FUN AND GAMES: THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

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GAMIFICATION VS GAME-BASED LEARNING

HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT AND WHY?

These apps award points for reporting traffic conditions. There’s a leader board to compare personal score versus the rest. Badges are accumulated when certain points are achieved. Social interactions occur when we say thank you to a stranger for reporting a condition. Finally, a virtual camaraderie is formed when everyone helps one another.

Gameification is also used in fitness bands that provide feedback on the number of calories that have been burned for the day.

Learning websites like code.org and Khanacademy.org award badges and points for students who complete the modules.

Social media websites use percentages to gauge the completeness level of your post.

By JEGATHESWARAN MANOHARAN
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BIZWORDS are rife and new ones keep on showing up with increasing rapidity. This is expected – with the continuous convergence of thoughts in a highly connected world, old things are being reinvented and words are refitted with new prefixes and suffixes.

Two such words are gamification and game-based learning.

While game-based learning is not a new thing, gamification only came into the limelight between 2005-2004.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Both words are in tangles – at least in the minds of the people who use them. So, what’s the fuss about the meaning and definition?

To make it simple, let’s put it this way: these two words are siblings from the same father, but from two different mother’s names.

Therefore, while they both have the same father and are to the outside world a family, the siblings themselves think that they are two different families.

The root word here is game. This means both words have something to do with game.

THE ADDICTIVE NATURE OF GAMES

When we look at games, they are naturally addictive activities, regardless of age.

From a simple puzzle in a newspaper to flipping of printed cards around a table, or rolling a ball into a designated goal, games have captivated our power. They have the potential to distract someone for relatively long periods of time.

Games have been woven into society’s fabric in almost every civilization, culture and even across the remotest tribe in the world.

It has been used as a medium for socialisation, developing the will to achieve, a status symbol, relaxation, improving life skills, training the mental and cognitive faculty, and physical stamina.

Something of such immense potential and diverse possibility definitely could play a bigger role in our progress, and therefore, the practice of using games for learning was born.

GAME-BASED LEARNING

What started with just a game of point accumulation for providing correct answers, evolved into role plays, card games, board games and online games. Here, the concept of game-based learning took shape.

Game-based learning is the use of actual games to deliver a lesson. The experience of playing the game itself is used to deliver the lesson. The elements within the game act as a metaphor for learning.

Case in point: the game of mancala (congkoi). The actions in the game involve choosing which slot to start with. However, the choice is governed by whether you want to ‘attack’ the opponent’s stones, prevent a potential ‘attack’ or spread the stones to create more opportunities and minimise risk.

These decisions and considerations in the game can be likened to a lesson on strategy and calculated actions.

Thus, the game experience metaphorically describes a lesson. The experience allows a much richer immersion that makes the lesson both meaningful and memorable.

The game itself functions as a platform for the learning to be built on.

In a game-based learning scenario, the central piece is to deliver the learning by relating to the elements of the game and experiences that the players went through.

The metaphoric link provides infinite possibilities as a tool for learning.

GAMEIFICATION

So then, what is gamification? Since games are so engaging, there must be some kind of science to it. And if we are able to decode that science, then like all other sciences, we will be able to manipulate, amalgamate, and synthesise it.

This means taking the science out of games and using it in other environments to motivate people to do something and get them to do it continuously.

That is the basis to the very definition of gamification: Using game-related principles and elements in a non-gaming environment to enhance participation, user motivation to take an action, continuous engagement, and even loyalty.

Instant feedback and curiosity

Games allow you to see the effect of your decision immediately. It makes people want to try something. The two elements here are instant feedback and curiosity.

What if we could take those two elements and use them for a non-game situation? That is exactly what Volkswagen did with their Piano Stairs, as part of their Fun Factory branding campaign.

All gamification starts with establishing the goal: What do we want to achieve?

In the case of the Piano Stairs, their goal was to motivate people to use stairs instead of the escalator.

They installed electronic boards on the stairs that produced piano key sounds when stepped on. Each stair is programmed with the sound of the next key, mimicking a piano.

The experiment witnessed a surge of people preferring to take the stairs by 66%. People were having fun walking up and down the stairs and some even stopped to ‘play’ a tune.

Hence using the element of feedback and curiosity, the initiative drew more people to use the stairs than the escalator.

Motivation

Games are also identified as sources of motivation for people to play.

Some of these motivators are:

- Points – motivates people to accumulate
- Badges – recognition of achievements
- Leader boards – personal achievement in comparison to others
- Levels – opens new adventures once the present level has been completed
- Stories – narratives or drama that make people curious
- Goals – final objective
- Social interaction – turning strangers to friends
- Challenges – nudge the feeling to win

A good example where a few of these motivators are being used is in our traffic mobile apps.

The root word here is game. This means both words have something to do with game.

The metaphoric link provides infinite possibilities as a tool for learning.

To put this argument to rest and provide room for both families to grow, it would be better that we see gamification as a way of adding game elements to learning processes, classroom practices and learners’ involvement to explore further.

Game-based learning can be seen as an approach of using games to make learning content more meaningful and create better conversations for deeper understanding.

Explore more ideas on using game-based learning at the first Malaysian Simulation & Gaming Conference, MASAGA 2018. For more information log on to www.masaga.com.my.
By ROSHAN THIRAN
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A

5 visit businesses, schools and universities, delivering talks here in Malaysia and overseas, there’s never a time when I’m not bowled over by the enthusiasm of people who have a strong desire to develop themselves and make a difference in the world.

