

winner!

Using Gamification in
Reward and Recognition
to improve Employee
Engagement


QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICES

WHAT IS GAMIFICATION?

“It is the use of use of game design elements in a non-game context”

It is a common misconception that gamification is the application of games that are created for a business purpose, but Gamification is not about the mechanics of games as such, and not even about creating something new.

Gamification is about enhancing an already existing experience by applying proven motivational techniques that encourage interaction with customers, employees and partners, to help drive sales, stronger employee engagement, increased profits and customer satisfaction.

THE IMPACT OF ENGAGEMENT

“Gamification is exciting because it promises to make the hard stuff in life fun”

Gamification can give you influence over your employees actions. It can be used to encourage desired behaviours, drive participation, educate and ultimately improve engagement.

- LiveOps, a call center outsourcing firm, reported that adding game elements to reward employees reduced call times by 15% while increasing sales at least 8% and customer satisfaction 9%. The company also reduced training time from four weeks to only 14 hours when it added badges and rankings to motivate its workforce.
- Companies like Spotify and LivingSocial have already replaced traditional reviews with mobile and gamified versions and have reported that 90% of employees are voluntarily participating in the programmes.

Adding gamification to your site can boost engagement by 1/3.

- With gamification your may see improvements in:

CONTENT DISCOVERY



COMMUNICATION



ON SITE TIME



SOCIAL SHARING



1. <http://www.nirandfar.com/2014/09/its-not-all-fun.html>

2. <http://www.gameffective.com/?rid=gaw&keyword=gamification&gclid=CN6Xnt22k8ICFarKtAodhjYAQw>

GAMIFICATION AND THE FOUR ENABLERS OF ENGAGEMENT

The four enablers of engagement have proved to be useful lenses to help organisations

The four enablers of engagement (as defined by the Engage For Success movement) have proved to be useful lenses to help organisations assess the effectiveness of their approaches. Reward and recognition, using gamification techniques, can have a positive impact on each of these enablers:

- Visible, empowering leadership providing a strong strategic narrative about the organisation, where it's come from and where it's going.
- Engaging managers who focus their people and give them scope, treat their people as individuals and coach and stretch their people.
- There is employee voice throughout the organisation, reinforcing and challenging views between functions and externally, where employees are seen as central to the solution.
- There is organisational integrity – the values on the wall are reflected in day to day behaviours. There is no 'say – do' gap.

HOW CAN GAMIFICATION BE USED TO IMPROVE REWARD AND RECOGNITION PROGRAMMES?

Adding gamification to your site can boost engagement by 1/3

Gamification can be used to improve the effectiveness of reward and recognition programmes. This could be through literally introducing game play, by awarding points for demonstrating certain behaviours or by introducing some sort of interactive aspect (for example a 'like' function, or allowing users to 'follow' live recognition feeds) to encourage peer to peer participation.

There are four immediately obvious applications for gamification in this area:

1. Drive people to complete an action

Gamification can be used to encourage users to complete a certain action by rewarding them for completing that action.

2. Improve product knowledge

Gamification can be used to improve employees' product knowledge through games that are introduced once a training course has been completed, interactive quizzes or offering employees the chance to take part in a game once they have read product documentation.

CASE STUDY - BRITISH GAS SIMPLY THANK YOU

Users see the list of nominees scroll across the screen. They then need to pull the light switch/cord which turns off the light, leaving the winners names 'glowing' on screen

The British Gas 'Simply Thank You' recognition scheme gives employees the chance to nominate their peers on a website for something they believe has been done well, or simply to say thank you for an action that demonstrates one of the company's values.

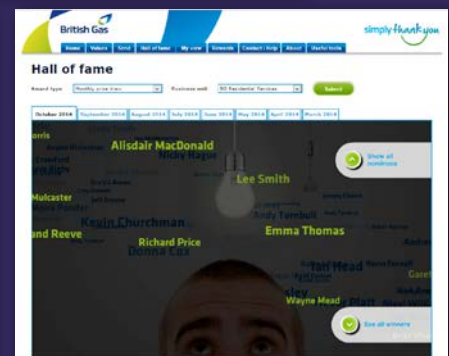
Users are able to 'like' nominations, and also follow people in their team or those chosen by them to see what recognition they may be receiving.

