

Fantasy is not the sort of thing that most companies would think of first when they wanted to motivate and [engage](#) employees. It sounds a little too un-worky.

If I have learned anything over the years though, fantasy is essential if you want people to break out of standard ways of thinking. Fantasy is a safe place for peoples minds to dream, create and explore ideas. It is a place where they can make mistakes without fear of punishments, where they can be someone else who is potentially braver or totally different from themselves. Great innovations can come from daydreams, imagine the power you could harness by facilitating this mentality!

The thing is, fantasy doesn't have to mean elves and orcs, it just means something that is not real and if possible has slightly different rules to reality.

So for instance, take data entry. Not the most exciting of jobs (I spent a long few weeks doing that as a temp back in the day), but it is essential that it is done fast and accurately. The question is, how do you train someone to do this in a way that is potentially enjoyable? Add a little fantasy!

One of my favourite examples that relates is [Typing of the Dead](#) from Sega, published around 2000. It was a based on the arcade light gun shooter *House of the Dead 2*, but rather than shooting enemies, you had to type words and phrases as they appeared on the screen. As you got further into the game, the words and phrases got harder and you had to be quick and accurate to survive. As fun as the game was, what you were actually doing was learning to touch type, but rather than simply being congratulated by [Mavis Beacon](#), you survived zombies! A bit like with *Zombies Run!*, the threat of a zombie munching on your nuts is pretty motivational!



Typing of the Dead

The same approach could be given to a great deal of training, where people are put into a safe virtual environment. Here failure is okay, but success is rewarded with progression.

Applying fantasy elements is tricky and you have to be sympathetic to the potential users. Not everyone wants to find their HR tools suddenly themed like a werewolf horror flick, but some might! So think about the users, the context and why you are doing what you are doing. The fantasy only works if there is a [magic circle](#), a safe boundary between the fantasy and reality.

Breaking from reality from time to time is a good thing, just make sure that reality is rewarding enough for your users that they want to return to it!

Featured Image from [Stevebidmead](#) / Pixabay

Please wait...