Every time I engage with students, professionals, senior managers and chief executive officers (CEOs), the question I’m asked could fill a book – not that it’s a bad thing!

I relish the challenge of having my mind stretched as I help people move along the road to achieving their goals in life.

Every now and then, I get into a conversation with someone who is somewhat less enthusiastic about what they want to achieve.

They tell me things like...

“What if I don’t want to be a leader?”

“Why is everyone telling me I need to be successful – can’t I just be happy with where I am?”

“I don’t want to change the world, I’m quite happy working in my 9-5 job and leaving my work at the office.”

For every one of these interactions, I have very short responses...

“You don’t have to be a leader – you can be whatever you want to be.”

“You’re not obligated to listen to what anyone tells you, if you’re truly happy where you are, you’re free to stick with what you’re doing.”

“Who’s saying anything about changing the world? Very few people actually get to do that. If you’re happy in your job, that’s your privilege. No one is making you change.”

Nevertheless, they voice their arguments...

“I’d sometimes wonder if the person I was talking to was just trying to convince themselves that they should be a leader or that they should be aiming higher in life. I imagine that they would have had their counter-arguments ready to go, before my replies made them redundant.”

Nevertheless, they voice their arguments to me, and I listen politely, but I eventually realized what’s really going on...

“They’re not trying to convince me of anything – they’re trying to convince themselves that the lives they’re now leading is exactly what they wanted.”

It’s ‘MY LIFE’!

Let me be clear: if you are genuinely happy with where you are, then you should absolutely continue doing your thing. There’s a reason it’s called your life.

As Bob Dylan once said, success is when a person gets up in the morning and goes to sleep at night having done what they wanted to do in the hours in-between.

If you feel that you don’t need more, you don’t shoot for more. If you feel like you don’t want to develop yourself and contribute more to the world, nothing or nobody can make you do otherwise.

But here’s the interesting thing...

In almost all of these conversations, it quickly becomes clear that the person does want more, they do want to push themselves, and they are desperate to make some kind of contribution beyond what they’ve already made.

BEGIN WHERE YOU ARE

As it turns out, a lot of them just don’t know where to start. As a result, they’ve concocted this defensive story in their minds which they use to convince themselves that they’re quite happy with life.

As the conversation goes back and forth, the question eventually arises:

“Oh, so let’s say I could develop myself and do more – how do I start?”

They answer their own question here. But I return it anyway, just in case.

“You start.”

A baffled look comes over their faces and I try to explain to them what I mean by this fundamental piece of advice:

When I was younger, I was restless at sales – and I mean terrible. But I knew it was a skill that I needed, and so how did I become better at sales?

Did I read books? Attend seminars? Speak to people mastered in the art of selling?

Sure. But that gets you only so far. So, I said to myself, “You have to start.”

And so, I began selling door-to-door and I honed my skills over time. All the things I had learnt before only really sank in after I began putting myself in the position of selling.

The reason I became better at selling was because I started to sell.

The RIGHT TIME IS NOW

At this point, the realisation dawns on the person that life isn’t going to wait for them. There is no right moment. No one can do your growing for you.

You’re in charge and you have two choices: you can either get out there and grab life by the throat, or you can sit back and let life’s current sweep you along wherever it pleases. Either way, you make the decision.

Again, if you’re happy with your life, that’s great. Maybe someone else will try to convince you to be this or that, but I’ll applaud the fact that you are where you want to be and leave it there.

When people ask me, “How do you convince people to buy your product if they’re resistant?” I say, “You don’t. If someone has no need for what you have to offer, walk on and find the next person who does.”

But if, deep down, you have that idea for a business nagging away at you; if you want to learn those new skills, if you want to go back to school and get that degree; if you want to make a difference beyond what you’re making now...

Do yourself a favour and see the story that you’re telling yourself for what it is: a bunch of limiting beliefs that are feeding you lies to say that you’re not good enough to do anything but settle and be grateful.

And once you’ve done that? Start.

OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

If you’re an introvert who’s terrified of networking but wants to connect with others? Start.

Attend as many events, gatherings and parties as you can and talk to people. Is it tough? Sure!

So was selling items door-to-door, but you learn so much and grow so much in confidence when you just decide to put yourself beyond your comfort zone.

Perhaps you have an idea for a business but are unsure where to begin?

Start. Read three books by experts in your area of interest; connect with people on social media who are relevant to your business; engage with them and add value to that relationship; ask questions; or take one or two industry leaders out for lunch and ask for their insights.

Build up from the bottom and don’t give up until you reach where your ‘top’ is.

SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY

Remember that success is never an end-point.

Warren Buffett is not successful. Bill Gates is not successful. Oprah Winfrey is not successful. Their success is ongoing. Always.

Buffett has a net worth of over USD444bil and he’s still working hard, pushing new boundaries, continuing to learn, and making a difference... at 87 years old.

Whatever you have nagging away at you, whatever makes you come alive – pursue it with all you’ve got.

The fears we encounter tell us the biggest lies we’ll ever hear. Go beyond the limiting beliefs and just... start.

IN CONCLUSION

You’ll stumble, fall and learn along the way, but that’s where we meet the most valuable lessons in our journey towards achieving the goals we set for ourselves.

Read all the books you can, talk to all the experts, attend all the conferences – these are undoubtedly valuable resources.

