

My Jujitsu instructor always used to say,

“I’ll teach you what you need, not what you want”

This always struck me as a fabulous way to look at teaching in general and one that I used myself as a Jujitsu instructor, mentor and everything else I have done that involved passing information to others.

Getting what you **want** is very rarely as important as getting what you **need**. In fact, getting what you need more often than not allows you to then earn what you want. In martial arts, like most things, you need the foundations, the boring things. The form work, the katas, the hours and hours of repetitive grind. The same is true in games. You need to get the basics before you can do the interesting things. You may not want to do them, the tutorial level is often not the most exciting, but you need them to be able to then go on and do what you want to do in the rest of the game.

Think about Minecraft. You need to learn the rules of the world, what blocks to combine, what animals provide what resources, what pick axes need to mine what rocks. Until you have those basic essentials, you can’t go and build those amazing structures you want to build or create working Babbage difference engines!

Another thought occurs that relates to gamification around want vs need. Often we don’t want to use extrinsic rewards, we know the research and we don’t want to fall foul of the consequences. But sometimes, that is exactly what we need! If you have limited time and budget and are tasked with creating an increase in activity, especially around simple repetitive tasks, extrinsic rewards are exactly what is needed. Once that is working, you can, of course, look at expanding this to more intrinsic methods.

I might change my old mentor’s quote slightly now,

“I’ll provide what you **need** so you can discover and earn what you **want** for yourself”