of my network and equally it hints at how I could improve my performance with suggestions to, for example, update my summary. It gives an absolute reflection of my position in my social network, and not my ranking in a global leader-board, which may be very off-putting.

Tracking and absolute measuring against other people is what games consistently do. From a behavioural science perspective it does influence our own actions to observe that of others. Personally, I have seen some very cringe worthy updates and I remember to refrain from those, however I have started including a feature picture for my blog posts basically because that alone will gain more clicks, which when you are building up credibility is one tool.

I love tracking how I am doing, I do it for all kinds of things both in my personal and professional life, so the fact that this system gives me a clear overview based on what I am naturally doing is excellent. In companies I have seen excellent sales activity tracking systems, which have similar capabilities.

In customer services you could have the completion progress tracker visible for agents, who could then communicate it to customers as they go, or for self-service platforms which include these same simple indicators as to how far you still have to go. In most cases, this will make the difference between half empty and fully completed. It allows the user to judge the time needed to complete, and once they have started finishing the extra one or two items is not a big ask.

**For more examples:**

Every Wednesday I blog about a campaign I have come across that I love. In these posts I look at why I believe it served the purpose well and where possible I will also share ROI results if and when they are available. Here is one I did recently about award winning loyalty programs: <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-loyalty-awards/>

**Conclusion**

As you can see from the variety of examples I looked into in this chapter, the scope for gamification is wide and varied. The key thing to remember is to have a clear purpose in mind for your gamification efforts.

Having a good understanding of what motivates your users, is equally a great starting point and will determine the success level of your campaign in the long run.

I hope that the examples given, have also given you some inspiration of what is potentially possible for your business. The next question is where will you implement gamification first.

## 5 Gamification by business area

Gamification by now, may sound like an extremely attractive proposition and one you may well want to follow up, but where should you start, or should you gamify everything all at once.

If you are a start-up company, you may well start with gamification for all processes in your business and look at where you find most traction and refine those. However if you are an established business, I would look at one business area first before tackling another one.

The decision of where to start then becomes a choice. Here are some questions I would encourage you to look at:

- Are your business goals aimed at engaging primarily customers or employees?
- What top business goal, would you like to prioritise?
- Where are the current pain points in the business where engagement is at an all-time low?  
Why is that the case? (If it is due to a bad process, fix the process first before starting to gamify it)
- What are the behaviours you are looking to encourage the most?

Etc.

Let's look at a number of business areas and explore where you could implement of gamification to ensure better performance. The big health warning for this chapter is that you need to make the solution specific to your organisation, your business goals, your specific users, and workable for your available processes and systems. Testing, as I mentioned before will be key. Also the suggested ideas are not all that is possible, you can do a lot more, so always feel free to explore further ideas and if you would like input, get in touch on our website.

### Human Resources

The area of human resources is primarily involved in attracting talent to the business, and then retaining it once they are hired. It is an area where the term employee engagement is coined on a regular basis, and several strategies to achieve this are being explored. In my view to a successful human resources engagement strategy is to create a company culture that people would like to belong to, once you have created this attraction and retention are easier to manage.

Look at companies who are consistently at the top of the 'Great places to work' lists in your country. Find out from industry articles what is that they do so well, why they are receiving all the spontaneous applications from jobseekers. In my book "Attracting IT Talent to your business" I looked at companies such as Google, who have a well-documented corporate culture, and they do receive a lot of spontaneous applicants. Their recruitment process is one of the longest I have ever heard of, and for a lot of the roles where a specific skill is sought for practical tests are part and parcel of the process.

Hackfests and technical competitions are not unheard of to create a sense of competition, as well as test the skills of specialists, which can result in an interview invite, or be part of narrowing down the recruitment skill-set. Typically, these events need to be well organised and structured for you to gain the skills you are after. If your company culture however is not at all competitive I would proceed with caution in full-out hackfest, where you have multiple highly skilled people solving a technically complex problem with the opportunity to gain employment. This technique is more suited to a competitive *work hard, play hard style* culture.

So how can you achieve the same when your culture is less competitive? Well, here is where I believe online and virtual simulations of your real company culture may well be appropriate. We have a business partnership agreement with Games for Business in Hungary and their virtual reality application process allows for competency testing, and specific skills testing through a virtual environment, which can be a true reflection of your offices and building. One of their clients uses the process to allow IT talent to apply for roles and showcase skills online, which allows for fast-tracking in the application process.