But keep in mind that the most valuable learning of all comes by doing. That’s something that will never change. Be a leader!
BEYOND THE ‘WHY’ QUESTIONS

By ALVIN DAN WERN KHANG
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ENERATION Y (Gen-Y), the young generation of this current age, refers to those born between 1980 to around 1999. This generation, with some calling them Gen-Why, will inherit the future, and many will be the leaders and change-makers of this nation and beyond.

Yet we have to come to a reality check, especially for those from previous generations. What has been done to invest in these upcoming leaders?

Has the existence of present things, the ever-improving technology, instant access to information, automated functions and the emergence of WhatsApp, helped build Gen-Ys or has it brought them more harm than good?

As I’m writing this, I’m also reflecting on how I got to the place where I am, being a Gen-Y myself.

Below are some pointers I believe have helped to nurture me as a person and a leader.

1 TO THINK CRITICALLY, WE MUST FIRST DO THE FORMER, I.E. THINK!

Graduating with a bachelor’s degree in psychology, I have discovered a fascination for the human mind and the power of thinking.

Critical thinking, at its core, is to think about our thought processes, re-ignite the notion of questioning, and ask why.

Doing that, we start peeling away the biasness, distortion, prejudice and lack of quality in our thoughts.

It’s a difficult process no doubt, because our mind, in its own function and beauty, also learns things automatically and unconsciously, thus impeding our awareness of certain subjects.

A simple example would be when you’re driving using a usual route back home. Our brain can go into an ‘autopilot’ mode where you are aware of the beginning of the journey, and the next moment of awareness is that you’re already home and have parked the car.

While critical thinking may not be absolutely needed for our usual drive back home, (not to be confused with being alert on the road), the same cannot be said of our everyday choices.

If we only subscribe to the fallacy of our mind stop growing, even the things we do will not see much improvement.

2 TO THINK CRITICALLY, WE MUST BE OPEN TO CRITICISM

This goes without saying. We only improve our thinking when we are challenged, and dealing with challenges can be a painful process.

People dislike the idea of being wrong, or that there is a better solution compared to what they previously thought of. Much like going to the gym helps to build our muscles, critical thinking challenges us to think in new ways and sheds light on certain issues.

While we do not need to go to every single person to receive feedback from them, it is wise to be connected with key people in our lives to hear from them about how our thinking process is.

When you have learnt to accept good constructive criticism, you are also in a position to give good criticism to help another person grow. This also challenges you to consider their thought processes and figure out whether their thoughts are coherent and sensible.

THE WHYS IN GEN-Y

Another area that I believe was crucial for my personal critical thinking development was finding meaning and purpose in what I do, which could be the reason why we’re also called Gen-Why. I discovered that when I derive meaning from the things I do, I grow in my thought processes in those areas. Because there are numerous things to think of, the best we can do is to be good at what we are passionate about and find other like-minded people who can continue to build our critical thinking skills.

So, go out there into the world and take up the challenge! Who knows? The inception of such a challenge may bring forth an idea of a lifetime.

Aspiring to be a counsellor to help youths and strengthen family systems, Alvin is constantly in his thoughts, thinking about what he, what is, and what will be. And by the way, he also loves to make Chinese tea! To learn how to lead the different generations in your organisation effectively, email us at info@leaderonomics.com.

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With Gen-Ys under the spotlight, Peter Economy delves into how this generation is impacting your business and your success, and outlines 11 ways of getting to know them better. To read and outlines 11 ways of getting to know them better. To read

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LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT: WHAT’S NEXT?

THE END HAS COME FOR OUTDATED APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By KULWANT SINGH BARDH
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I

N 2015, there were 2.5 billion Internet users. What is the expected number by 2020? Five billion. This equates to half a billion newcomers to the world wide web every year from 2015 till 2020.

An average user has 29 apps on their smartphones, out of which only five are used 76% of the time. The way we consume media and information is changing far too rapidly. The way we learn is also changing at a very fast pace.

I have been spending some time in Indonesia lately. In 2015, none of the human resource leaders there were willing to consider abandoning traditional classroom-based training. Back then, they had just come across terms such as ‘e-learning,’ and they were struggling to push through any form of technology-based learning.

Now, when I speak to learning and development leaders of some of the top companies there, they feel that they are ready to push for e-learning. So, the time has come.

What was startling for them to hear from me is that if traditional classroom training is becoming archaic, e-learning is merely a touch of paint to an old car.

MOVING AWAY FROM ‘OLD SCHOOL’ LEARNING

E-learning and mobile learning are considered ‘old’ for many trendsetting companies that are way ahead in their learning course.

This is analogous to the rate of social media adoption among companies that are just about to jump on the bandwagon. In such instances, they face the risk of becoming irrelevant especially for companies that are way ahead in their media adoption among companies that are way ahead in their learning course.

This has been happening in the field of neuroscience, wrote his five predictions that are way ahead in their learning course.

David Rock, a noted authority in the field of neuroscience, wrote his five predictions about talent management for 2016.

Here is an excerpt from his Jan 2016 article where he talks about leadership development getting increasingly overhaul in his third prediction:

“Companies are increasingly frustrated from returns in leadership development. While as many as 85% of companies rank leadership development as ‘urgent’ or ‘important’, only 14% claim to be ‘excellent’ at developing their global leaders.

Another study by 4ps found that only 50% of large organisations actually prioritise developing leaders’ global competencies, and as little as one-third describing their efforts as successful.

The challenge is that leaders have more time to learn in less time, with smaller learning budgets, and yet we’re using the same organisational and professional development strategies in play for decades.

