

Gamification to change behavior



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Gamification is the application of motivational elements from games in the real world. In a game, individuals play to improve themselves, as a team, or as individuals. One player may play to win, another to explore, and yet another to accumulate as many points as possible. It is evident that people are diverse, and gamification can be successfully applied to achieve goals and teach new behaviors to large groups of people.

How this works is explained in this whitepaper.

Gamification is based on the combination of change management, performance management, and game theory.

1. Game theory

Good games contain three elements that ensure players are intrinsically motivated to continue playing. The desire to play the game motivates players to learn new behaviors.

Three fundamental elements of an engaging game

1. *Autonomy*

In every successful game, a player has freedom within the confines of the game, meaning the freedom to make their own choices. This freedom appeals to human creativity and the desire to play together and have fun. Therefore, a game encourages learning new things within the boundaries of the game.

2. *Mastery*

Many players are motivated by the desire to do things well and preferably improve continuously. A game is not challenging when a player can do everything immediately. In successful games, there is something to learn, and the final level is not achievable for beginners. Short-cycle feedback through points and badges motivates development from beginner to master.

3. *Meaning*

By connecting a game to essential things, such as optimizing a meeting, adhering to traffic rules, or engaging in sports activities, a game aligns with a player's intrinsic motivation. Gamification, therefore, occurs in the workplace, not just behind a screen or in a classroom.

Good games contain these three elements to varying degrees, ensuring that players are intrinsically motivated to continue playing. The desire to play the game motivates players to learn new behaviors. In a game, desired behavior is rewarded through triggers and short-cycle rewards. This works, for example, when quitting smoking, losing weight, using technology more frequently at work, or adopting other new routines in the workplace. These triggers and rewards are explicitly present in games in the form of levels, challenges, points, badges, and social interaction. This makes playing so enjoyable.

2. Change management and gamification

Game theory supports the idea that new behavior can be learned in a fun way. But in addition to teaching new behavior, one also wants the new behavior to be lasting. This is where change management comes in. Three elements of change management ensure that new behavior becomes sustainable.

Three *elements of change management*

1. Intrinsic motivation: From have to want

Ideally, people are motivated for both the end result and the change itself. It is also essential to answer the question: "what's in it for me?" Then the change aligns with the needs and desires of the employee. In gamification, the average player doesn't want to win a particular badge but is motivated by 'recognition,' 'belonging,' or 'fun.' Playing and thereby applying (new) desired behavior aligns with the player's motivation, whether it's gaining knowledge, working compliantly, collaborating smarter, or learning to use new technology.

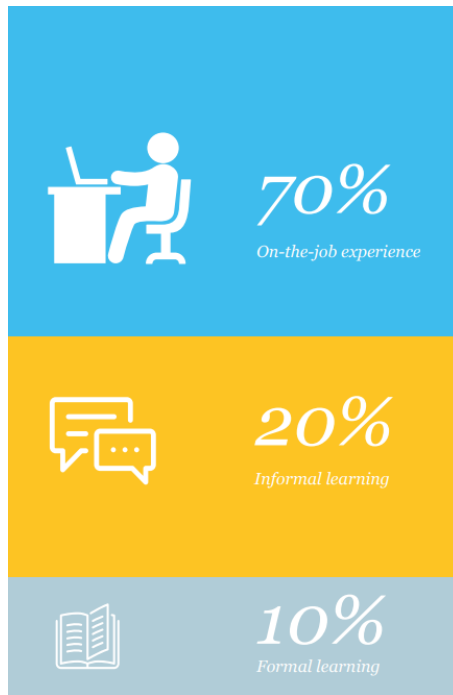
2. Incremental changes instead of all at once

Achieving sustainable behavior change doesn't happen all at once but occurs in small steps. When someone successfully repeats one small action multiple times, that action will eventually become a habit. Sometimes a change may seem tiny, but it's about maintaining the momentum of taking a small step each time. Getting one step better every day results in being 365% better after a year.

3. From learning to application

New knowledge fades if not applied immediately. Fifty percent of what is learned is forgotten every day. The 70:20:10 learning model (see the figure on the right) shows that we primarily learn in the workplace, not in a classroom or through e-learning. Gamification ensures that a player gets directly involved.





3. Performance management: Hard results

It is useful to start with 'the end in mind': the goal at hand. This goal must be measurable so that the impact of the game can be determined. Think of goals such as exercising more, collaborating better, or engaging in more sales activities.

A measurable goal can determine the impact of the game.

For new structural behavior, it is essential that game design unlocks the desired behavior. It is useful to start with 'the end in mind': the goal at hand. Unlike gaming, gamification is not just entertainment but serves a specific purpose that is genuinely relevant to every player (meaning). This goal must be measurable so that the impact of the game can be determined. Think of goals such as exercising more, collaborating smarter, or engaging in more sales activities. Experience shows that working with measurable goals is effective.

Conclusion

Gamification is a proven method to facilitate behavioral change in an accessible, scalable, and, above all, enjoyable way.

The focus is on what the end-user truly needs and wants to do. At Highberg, we focus on improving workplace performance by combining gamification and behavioral change, enhancing performance with the adoption of new technology in an accessible, scalable, and fun way.

Examples of games

- More effective meetings,
- Smarter collaboration,
- Effective management based on facts and figures
- And smart information sharing.

Would you like to learn more about Gamification?

Then come to the Gamification workshop.

In 2 hours, you'll learn the basic principles of gamification and how to apply them.

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