PriceWaterHouse is using Multipoly, an online game to attract interns through social media, competency test them, and they also manage their internship program through the game. Each player is assigned a career coach, and they are given missions to complete on which they receive feedback. The early missions test competencies that are needed for the role at hand, such as organisation skills, logical thinking, verbal and numerical competencies.

For internal employee engagement thinking long term is key. If we refer back to the Gallup State of the Global Workforce Report, we learned that employee engagement is a comprehensive approach from management, to the opportunity to contribute, work in areas the employee feels they can contribute, and well being. So to come up with a gamification approach to tackle all of these in one go, will be a longer process, and I would recommend breaking it down into smaller chunks with small pilots and a phased roll-out, where new elements are introduced over a period of time.

Employee engagement typically tends to be a transformational change program, and will require great communication strategies to work alongside a gamification roll-out. Some of the best campaigns I have heard of have come from IBM, where they used an Artificial Intelligence game to engage workers across the globe to launch a Corporate Social Responsibility program. Examples of where employee engagement has been tapped into for short-term business objectives are more plentiful: from campaigns to complete employee profile details, to collaboration in expert internal communities.

When I think of the human resource function in a lot of organisations, the most time consuming parts are recruitment, induction, conflict management, engagement, career progression, talent management and often development. Equally, for a gamification project to work in the HR field, they, as a function would need to be considered a strategic part of the business, and ideally have members of the team at board level to influence decision making as much as implement strategies coming from the board.

## **Marketing**

The marketing arena is probably one where games have been used, especially in terms of promotions with adver-games for example. Marketing tends to be the visual front element for a brand and a business. Here gamification is typically used to create customer attraction or engagement. However marketing also engages with data tracking, customer profiling, often loyalty programs are run in this team, or at least in collaboration with them, at times employee branding engages both HR and marketing together to create a positive brand image.

For the Football world Cup in Brazil, several companies used games to interact with customers based on the World Cup theme. I showcased a few in the blog, namely a real life game to promote a new type of meatball snack, it is the last example video in this blog post: <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-world-cup-fun/>



Typically in marketing the purpose of gamification is to collect the connection data from the customer whether that is an email, a phone number or the physical presence at an event. Marketing is aimed at influencing a potential customer to become a customer through a number of actions, with gamification the potential to win a prize, or free goods is often enough, especially when you are targeting the group you have identified as having potential. The clearer your target group and the closer aligned your marketing is the better.

A game element I loved in a recent Pepsi campaign was actually having a storyline, where the protagonist have superhero type powers which is going against the social norms. The story is one element, surprise and delight the feeling what is wanted and, obviously, brand recognition with sports celebrity links. Here are 3 chapters of the Pepsi campaign:

Chapter 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DnKOc6FISU>

Chapter 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLyvkBifQ3w>

Chapter 3: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spDdO\\_ZB-lE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spDdO_ZB-lE)

Game elements such as competitions have been part and parcel of marketing to raise brand awareness and increase brand engagement. Often brands have associated themselves with a cause to support a bigger meaning, and not just their profit baseline. Innovation through gamification in marketing comes when campaign managers think longer term and build fan/community bases for their customers or potential customers.

## **Sales**

In a sales environment, leader-boards and incentives with rewards in monetary or prize terms are the most well known game elements. In a lot of sales organisations the VIP club element also exists for top performers with different kind of badges and labels depending on achievement. What often tends to happen in a competitive sales environment is that the top performers gain all the rewards.

Elements such as relative leader-boards, which aim to show how you are progressing amongst your peers, can also assist in encouraging behaviours of those in the middle or at the lower end of the table. I would also encourage organisations to identify the behaviours that bring results for sales people, as well as building a positive sales experience from a customer perspective.

What you want is both the customer and your employee to build a long-term relationship, built on regular communication and trust that you will deliver what it is the client has bought. Customers have over time become more demanding, because we are consistently sold the experience economy, and some organisations have definitely figured out how to engage the clients along the sales process.

## **Finance**

Some start-ups in the finance industry have been early movers in applying gamification in order to encourage behaviour that is encouraging financial good practice for end-customers. For example: SaveUP.Com is encouraging the general public to create behaviours that will help them get out of debt, and gives people rewards to do exactly that. The rewards are financed by financial institutions, who in their own right with the economic crisis as a very recent memory have to prove a point in being ethical.

In organisations I have also come across some situations, where managers are rewarded for bringing their figures and reports in on time. The hardest task for the accounting and finance teams tend to be month-end, quarter-end and year-end, where they are chasing information in order to complete. I have also seen one organisation where finance had a leader board of compliant teams within the organisation. Compliant to them meant all the team members adhered to the expense policy and handed in their claims regularly on the time dedicated for it.