We are seeing a growing trend towards simplifying leadership development — eliminating the ‘model muddle’ and instead developing a mobile framework for ‘sticky learning’ to develop leaders in companies. Increasingly, we’re seeing companies turn to interactive and social learning initiatives with built-in acknowledgments of how the brain optimally learns.

We estimate that up to 40% of larger companies are reconsidering their learning strategies and that this number will continue to grow.”

THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Now, coming back to the story of the Indonesian companies. We had to educate them about the future of learning as being experiential, practical, and highly engaging, and allowing high retention rates in learning in the shortest possible time.

And that is only possible when they are willing to take on the approach that ‘learning happens best by doing.’

E-learning is merely a quick way to absorb knowledge using web-based tools but it still lacks practical skills application.

New research in the field of neuroscience is beginning to discount the traditionally held assumptions about the best way for learners to learn.

Instructional designers could lose their jobs in the future as the Kol’s life cycle and assumptions of learning styles today emphasises on “doing” more than anything else.

New neural pathways can be formed when learners are allowed to experiment the learning entirely by themselves through realistic simulations and getting immediate assessment of their actions.

New neural pathways can be formed when learners are allowed to experiment the learning entirely by themselves through realistic simulations and getting immediate assessment of their actions.

CONTEXTUALISED LEARNING

Self-directed experiential learning through gamified simulations is the new future of learning. The role of facilitators will evolve to focusing more on contextualisation of the learning.

Managers can be trained to conduct facilitation themselves since most of the learning happens by “doing.” This comes with the assumption that learners will know how to unlearn, relearn and learn through immediate assessments received while they do the simulations.

With minimal facilitation techniques required because of the more self-paced self-directed learning from the immersive gamified simulations, the role of managers in conducting such training for their team will increase.

Through the ‘teach-back’ method, managers will also learn to reinforce their own skills.

In the future, companies will worry less about paying higher fees to source for the best facilitators to bring content to life, as the content will come to life by itself through immersive gamified simulations.

The traditional classroom-based training is at risk of becoming a dinosaur. If developing countries such as Indonesia are already recognising this, and given the rapid rate of technology adoption, they could well be ahead of some of the more advanced countries in this region in no time.

Judging by the exponential rate of learning through technology adoption in the next few years, even doing something new might already be too late for some companies.

PARTING THOUGHTS

So, what is the future of learning going to look like?

It will be delivered through virtual reality, augmented reality, and supported by artificial intelligence. This will apply not just to leadership development approaches but also to virtual assessments.

Delving into the top learning disruption requires an article all by itself, something I hope to come up with some time soon.
**The Role of Gamification and Game-Based Learning**

**Any great game is actually a story and the truly greatest games tell us something about ourselves and our world.**

**Synthesis** is a difficult thing to describe, but perhaps one of the most powerful tools we have in working with complex problems is the ability to reframe problems and find new ways of looking at them. This is exactly what complex games can provide: a way to see the problem from different perspectives and to find new ways of solving it. Gamification is the process of taking a complex problem and using games to help us think about it in new ways. Gamification can help us to develop new strategies for problem-solving, and it can also help to provide feedback on our progress. It is not just about creating fun games; it is about using games to help us understand complex systems and to find new ways of solving problems.

**Gamification** is the process of taking a complex problem and using games to help us think about it in new ways. Gamification can help us to develop new strategies for problem-solving, and it can also help to provide feedback on our progress. It is not just about creating fun games; it is about using games to help us understand complex systems and to find new ways of solving problems.

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The Malaysian government has recently published a guideline that allows up to one third of a student’s programme to be delivered using MOOCs, and many institutions are already experimenting with them. However, it is possible to discover a gamified future where students will choose their own educational track by negotiating in one institution with another institution, and the MOOC MOOCs from other institutions. By doing so, the students can design their own course programmes and degree schemes to study what is relevant to them. Universities will still validate assess- ments and award degree certificates, but the days of mass participation in single discipline degree may be ending. Very few students will expect to spend the whole of their lives working on a single academic discipline. Hence, we say that good degree programmes will be broad-based and general and they can encourage a better understanding of the arts or science disciplines. The future of education will be more diverse and flexible, and students will be able to choose the path that suits them best.

By ASSESS PURI
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**What’s the solution?**

I got this idea from the legendary management guru Peter Drucker who wrote, “What’s the only real resource? The only real resource is people. Everything else is disposable.”

The Future of Education

**REINVENTING EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE**

This also has implications for the academic. Universities may come to resemble online gaming teams assembled not by discipline but on the basis of core requirements.

For businesses successful in multiple fast-moving industries, the impact of gamification to consider is the student experience, explained by one senior academic:

“With the rise of the MOOCs, digital marketing has become a serious component as universities seek to maintain consistent levels of quality from home. Indeed, this is where the nature of a true university begins to be unappreciated even though it contrasts and the work that we do now may be unappreciated even though it contributes to a bigger picture.”

For many educators, gamification is no longer just a buzzword. It is being applied to every stage of the educational process. At the early stages of using technology to gamify them, gamification will ultimately give us better ways to enhance students’ individual and group experience, to align self-development with the greater game of life.

By AKHMAD JAFAR

The Future of Education

For many educators, gamification is no longer just a buzzword. It is being applied to every stage of the educational process. At the early stages of using technology to gamify them, gamification will ultimately give us better ways to enhance students’ individual and group experience, to align self-development with the greater game of life.

