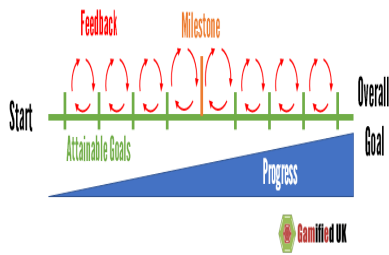


Focused Feedback and Attainable, Maintainable Goals



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Description

Don't Mention Gamification

I was challenged recently to talk about gamification without mentioning games or gamification! The reason is that many people have not got time to dive too deep into the meanings and on its own, gamification as a word is confusing, to say the least. So, I took to YouTube and had a go!

My thoughts revolved around two core concepts; Focused Feedback and Attainable, Maintainable Goals.

Focused Feedback

Feedback is essential for engagement in anything we do, whether it is related to our job, social life or hobbies. Without feedback, we don't know where we, how we are doing or where we are going. Not having feedback is like driving without seeing the road or a map!

Good feedback focuses specifically on the needs of the user and is [Relevant, In-Time and Meaningful](#). I have explained this in previous posts, but the core is that feedback does not need to immediate, but does need to provide value to the user at a time that lets the user act on it. Feedback comes in many shapes and sizes, from physical rewards to verbal pats on the back to progress bars. However, the main *types* to consider are notification of success, failure and general progress.

The crux is, you are keeping the user informed to enable them to take responsibility for what they do next and how they do it.

Attainable, Maintainable Goals

Goals are hugely important to us as we try to achieve the things e want to achieve, but it is important to understand how to set them! There are many methods out there, I particularly like [SMART goals](#).

However, a simple way to look at your goals are “Are they attainable and are them maintainable?”

Attainable

If your goal is too big or set too far into the future, it can be very hard to prioritise it. Years ago, I discovered a concept called Construal Level Theory. It basically states that the further away an event is, the harder it is for us to give it a priority because it is abstract, whereas close up events are more concrete.

So, when creating goals you should have in mind the overall goal, but also smaller more attainable goals. If you have a year long plan, break it down into months, weeks and days.

Maintainable

You need to balance how small the goals are between your ability to keep achieving / maintaining them and how practical they are as a way to achieve the overall goal. If you make them too small, it becomes hard to do enough of them to achieve the main goal. Too big, and they become unattainable again. This leads to becoming demoralised.

A good example is my wife. She is currently writing a book and set herself a daily word count she had to achieve, to get to her end of year goal. However, life got in the way, as it does, and the goals become unattainable and unattainable! She got very demoralised always falling short of each daily or monthly goals. Every day she was unable to write, the end goal got exponentially further away. Her solution, lower the daily word count a bit, without significantly changing the potential delivery date of the end goal. This left her with a much more attainable set of goals, that she could not only

Her solution, lower the daily word count a bit, without significantly changing the potential delivery date of the end goal. This left her with a much more attainable set of goals, that she could not only achieve but overachieve on from time to time. You can see below her 2016 word count vs 2017. Up until February 2017, the daily count was 250 words. In march, she changed it to 150!

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1																Finish Point	3252
2																Starting Point	3118
3	1	150															
4	2	150			543												134
16	14	150			727												
17	15	150			949												
18	16	150			1767												
19	17	150															
20	18	150		2811	350												
21	19	150			643												
22	20	150			134												
23	21	150															
24	22	150															
25	23	150															
26	24	150															
27	25	150															
28	26	150															
29	27	150															
30	28	150															
31	29	150															
32	30	150															
33	31	150															
34																Year To Date	11155
35	Total	4650	0	2811	8344	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
36																	
37	Monthly Target	4650	4200	4650	4300	4650	4650	4650	4650	4650	4650	4650	4000	4650			55000

2017 Word Count Targets

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	Monthly Writing Target vs Actual												Finish Point
2	Target	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			Starting Point
3	1	250		858	106	0	530	0	0	1126	0		
4	2	250		0	0	0	0	249	0	0	0		
21	19	250		1538	171	675	0	0	0	0	0		
22	20	250		0	1580	0	427	1146	0	0	0		
23	21	250		539	1184	0	154	0	0	0	0		
24	22	250		0	256	978	260	90	0	403	0		
25	23	250	216	314	0	591	679	1445	0	0	377		
26	24	250	0	1030	313	193	0	383	0	0	0		
27	25	250	702	942	0	0	415	0	0	0	0		
28	26	250	0	0	0	0	706	0	0	0	0		
29	27	250	0	1053	700	634	831	0	0	0	0		
30	28	250	0	174	0	0	0	306	0	0	0		
31	29	250	2191	192	70	0	0	144	0	0	522		
32	30	250	0	223	0	0	0	0	0	0	149		
33	31	250		220		1011	0		0				
34													Year To Date
35	Total	7750	3109	14153	11656	10167	5231	6802	1236	5821	1466		59641
36													
37	Monthly Target		2250	7750	7750	7750	7750	7750	7750	7750	7750		64250
38													
39	Over/Under		859	6403	3906	2417	-2519	-948	-6514	-1929	-6284		-4609

2016 Word Count Targets

The end result is a much happier and more motivated writer!

Adding them Together

When you mix feedback into your goal strategy, you suddenly have a very powerful motivational tool. You can set feedback for each stage of each goal, positive notes to say well done for hitting a weekly goal, gentle chastisements for missing them. Bigger rewards (like a team meal) for hitting more significant milestones. Daily updates on a progress chart to show you and your team where you are compared to where you need to be.

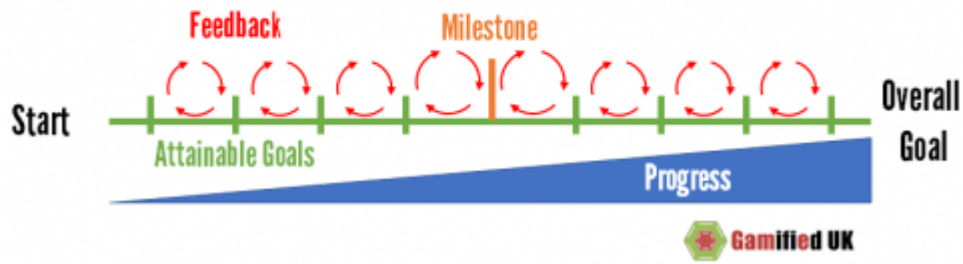
Conclusion

Ok, so now I will use the word gamification again...

Gamification purists will not like this as it does not contain concepts such as narrative, competition, collaboration etc. However, for the Non-Gamification Muggles out there, this should be a clear starting point to understanding why we get so excited about the potential for gamification. Simple changes can have a massive impact on motivation, engagement and productivity!

I'll leave you with a summarising model – I like models...

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Focused Feedback and Goals

Category

1. Gamification
2. Education
3. Opinion

Tags

1. feedback
2. Gamification
3. goals
4. rewards

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