



Why am I interested in Gamification?

Description

This is a question many ask me – including myself!

The answer is complicated I suppose, but worth mentioning here.

Many feel that gamification is nothing more than an invention of consultants hell bent on making money from corporations who want to control their employees. In some instances this may even be true!

The fact is, I got involved because of a love of games that goes back over thirty years. I have always loved games, playing them, creating them and learning from them. One of my earliest memories of gaming was my father creating me a maths games. It was very simple, on an early Spectrum. All it did was ask you maths questions and you had to answer. It would congratulate you and I seem to remember there was some graphic representation of your success.

Games engage people in ways that other media can't for many reasons, not least because they put you at the centre of the experience. Now, gamification is not the same as games, this is something I think we all agree on. The point is, I saw how powerful games could be and I could see how methods used in games to encourage mastery, autonomy, relatedness and purpose could all be transferred to non game related activities.

The applications are numerous; making dull tasks more bearable, better performance reviews, helping people integrate within a company and understand its values, marketing campaigns, better loyalty schemes and so much more.

Many people will tell you that it is nothing more than collecting data points and using them to track progress and reward people with meaningless points and badges. It doesn't have to be though. You don't need any of that to engage people with ideas you learn from games. You could just have a sheet on a wall that helped people track their career progress. You could create better learning materials based on how games handle onboarding. It is about using what we understand about games and turning that to our advantage when trying to solve other problems.

I got involved because I am passionate that there is more to gamification than the rubbish we tend to see. I got involved because games are part of the now and will only get bigger in the future. If we

ignore these facts, we ignore so many tools available to us to make things better for everyone – and I have even started on what “serious” games can do for us!

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