Nominations are encouraged through a prize draw, the winners of which are announced online each month and shown through an interactive video.

Users see the list of nominees scroll across the screen. They then need to pull the light switch/cord which turns off the light, leaving the winners names 'glowing' on screen.

The winning nominees are then awarded points that they are able to redeem for vouchers or merchandise as a reward.

Using gamification in this way encourages employees to use the system and thank their colleagues on a regular basis.



3. Drive employee performance

Gamification can be used to drive employees to perform certain actions, such as hit a sales or customer service target. By setting incremental targets that are achievable for the individual and personalising the website with suitable communications, rather than applying a 'one size fits all' approach, organisations can engage employees at all levels, not just top performers.

CASE STUDY – VOLKSWAGEN COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

The games are simple to play, such as matching pairs or picking the winning box

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles (VWCV) offer dealership employees the chance to play an online game once they have achieved a certain number of sales. So only those users that have met their targets are eligible to a game play.

The game plays can be linked to sales of vehicles or parts incentives, encouraging employees to increase their product and brand knowledge, so that in turn they are able to improve their sales. The more sales achieved, the more opportunities to play and win points that can be exchanged for vouchers or merchandise of their choice.

There are various qualifying criteria, meaning that all staff have equal opportunity to play (sales teams, technical support and office staff alike).

The games are simple to play, such as matching pairs or picking the winning box.

Giving employees the opportunity to play these games appeals to their competitive nature. This will result in them striving to increase their product knowledge in order to make more sales, encouraging brand engagement, and ultimately increasing ROI for the company.



4. Improve Internal Communication

Gamification can be used to drive employees to a website, to look at company communications for example. Users can be rewarded for simply reading particular pages or visiting the area of the site that Managers feel is a real relevance to that individual. Winners of a prize draw can be announced each month via the site, thereby expanding on the opportunities to encourage users to visit.

CASE STUDY – TALARIUS

By encouraging two-way communication, employees know that their suggestions are being listened to and taken seriously

Talarius have implemented a suggestions programme to show their employees that their feedback is important and makes a genuine difference to the company. Employees are rewarded for successful suggestions with points that can be exchanged for vouchers or merchandise as well as their suggestion appearing in a 'Hall of Fame'.

Employees input their ideas through an interactive website, aligned against the company values. They are then able to see their progress and are rewarded when their idea is a 'winning spin' and is put into practice.

Using gamification in this manner, employees are able to see their ideas come to life. By encouraging two-way communication, employees know that their suggestions are being listened to and taken seriously, thus improving employee engagement.

Core Value	Name	Impact	Action
Customer Focused			View
Profit			View
Time Saving			View
Cost Reduction			View

USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT

“Digital technology is not about what we can create and present, it’s about what the employee is able to do with it to better their experience”

There are numerous reasons why technology and ever advancing social media techniques should be considered when implementing a motivation programme for employees.

Social media techniques, mobile applications and other technological advances are an important tool and when used in the right way, can have a huge impact on encouraging employees to recognise their peers and to keep them engaged in any chosen programme.

With a variety of social techniques and technologies available to employers, and with new ones being created all the time, it is crucial to assess which will appeal to the audience of the scheme. Whilst the application of ‘likes’, comment functionality and mobile optimisation may seem a useful addition to any scheme it is important not to waste valuable budget on underutilised technology.

Use focus groups, feedback surveys and trial new additions prior to any company-wide roll out. It is easy to become blinkered by technology that replicates everything available to you as a consumer, but remember, as an employer the relationship you have and the interaction your programme website has with your employees will be different from their social interactions at home. You must ensure that any new technology will have a genuinely positive impact on desired outcomes and the overall objectives of the scheme. That being said, if the technology applied is well aligned to your objectives, it can have a genuinely positive impact on engagement...