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The Future of Education

For many educators, gamification is no longer just a buzzword. It is being applied to every stage of the educational process. At the early stages of using technology to gamify them, gamification will ultimately give us better ways to enhance students’ individual and group experience, to align self-development with the greater game of life.
AFTER spending a week facilitating a leadership camp organised by Hap Seng for children in Tawau, I came back with a renewed perspective of life.

Here are some of the lessons I learnt from the innocent life of children:

**BE JOLLY AND HAVE FUN**

I was very curious as to why the children were so happy while playing chase at the playground. Turns out that when we exercise, our body releases endorphins. Endorphins make us feel good and that was why they were brimming with such joy and laughter.

**BE FORGIVING**

I was also astonished at how fast they forgave each other. One moment they were having a fight and the next, they were smiling and playing together again. It is human nature to hold a grudge when we have been wronged. But the longer we hold on to it, the more bitter we become.

When the divide between right and wrong becomes ambiguous, “the end always justifies the means” is a common lie we tell ourselves — until someone asks, “what then justifies the end?”

*So, it is in the interest of our well-being that we are ready to forgive others as if they are children who did not mean what they did, because as Alexander Pope says, “to be angry is to revenge the faults of others on ourselves”. This in no way means that they should not be responsible for their actions, but only that they are given a chance to turn over a new leaf and become better versions of themselves faster.*

**BE FAIR**

Children are adept in spotting unfairness and inconsistencies. And the most unfair thing in life is none other than life itself.

But just because life is unfair, that does not mean we have to be too. I met a child at the market in town. He was working there to support his family. Despite being born into poverty, he did not resort to unfair means such as stealing to resolve his financial issues. Instead, he chose to work honestly as a store-helper.

This child showed me that if I think something is lacking in life, I should do something about it and not just drown myself in sorrow and despair.

**RIGHT IS RIGHT AND WRONG IS WRONG**

Sometimes, children have a better sense of what is right and what is wrong than us adults. When the divide between right and wrong becomes ambiguous, “the end always justifies the means” is a common lie we tell ourselves — until someone asks, “what then justifies the end?” It is always easier to make up excuses than to own up to our mistakes.

Just as we teach our children to apologise and make right of their mistakes, we too have to lead by example because actions speak louder than words.

**HELLO, CRUEL WORLD**

I used to wonder how someone could bring a child into a world that is full of pain and suffering. But perhaps because it is a cruel world, it is in dire need of children. Because they make it a better place.

I remember a young child who after being given a bowl of rice and iced lemon tea with the ice, he dreamt of becoming a chef. He also orders nasi lemak without the sambal and iced lemon tea with the ice. To learn more about Leaderonomics’ initiatives for youth, send an email to youth@leaderonomics.com.
GOOD VS GREAT EMPLOYEES
WHY MOST COMPANIES NEVER HIRE THE PERFECT PERSON FOR THE JOB

By JEFF HADEN
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W

ANT to hire superstars? Trying to find the “total package” is the last thing you should do. Literally, and not in the

teenage use of the word) the last thing. Why?

Talk about the typical hiring process. You work hard to find and select the right candidate. You evaluate skills and experience and then ask interview

questions to determine if the candidate possesses qualities like attention to detail, interpersonal skills, leadership ability, problem-solving skills – the list goes on.

This process is exhaustive and, well, exhausting.

Still, while many of the people who get hired turn out to be good employees, few of them turn out to be what every company

really needs: great employees. Why? Those companies – and the peo-

ple making the decisions – took the job description approach to hiring.

THINK ABOUT JOB DESCRIPTIONS

They list a wide variety of qualifica-
tions the employee should possess.
Typically, attributes like “self-motivated”, “able to work with minimal supervi-
sion”, “able to prioritise and handle multi-
ple tasks”, and “able to work well alone or as a member of a team” are included.

So, what happens?

People begin evaluating candidates with those requirements in mind. The candidate who ticks the most boxes is usually selected – and the company ends up hiring good when they really need great.

THINK ABOUT THE TRULY GREAT EMPLOYEES

You know them. Rundowns, some are not, but all possess at least one incredible skill.

They do at least one critical thing so well that people are willing to overlook

some of their deficiencies. They may not “take a collaborative approach to problem solving” but they sure do make your fulfilment facility sing. A great employee has what you really need. All other attributes on the job description, while important, pale in comparison.

The next time you hire an employee, set the job description approach aside and take this approach instead.

1 Determine what you really need.

Forget about finding a “well-
rounded employee” (whatever that is). If you could only pick one or two attributes, what are the most important skills or qualities you need?

Those attributes will often change depending on your current needs. So, ignore the job description. Forget the position; think about the job. Decide what you really need the new employee to do.

HubSpot chief technology officer Dharmesh Shah says, “You don’t need a VP [vice-president] of anything... you need a Doer-Of-Things-That-Need-To-Get-Done.”

2 Decide what you really don’t need.

When ticking off boxes on a list of qualifications, it’s easy to forget that you simply can’t live with some attributes, regardless of how solid the candidate appears to be. Complete this sentence about a theoretical employee: “I don’t care how great she is, I would still let her go because she...”

Those are your no-go attributes. Never lose sight of them.

3 Do a first pass.

Set aside every candidate who doesn’t have what you really need. Don’t be tempted by the “Wow, he really has a wide range of skills” candidate. If he doesn’t bring the one or two attributes you really need, he may turn out to be just a good employee.

Then, set aside every candidate with an attribute on your “no way” list. They won’t be great either.

