Just as a thought, as a tag line – Gamification: why you have been doing it since you were a small child.

Gamification is another one of those words that seems to be getting a lot of use at the moment, a little bit like Cloud. If you look at the Internet for a description (in my case Wikipedia) you get;

"Gamification is the use of game play mechanics for non-game applications (also known as "funware"), particularly consumer-oriented web and mobile sites, in order to encourage people to adopt the applications. It also strives to encourage users to engage in desired behaviors in connection with the applications. Gamification works by making technology more engaging, and by encouraging desired behaviors, taking advantage of humans' psychological predisposition to engage in gaming. The technique can encourage people to perform chores that they ordinarily consider boring, such as completing surveys, shopping, or reading web sites."

Got that?

Basically it is making a task more interesting by adopting gaming mechanics. At it's simplest all that means is you get some kind of reward for doing a task.

Now that reward may be as obvious a trophy or as vague as just having fun whilst doing the task.

Why is this so important all of a sudden? In your job there must be tasks that bore you senseless? For me it is data checking. Do you do something to make that more interesting? I set myself challenges. Get x number of records checked and I can have some chocolate. If I get to the end of this string I will go to the loo. That kind of thing.

Imagine that upscaled to a department. The person who correctly checks the most data by the end of the day gets all his drinks at the weekend for free. Suddenly you have a game on.

That is all fairly obvious. There is however more to the concept of gamification and certainly more to gaming mechanics.

When you play a video game, for the most part, your reward is the fun of playing. You may get achievements, but mostly your reward is getting to the next level and enjoying it.

What if you made that game achieve something in the real word? Take a fictional resource game. You are enjoying getting your resources in order and growing your town. In the

background though, all the stats you are managing are in fact real stats that a company needs checking or managing. Suddenly your game is having a real world effect.

Recently I read about a Finnish start up that is using a game that has users typing words. As you correctly type a word a little mole safely begins to cross a bridge. Get one wrong and the bridge crumbles away until moley plummets to his doom. Sounds daft, but every correctly typed word is helping to digitise the Finnish national archives! ([Game it up!](#))

And that is why it could be so important. From simply making people in an office enjoy their job more and thus become more productive, to using small repetitive actions in a game to automate real world tasks, Gamification has some real potential!

But, you should know this already. You have been exposed to gamification since the day you were born. It's how your parents taught you to walk, talk and use the loo. Everything as a child is learned using simple games and repetition. Super Nanny introduced reward charts to the masses. Rewards for behavior – essentially a game mechanic.

These are all [game mechanics](#) and all things we do naturally. These are also things that anyone who plays video games understand extremely well.

So why not bring it into the workplace and make it a more enjoyable and productive place to be?

Please wait…