Just a quick one (yeah another quick one) whilst I finish off the reward schedule chapter of my Introduction to Gamification series!

I was recently doing a series of talks which gave me reason to pause and reflect a little on my position in the world of gamification.

I have been around for a while in relation to a young industry, since about 2011. That puts me in a position to have been actually at the leading edge of the growth of the industry along with a few other highly notable people. Many of them are still around, some have moved on to greener or newer pastures.

However, it means that people who are up and coming in the industry display a measure of respect towards me, or at least that's what they say when they are asking for help or advice! But seriously, I very rarely get people having a go at me, normally they are asking me to share knowledge with them or help them. It is such a privilege to have people think of you in this way, as a teacher or mentor.

Anyway, back to the point. As I was speaking, people would introduce me in different ways. Gamification Expert, Gamification Thought Leader, Gamification Guru, Gamification Prophet (I kid you not). All of these make me cringe, but people use the terms because they want to get across to the audience who I am in relation to the industry – which is probably not all that easy. Gamification Solution Designer, my actual job title, probably doesn't sound cool enough. However, as much as I cringe, I have to be grateful – they could call me a lot worse. They are all terms of respect for what they perceive to be my achievements and contributions in the industry over the years.

The thing is, I am just a gamification nerd. I love gamification and spend a lot of my time thinking about it, writing about it and doing it. It is a passion. So I find it hard to accept any level of praise for what I do. That doesn't mean I don't appreciate it. It also doesn't mean that I don't from time to time fall into the trap of believing the hype!

And that is the crux of this little post. In an era of gurus, thought leaders and prophets, it is very easy to fall into the trap of believing your own hype. It is fine for others to call you these names, but it is very different if you start to walk around calling yourself them. For me, that feels conceited and self-important. It is fine to be confident in one's abilities, but genuine humility is more endearing than hubris! It's a tough balance though, as often you are only as good as your reputation these days and self-marketing takes a certain amount of bragging, it just helps to make sure you can back it up if you go that route too deeply!

Right, back to the next chapter!

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