4 Conduct highly focused interviews.

Spend 10% of your time assessing general qualities and 90% of your time ensuring the candidate truly has what you need.

Ask for examples. Ask lots of follow-up questions. Write everything down.

Then, check references and use your notes to help you ask specific questions. Sure, some companies won’t provide any information, but many small busi-

nesses will.

Many will say that they are not allowed to share information about previous employees. When that happens, try saying, “I understand. I just really worried I might make a mistake. Could you perhaps tell me, if you were me, would you hire him?”

You’ll be surprised by how many people who will help you out with a whispered “yes” or “no”.

5 Assess the “total employee”

If a candidate seems relatively equal in terms of what you really need, then decide which one best meets your more subjective criteria.

Conduct a second interview if neces-
sary. “Nice to have” qualities because you’ve done everything possible to identify the candidates who have the attributes you truly need.

YOUR THOUGHTS

What do you think? Do you hire people who have that one skill you most need, or do you try to hire candidates who appear to be the total package?

Jeff Haden is a speaker, ghostwriter, and author of “The Motivation Myth: How Highl y Successful People Really Set Themselves Up to Win.” Email your thoughts about this article to editor@leaderonomics.com.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Not only will sharing the leader-
ship role take some burden off the leaders’ shoulders, but employees will feel more empowered and much more engaged.

Jeff Economy has written more than 80 books on a variety of business and leadership topics. Do you have any tips to add to this list? Share your thoughts with us at editor@leaderonomics.com.
T
t he key difference between a company that stays on the cut-
ting edge and one that fades away, always boils down to one
t hing: Decisions.

Every department or business unit has its own priorities and expertise, and most organisations make decisions with a con-
sensus building process. While it seems natural to try to get
everyone ‘on board’, it turns out there is a better way.

Amy Kates, the managing partner of Kates Kesler Organization Consulting and
co-author of Bridging Organization Design and Performance, says the real issue with re-
aching agreement across departments is often baked into the company itself.

She explains that, by design, teams
have tension baked into them, because
each single department is built to focus	on totally different priorities and tasks.
Organisations unintentionally end up with “silos” because of this. It’s extremely
important to bridge these departments to inspire a more communal focus.

She broke it down further: “Companies
that make better and faster decisions
than their competition, win.”

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

To speed up good decisions, the best
thing you can do is stop trying to get
everyone unanimously to agree on some-
thing, and instead “focus on structured
collaboration”.

Start-ups and younger companies are
especially prone to falling into the agree-
ment trap.

In an attempt to be democratic, they end up wasting
capital, so everyone can feel comfortable
with their decision, instead of making a
strong (if not, all that popular) choice.

Kates warns that while consensus
seems collaborative on the surface, it often elicits debates and brainstorming
sessions instead of a targeted solution.

Department heads enter into decision-
making with one thing in mind: voice
your opinion and advocate for the smart-
est decision.

However, this creates an environment
where everyone is only saying for the decision
that best suits their own needs.

The difference is subtle, but debilitating:
“Consensus means we all have to agree. And that means that everyone in
the group has a veto. To reach an agree-
ment, what happens is the group tends to sub-optimise the solution,” Kates
explains.

By having multiple people cut down
solutions for not being the best fit to
their department, very good ideas can
often end up on the cutting room floor.
This means everyone will put in the
two cents on how choices will affect their
own work. Providing context is good, but
aiming to find common ground is where
things can get tricky.

“Common ground might not be the
best outcome for the organisation,” Kates
says.

“We may not have a good decision,
and we may not have a fast decision.
What do we do have is ‘everybody feels
good’.

What can we do to start coming to decisions more quickly without becoming
tangled in the search for agreement?”

1 KNOW YOUR GOALS GOING IN

Kates’s strongest recommendation is
to realign your goals. Is your organisation
trying to come to a concrete and final
decision?

Then reaching interdepartmental
agreement should not be your top prior-
ity.

When department heads come togeth-
er for a meeting, they are coming armed
with their own issues and trepidations.
This should be acknowledged, but not
owed on.

First, you should outline the nature of
your meeting: if it’s to make a decision,
then release the pressure of consensus.
Embrace different perspectives but
understand that there is no ‘silver bullet’
solution to any problem.

2 START TO LET GO

In the end, it’s all about trust.

“What we counsel our clients to do is to delegate as much as possible,
right? To trust in another, let go,
and say ‘Look, you make the decision
unless there are issues that involve me.
Otherwise I trust you to make a good
decision’.”

This may be a particularly painful part
for any leaders or business-owners, but
by trusting your employees, you are effec-
tively speeding up the process.

3 GIVE THE ‘GOLDEN VOTE’

One person, perhaps the head of
the department most likely to execute
the decision, has to make the choice and
accept responsibility.

As Kates explains it: “… one role has
what we call the ‘golden vote’. It means
that you’re accountable for the quality
of the decision.

“For bringing the right voices, the right
data, and making sure there’s a candid
conversation. And at the end of the day,
if we can’t find a decision we align on, you
make a well-informed call and we move
to execution.

Nothing is perfect, so trust that you’ve
weighed your options and execute your
choice confidently.

So, who has the ‘golden vote’ in your
next big decision?

Kevin Kruse is a New York Times bestsell-
ing author, keynote speaker, and leader-
ship expert. He is the founder of The Kruse
Group. To engage with him, email us at
editor@leaderonomics.com.

