



The gamification of a career

Description

A fair few of my recent posts have revolved around how we can use ideas from games / gamification to improve certain aspects of an employee's "journey" through their career. I thought it may be time to pull it all together in a single coherent (I hope) post!

It makes sense to start with an employee's first days, usually an induction process of some type. Rather than the standard two or three days of death by PowerPoint, how about this;

They start with a simple half day induction, preferably done face to face with a group of other newbies. Here they are told the basic essentials for them to actually get into an office, cover any legal requirements and meet people they may be working with in the future. After this, they are given the essential kit to get them going, probably a Smartphone and laptop.

The next step is to get them settled into their main place of work and get them logged into your Kahn Academy style social gamified learning environment (SGLE). Here they can take various courses "with" other people who have started at the same time as them. Each mandatory course that they successfully complete allows them to do the next course and potentially opens up areas of the intranet for them. For example, they are not allowed to claim their expenses until they have done the expenses training course. They can help each other with issues as well as talk to other new starters across the company.

After the first month, they see their career planner. Here they talk through their aspirations, where they want to be over the next X number of months and years. A few days after this meeting, they are given their career game board.



This game board shows their career mapped out in a simple way, showing all the major checkpoints. These may be related to time served, personal development desires or anything else that is important to the development of an individuals career. Of course, things change and so the board may change over time, but having it there will help people visualise where they are and where they are going!

Rather than having a single review and promotion point at the end of the year, or for that matter large grade distances, we have a more spread out system. This is not a project plan, it does not include specific projects, rather personal and career developments.

Throughout the year, feedback is given through a simple online system. During and after projects, people they have worked with can go to this system and give a simple rating out of five (as an example) and a short comment. This has to be a simple and [frictionless](#) system to work though. They can either go there and just look up the employees name, or the employee can send them a unique link that they can get too from any web enabled device.

This feedback and development check points are then used to move you along the career board. As you can see, it is split into small steps, development promotions and then large checkpoint promotions. If your current grading system goes F, E, D, C, B, A (F being the most junior, A being the most senior) – our new system would look like F.1, F.2, F.3, E.1, E.2, E.1 etc (as seen in our game board above). This way, each short term goal is more attainable and easier to work towards. It avoids people stagnating in a grade for years. Each small jump needs to carry some form of reward – either in benefits, qualifications or financial remuneration – depending on the level and importance of the step.

This last part is an example how our [feedback loops](#) from my last post would work. You work hard, get good feedback, work hard, get good feedback and then using your career board and your career planners help – you can know when promotion chances are coming.



The final point would be about rewards. Many companies give personal performance bonuses. However (and I am not going into the reason here – read some Dan Pink or some of my [earlier posts](#)), this is not always an effective way to motivate the best quality of work. If you feel the need to give bonuses, make it a company performance bonus. This way, each individual feels that they are part of the larger team. They have to work with their team to make the company successful. If they give the company quality work and help the people they work with to do the same, then they are rewarded as a team. This sense of purpose and belonging is very important.

This is a simple look at how it could be done. It is however, not a simple thing to do (I'm a dreamer, but I'm not naive!!). However, some of the ideas are easy. Why not give people more fixed ideas of when they may get progression? Why not make your learning systems better and more engaging – there are lots of them out there now! The little things all add up in the long term.

Think different – be better!

Category

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