



Reward Excellence not Mediocrity and Expectation

Description

When designing a reward system, it is easy to be tempted to reward everything!

- “Hey, you clicked on a button – woot”.
- “Awesome, you clicked that button twice, go you!”
- “OMG, you clicked that button 10 times now, you are the button king – have the button king badge!!!!”

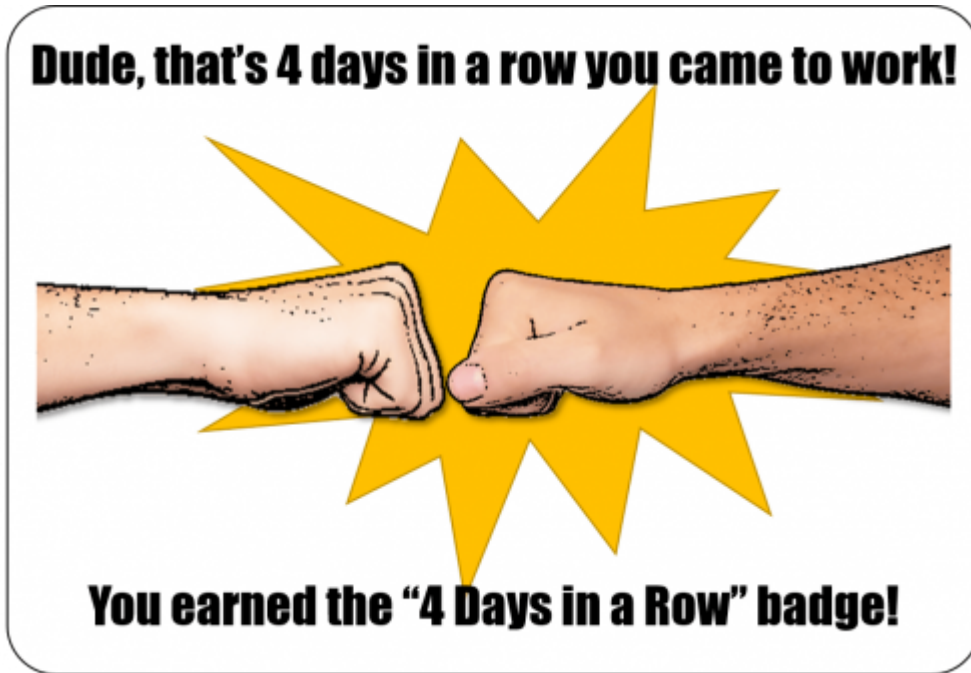
The trouble with this is it devalues rewards very quickly. I have written in depth about [rewards and badges](#) before, so won't go into it here. What I want to put over in this short post, is the need to reward the right things and congratulate others.

Take my daughters school and a [previously mentioned](#) issue I have around them rewarding kids for attendance. 100% attendance = a reward of no homework for a week and a certificate. The issue here is the children being rewarded are 99% of the time not in control of their attendance. It is down to illness or parents taking them out of school for various reasons. It also highlights those who are unable to maintain 100% for reasons out of their control and could turn the class against them.

By all means, congratulate them for being there 100% of the time, but don't make a huge display of how amazing it is. Presenteeism is not excellence, it is expectation! It is like congratulating someone for going 10 days without out saying “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” or a week without burgling a house. These are expectations, they are not demonstrations of excellence unless you are addicted to Mary Poppins and kleptomania! If you continue to reward the mediocre or the expected, you just start a race to discover what the greatest reward for the least effort is.

We should be rewarding and be celebrating excellence and trying to weed out mediocrity, not putting it on a pedestal as being worthy of celebration! But keep in mind, this is all relative to the individual. One person's level 1 reading may be another's level 10. As long as they are putting in the effort and excelling at their level, it is worthy of celebration.

This is yet another example of why one size does not always fit all.



4 Days in a Row

Category

1. Gamification
2. Education

Tags

1. badges
2. excellence
3. mediocrity
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