In my businesses over the years I have often offered a discount for paying upfront before the project started, which was a win-win for both the client who received better value and for my business where cash flow is also important. This worked very well whilst dealing with smaller providers, however when dealing with large organisations the terms were often dictated by their policies and often beyond the 30 days as standard.

## Customer support

Customer support functions in call centres have a dedicated gamification wing looking after them and some of the early projects in gamification. The key in customer service is obviously delivering a great service, so rating the agent and giving the customer rewards for doing so is one thing. In a recent visit to my local Boots store for some health related supplies, the cashier handed me a note where he asked me to rate my experience and thank him for saving me money. I was buying two items, yet they had a 3 for 2 deals, so I could get more for so saving for the long run. My potential reward was winning a £100 gift card.

Another type of behaviour that is often important and needs to be encouraged is accuracy in completion of customer records and keeping them up-to-date. One of the most original things I have come across here is actually from an airline telling its customers that reindeers may be pulling up outside their house with Christmas presents, and they used google maps street view to show the clients based on current information where they would be pulling up, and that caused a 40% update of actual customer address data.

Within call centres, rewards for completion of accurate client details and positive solutions are good.

## Innovation

According to Gartner up to 70% of innovation efforts will be supported by gamification by the end of 2014. A lot of the time in my experience it has indeed been the innovation team who has instigated the introduction of gamification into their organisation.

Innovation processes from brainstorming to idea generation can be encouraged with gamification often by those closest to the process such as customers and immediate front line employees. For the Spanish postal organisation, they turned to their own staff with a gamified idea generation approach to gain an insight what could be improved on their website, instead of hiring external consultants to do this work. They saved 70% in terms of financial spend by doing so and generated a valuable stream of ideas.

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-gamification-campaigns-go-postal/>

Hack-a-tons where a number of related professions come together have been used in the broadcast industry to deal with the emergence of the second screen. The purpose of these events is to generate new ideas to address the common problem from a number of angles. The British Security agency has launched a hack-a-ton to find new hires and also innovations on how to deal with online terrorist hackers.

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-campaigns-love-gchq-national-hacker-competition/>

For research and development innovation and research advancements rating, voting and crowd-sourced input are elements of gamification which are assisting the advancement of science. The Longitude prize is a prime example, where the public voted for what they found most important and the winner would receive a part of the £10 million fund to research a solution. <http://www.longitudeprize.org>

Some research has gone as far as designing a serious game to have the public assist in irregular pattern recognition. For example, cancer research has a game to discover irregular DNA strand patterns and when about 50 different players identify an irregularity they will pass on the specific DNA strand to researchers for further examination. This has sped up research and is increasing the quality of research carried out. <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-cancer-research-uk/>

Fundraising for research has been one through crowd-funding for a number of years and having people do amazing feats to generate donations is not new. Hence, it isn't surprising that websites such as just giving have an amount of gamified elements, such as target fundraising goals, with visual trackers and also encouraging fundraiser to share their progress and blog posts through social media. <http://gamificationnation.com/crowdsourcing-way-raise-funds-serious-healing-game/>

### **Learning & development**

Finally, one of my personal favourite topics is the area of learning and development. In my career I have worked with game elements as part of my training delivery since the late 90's from role plays to time challenges, rewards and stories to name but a few. Where possible, I used real stories and examples in the content to illustrate and simulate potential outcomes and decision points for learners.

In my instructional design and learning design work in recent years, I have often integrated progress tracking, freedom to take modules at the learner's choice, short tests to allow for skipping of content sections. Equally, my Gamification Nation clients have earned badges for participation, and topic completion in addition to all the elements above.

Some of the materials that inspire me are the approaches from the Institute of Play on curriculum development being a collaborative approach between teachers, curriculum experts and game designers. <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-institute-play/>

We see the future of learning to be more and more in the area of adaptive learning, where learner preferences and knowledge desired are the key drivers as opposed to what the teacher thinks is important. <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-adaptive-learning/>

In our view, the future of learning will be in the area of simulations and debriefs on these. With developments such as 3D, augmented reality and systems such as Oculus Rift, we see the simulated versions becoming so life-like and real that learning will be on par with having actually experienced this situation in real life. It is also an area we are actively looking to develop projects in.

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-learning-simulators/>

For my clients, I am often asked to look into learning management systems that are gamification enabled and two that we are happy to recommend are Growth Engineering and Curatr3: <http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-growth-engineering/>

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-curatr3-lms-ht2/>

Both systems allow social sharing, game elements to encourage completions, discussion, learning engagement and a lot more. Both systems have had great success stories and are worth looking into when you are looking for this kind of solution for your organisation. The key will still be to make sure that you learner's journey is encouraging the behaviours you want the most.