2 5-MINUTE FAVOUR

Adam Rifkin, named
Fortune’s best networker on LinkedIn
believes you should be willing to do
something that will take you five
minutes or less for anybody without
thinking about being repaid.

After retiring in his 30s as a suc-
cessful entrepreneur, Rifkin began
doing favours by introducing and
connecting people to jobs or business
opportunities, starting with three
introductions every day.

The essence of this is to pick a
favour that take at least five minutes
and excel at it.

This could even be asking someone
what they’re working on so you’ll
have a better understanding on what
they help might need.

2 PRIORITISE

As much as we want to help
everyone, this is very much impossi-
ble without sacrificing yourself.

A great rule of thumb to live by is this:
line-up friends, family, col-
leagues and everyone else, although
there is, sometimes, a fine line
between friends and colleagues.

The question to be asked before
leaving a hand is: Will this affect my
time/relationship with my family?

If not, then go ahead and help the
person.

It’s a great way to keep one’s self-
balance without having to jeopardise
other relationships and burn out.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How else can you become a suc-
cessful giver in a world perceived as
full of takers?

Rohin is a low：%graduate and free-

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and reflective writing. Share your
thoughts with us at editor@leadero-
nomics.com.

Ever found yourself overbur-
dened with work, only to have more things piled on
your plate? Struggling to stay
“no” at work for fear of it
affecting your performance?
Check out this infographic
on how you can say “no” at
work — and still keep your
job.

Work is a convenient excuse
for not taking care of yourself.
Not exercising, poor diet, and stress are a
bad combination. Go make
time for yourself. Don’t wait
until you get a heart attack.
Check out this story on
Leaderonomics.com. bit.ly/DLdayNo

TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS

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nomics.com for more details.

By ROHINI RAJARATNAM

editor@leaderonomics.com

“Being a successful giver
means being helpful while not
sacrificing your own goals.”

– Adam Grant

MERIAM-Webster defines the term ‘give-and-take’ as the practice of
making mutual concessions. In other
words, it involves compromising or
reciprocating the circumstances we are in.
Wharton University of Pennsylvania professor Adam Grant, also author of Give and Take: A Revolutional Approach to Success,
gives a dichotomy of behavioural styles people adopt in
pursuing success.

There are the takers which he
explains as having a distinctive signa-
ture in that they like to get more than they give.

Takers lift reciprocity in their own
favour, putting their own interests
above anyone else. In short, takers
attempt to maximise profits and
work solely for themselves.

The other group are called the
matchers or here is
what other people need from them.
Take, for example, someone who is
willing to help others by making an
introduction, giving advice or even
imparting some knowledge without
any strings attached.

However, there is also a third cat-
egory, i.e. the matchers, and here is
where majority of the population is
categorised.

Matchers strive to preserve an
equal balance of giving and getting.
They operate on the principle of fair-
ness, that is when they help others, they
practically expect them to do the same.

According to the study by Grant,
givers are considered the most suc-
cessful.

Givers lift reciprocity in the other
direction, preferring to give more
than they get. They are more other-
focused, paying more attention to

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By KEVIN KRUSE

editor@leaderonomics.com

STAYING RELEVANT

START BY MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS

“Give and Take: A Revolutionary Approach to Success”
by Adam Grant

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10
PROFESSIONALISM MATTERS

A GREAT TEST ON SELF-CONTROL

Here are six ways to show up more professionally.

1. Get a grip on your emotions
   When you try to do everything, it’s hard to do the most important things well. If you want to be taken more seriously, pick a few strategic priorities that will make the biggest impact and build a strong plan to execute elegantly on those things first.

2. Focus on what matters most
   When your boss asks for an update, don’t come in spewing all the details; bring a bulleted list of what you’ve done and what you need. Consider who you’re speaking to and how your communication can serve them well.

3. Build some white space into your calendar
   When you over-book your calendar, you’re more likely to find yourself racing late into meetings, disheveled and under-prepared. Try leaving yourself a few minutes between appointments so you have time to gather your thoughts, connect with key stakeholders before the meeting starts, and consider how you can bring the most value to the table. A little white space will also help you resist the urge to multitask with your phone under the table while “no one is looking.”

4. Streamline your communication
   Before speaking, consider your audience. When the CEO “casually” asks, “How’s it going?” be ready to tell her something substantial.

5. Develop upwards empathy
   Before you write your boss off as a witch, consider the pressure she’s under and how you can help. Professionalism requires perspective.

6. Stop talking trash
   You don’t have to convince me, I’m sure you’ve got some peers who would be better off being “promoted to customer.” And, nobody likes a whiner.

CONCLUSION

Your turn. What’s your best advice for managers looking to show up more professionally?

Karin Hurt is a keynote speaker, leadership consultant, and MBA professor. She has decades of experience in sales, customer service, and human resources which she uses to help clients turn around results through deeper engagement. If you want more opportunities to win well, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com.

Emotions. They’re antithetical to rationality, representing the disruptive to the ordered. Do emotions, however, deserve to be cast under such an unfavourable light? Check out why it’s important for you to be rational about the emotional when making sound decisions:

bit.ly/ETEmotions

Online Exclusive

Ravindran Navaratnam reflects on Tun Dr. Mahathir’s pragmatic approach to problem-solving and a proven ability to adapt to changing conditions, as well as other reasons for why there is hope and an incredible opportunity for a much better Malaysia. Read more at:

bit.ly/restructuringRN

"That's what games are, in the end. Teachers. Fun is just another word for learning."