CASE STUDY – EON

Every 2 minutes, an E.ON employee receives a personalised ‘thank you’ from a colleague or customer sent via their “Buzz” recognition scheme. Since the programme was launched in 2013, 76% of the company’s employees – more than 49,000 people – have been recognised. The Buzz recognition scheme has succeeded in meeting all E.ON’s objectives at the same time as achieving a 40% reduction in budget compared to the company’s previous, more reward focussed, scheme.

Key statistics relating to engagement and motivation have improved by up to 18%. The programme has also boosted ‘employees understanding of the company vision’ to 75%.

Interestingly E.ON used very little communications regarding the scheme, it has been described as ‘going viral’ as a result of employees feeling ownership over the scheme.

CASE STUDY – BRITISH GAS

British Gas ensured that their field staff were more engaged in their online Simply Thank You recognition scheme by developing a mobile friendly version of the programme website. As a result, a huge 72% of the field staff population have either used the system to thank their colleagues or to receive recognition themselves – a dramatic increase on filed staff interaction prior to the mobile launch.

CASE STUDY – VIRGIN MEDIA

Virgin Media has evolved its recognition programme, Shout, from a paper-based scheme to a social media model in line with the organisation's focus on technology in recent years.

When Virgin Mobile was rebranded to Virgin Media in February 2007, the paper based recognition programme was moved to the company intranet, and in 2009 employee profile pages were introduced (similar to those used on Facebook), on which the recognition could be displayed.

A recent company wide employee engagement survey has revealed that receivers of peer recognition nominations ("Shouts") are 4% more engaged than those employees who had not received any and the top 200 receivers of shouts were 12% more engaged than other employees.

MEASURING SUCCESS

It is obvious that there are huge applications for using gamification in motivation programmes, making them more appealing to users. Landers (2013) suggests that by 2014, 70% of Fortune Global 2000 will use gamification, but that 80% of those efforts will fail! So when introducing gamification, the most important thing to consider is whether the results can be measured, thus confirming whether it has achieved its original objectives.

- By using gamification to increase participation (such as British Gas 'Simply Thank You' scheme), the results are easy to measure. Within the system that has been built it is possible to see how many people have logged in and for how long, whether they have made nominations (against which corporate values), who has viewed the prize draw video etc.

- Through using gamification in the way VWCV have for dealership staff, to increase product knowledge and sales, it is also easy to see whether the strategy has achieved its goals - by measuring sales figures against incentivised models since the games were implemented against benchmarking statistics.
- It could be argued that trying to measure an increase in employee feedback (which is the aim of the Talarius gamification) is a slightly more difficult thing to quantify, as people only log in when they have a suggestion to make. However, it is still possible to see what percentage of staff are logging in, how many suggestions are being made and whether staff turnover has decreased since the introduction of the scheme.

Engagement is by far the most important measure for success in gamification. If employees are enthused by gamified applications then there will likely be a knock on effect on overall engagement levels.

SUMMARY

A gamified application must offer a worthwhile experience that appeals to users; otherwise people are simply not going to use it. At the same time, its success has to be measurable.

Gamification should encourage employees to demonstrate chosen company values, which ultimately is the goal of any good motivation programme. When planning the implementation of a motivation programme, it is important to make sure there are clear measurable objectives, and when using gamification that the results can be measured.

Gamification is so much more than just adding a flashy game to a website. Done in the right way, gamification can have a huge impact on the success of your motivation programme and ultimately the success of your business.

ABOUT SODEXO

Engagement encourages employees to buy-in to the goals, ambitions and corporate ethos of an organisation in a way that will inspire them to drive the business forward proactively and generate success.

Sodexo's dedicated motivation division helps organisations to engage their workforce through [award winning recognition schemes](#) and branded [incentive schemes](#) which improve performance and talent retention and, unlike cash incentives, provide detailed reporting to demonstrate return on investment.

Headquartered in Milton Keynes, the company is part of Sodexo, which employs over 500 people from a wide range of specialist and vertical sector backgrounds.

For further information please visit www.staffmotivationmatters.co.uk.