The teaching and learning app community has come up with a number of great examples from which companies can learn great practise. I personally love the language learning app Duolingo, which encourages me to complete carious challenges and keeps me on track.

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-duolingo/>

For the classroom, Class Dojo allows teachers to encourage students through rewards as well as motivational messages, which are both communicated to the student as well as the parents. Class Craft goes further and allows students to collaborate together on projects from a tribal perspective with collaboration and mutual support as a key behaviour to display whilst learning and exploring topics.

<http://gamificationnation.com/gamification-stuff-love-class-dojo-classcraft/>

For some of our clients, I work out gamification strategies for learning content such as, for example, a leadership curriculum. For other clients, we apply gamification design to the whole learning function from delivery methods to systems and contents. In some occasions we also write serious games or simulations to bring home a specific concept.

## Conclusion

Whether you are just exploring the topic of gamification or actively looking to apply the strategy to your business, I hope that this book has given you an overview and some basics to keep in mind when embarking on this journey.

If you would like to explore the journey with a navigator or playmaker, we are obviously always delighted to join your journey. In the first instance we ask you to share your key take-away nuggets from this book on social media and include our twitter name @GamificationNat and #BusinessGamification in your message.

## 6 About the author



An Coppens is the Chief Game Changer at Gamification Nation Ltd, where the vision is to make business and learning more fun and engaging. Gamification Nation Ltd offers gamification design services and is based in London, serving European based clients primarily. An is an award winning business coach, learning & development professional, author and speaker.

An Coppens has spoken and held workshops at the following events in the past number of months: Sales and Marketing Excellence in Pharma in Amsterdam, Gamification World Congress in Barcelona, Gamification in HR Summit in Paris, BrightTalk web summit, Gamification to engage app users webinar held for BrightTalk, Gamifiers Meetup and Interesting Talks Meetup.

With Gamification Nation, An offers gamification design services and online learning programs which are designed to encourage winning behaviours and improve business results in the areas of sales, recruitment, learning and productivity. She is a prolific blogger on the topic through [www.gamificationnation.com](http://www.gamificationnation.com) and tweets under her Twitter alter ego @GamificationNat.

She is the author of 'Leading the boss in the mirror', a book, which teaches people smart and practical ways to reduce their stress levels and is the culmination of her work with high achievers in her coaching practice. Her second book "Attracting IT graduates to your business" was written for Impackt Publishing and is aimed to help organisations with small HR teams to be creative in their graduate attraction strategies (it includes a chapter on gamification as one option). She is currently working on her 3<sup>rd</sup> book called "Gamification in business", which will be published later this year.

She was a guest expert contributor on the RTE (Irish television) show 'How long will you live since it's pilot series and continued to contribute throughout all following series. Her clients nominated her for the European Coaching Achievement Award and proved to the European Coaching Institute that they had achieved lasting benefits from working with An as their coach.

She speaks and trains on the topics of gamification for entrepreneurs and learning, work life balance and leadership with passion and inspiration at conferences and in corporate settings. The feedback given at these events ranges from inspirational to making a tangible difference.

She has worked with 100's of business owners, high achievers and corporate employees to achieve a new level of skill in business development, mind-set, leadership and more.

She originally started B/Right Business Coaching in Cork, Ireland to bring big business change knowledge to the small business sector, because prior to this venture An had worked with Xigma Management Consultants, Philips Electronics and Arthur Andersen Business Consulting, where she had learned big business strategies for both project management and change management. She holds a BA (Hon) in International Marketing and languages from Dublin City University and an MBA from the Open University Business School in the UK.

An is a prolific reader and will seek out further development with mentors and thought leaders worldwide to enhance her skills and improve her services for clients. She holds business and life coaching qualifications from the UK, USA, Australia and Ireland and is qualified as master practitioner of neuro-linguistic programming. She is currently studying towards a diploma in game design and has recently added gamification design expert to her qualifications.

She became the go-to person for business start-ups, business growth and work/life balance and worked extensively with clients from the Cork city and county enterprise boards as well as Enterprise Ireland.

In 2010 An took on the new challenge of becoming an internal training consultant for the media industry with a position in Modern Times Group, a broadcasting group headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden with the largest geographical footprint in commercial radio, television and online TV. She quickly proved her capabilities by winning the Rookie Award in Modern Services with her Strengths Based Leadership training.