- Raph Koster, game designer

Nicknamed “Woz”, Steve Wozniak never created or invented 'stuff' to become rich and famous. He simply wanted to ‘make cool stuff’, and that was what motivated him. Leaderonomics’ CEO Roshan Thiran shares the formula for happiness, success, and life that he learnt from the Wizard of Woz. Listen to the podcast:

bit.ly/RYGstevewozniak

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POMPOUS, CONCEITED, EGOTISTIC...

ALL THAT'S UGLY IN LEADERSHIP BEGINS WITH ARROGANCE

By DAN ROCKWELL
editor@leaderonomics.com

ARROGANCE. It’s such an ugly word. Sadly, the ones who are arrogant may not know that they are. Want to do a self-check?

You might be arrogant if you:
1. Look down your nose on those you serve. Arrogance views others as burdens and irritations.
2. Beat yourself up over little mistakes. Arrogance can’t learn from failure, because failure is not an option for pomposity.
3. Feel anger as a first response to human frailty.
4. Secretly manipulate, rather than openly influence. Arrogance has a personal agenda. Influence seeks the highest good of organisations and individuals.
5. Help from a high tower of superiority. You’re arrogant if giving help puffs you up, but receiving help is out of the question.
6. Cheat to win. Saving face makes integrity a convenience, not a necessity.
7. Consider people as objects to be used for personal gain.
8. Reject the idea of dependence and interdependence and choose to stand aloof.
9. Criticise first and ask questions never.
10. Respond with ungratefulness.

Entitlement robs arrogance of gratitude.
12. Put receiving value before giving value.
12. View leadership as an entitlement, not as an opportunity to serve.
13. ‘Get it’ and others don’t. Arrogance is always ‘right’.
14. Push back with explanations, justifications, and excuses when receiving tough feedback. If you want to see a person’s true character, give them tough feedback.
15. Never seek feedback. Giving feedback is the only option for arrogance.
16. Your world is best explained with ‘I, me, and mine’.

THE CURE
The idea that you can overcome arrogance is an expression of, well... arrogance. Don’t try to overcome arrogance. You can’t stop that puffy feeling in your chest when respected leaders respect you. It just happens.

The practice of humility is the only cure for arrogance.

How might leaders overcome arrogance?

There’s a fine line between confidence and arrogance, but it’s a line that effective leaders dare not cross if they want to be a leader worth following. Check out this article to learn more: bit.ly/confidenceorarrogance

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You’ll see us in print again on June 23rd.
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www.leaderonomics.com
By Ling Gen Shan

editor@leaderonomics.com

GAME-based learning has the ability to instil significant motivation in students and offers a practical learning exercise to enhance effective learning. It helps to transform dull, dry classroom learning into an enjoyable, engaging experience that motivates students to participate in an absorbing learning process. When the learning is interesting, we don’t learn. When we are involved, we are excited to learn.

Elements of video games, such as scoring points, or “leveling up,” act as a reward motivation for players, who are driven to carry on and improve in their skills in order to achieve these rewards. As a result, the student becomes aware of any learning that is taking place, as it takes place within a framework of excitement and interest to the individual.

Games expose learning outside the classroom – they can instil a hunger for knowledge in students that they otherwise may not experience through conventional methods.

Games provide a safe and controlled environment to help students learn different skills, such as hard-to-experience to coordinations, more complex skills like problem-solving and strategic thinking.

More importantly, this model of development offers the student the opportunity to “learn by doing,” which deepens the understanding of whatever a particular game experience has to teach.

Experiential learning is made easier using video games. In some cases, they replicate real-world scenarios, which allows for the kind of learning that would be easily transformed to actual practice.

We might consider, for example, a game that helps to prepare learners for the actual task of driving a car. Learning to drive involves a framework of excitement and interest, which is key – not winning a race. Players are allowed to learn in a safe environment, where everything is taking place in real time. As long as we remember to fail, we can learn.

Why it works

Motivation is the key element behind the success of game-based learning. Points and leader boards are often used in games because they are extremely motivating for players to accumulate points and achieve high ranking positions.

Traditional learning doesn’t motivate students. Learning to drive, for example, is a task that students have to learn, yet it doesn’t motivate students. In games, however, the game is designed to reward the learner to experience time flow; there is no awareness of any learning, and so they become focused and “in the zone’.

Further, the fun of engaging in game-based learning means that people want to spend more time with it.

THE BENEFITS OF GAME-BASED LEARNING

By Ling Gen Shan
editor@leaderonomics.com

WAYS GAMES AID LEARNING

THEY MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO LEARN

Before we learn anything, we have to be motivated. We also need to be exposed to relevant material that will facilitate learning. Games enable us to do that, as they quickly cultivate knowledge and cope with the skills to play the game and lead the board rankings. Motivation is then used to work towards a sense of achievement. Also, games allow the learner to experience time flow, there is no awareness of time passing, and so they become focused and “in the zone”.

Further the fun of engaging in game-based learning means that people want to spend more time with it.

GAMES PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE, FROM THE MOST COMPLEX KNOWLEDGE, WHERE STUDENTS SHOULD TOGETHER WORK THROUGH MORE DIFFICULT TASKS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP SKILLS AND TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND BASIC CONCEPTS BEFORE MOVING ON TO MORE COMPLEX PROBLEMS.

Games provide knowledge, from the hard to the more complex knowledge, where students face each other and work through more difficult tasks together to develop skills and to be able to understand basic concepts before moving on to more complex problems.

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