

One of the latest buzzwords to run rampant throughout the gaming world is the idea of gamification. The idea of taking the sets and rules established within video games and applying them to real life. However, there is one problem with this concept. When one actually takes a look at the way their lives and the world works, one cannot be mistaken for thinking that life is already a game, and that the push for gamification is just a fad that will pass.

The purpose of this video is to give the uninformed details on what the concept of gamification is and how, exactly, it is flawed as such. To begin with, Merriam-Webster defines “gamification” as:

The process of adding games or gamelike elements to something (as a task) so as to encourage participation

Simply put, gamification encourages people fulfill tasks because it is like a game. But, the definition goes further than that. Continuing on, the same definition includes a quote directly below from J.J. Rosen where he states:

Easy-to-use Web- and mobile-based learning platforms ... take the boredom out of long training sessions by gamifying the entire process. A training manual is replaced by an interactive game that allows participants to win awards and be acknowledged.

For those who do not know who J.J. Rosen is, he is the founder and chairman of Atiba, a computer company started in 1992 that works in numerous technical fields. With these credentials it shouldn't be much of a stretch to consider Rosen an informed person on software development given his 25 years of experience. However, there are numerous counterpoints to the position that Rosen, and many other software companies, fail to understand.

To begin with, let's pick apart the first red flag that comes up, the indication of instant gratification for an employee gaining acknowledgment from a training course, not the actual job. Using the definition provided by the magazine *Entrepreneur*, they state that:

Instant gratification is the desire to experience pleasure or fulfillment without delay or deferment. Basically, it's when you want it; and you want it now.

The article goes on to state that the increased expectancy of instant gratification has happened as a result of technologies rapid growth. While one may not see this as an issue, The Boston Globe outlined the numerous

problems with instant gratification such as the increased focus on having quick fix moments with a smartphone game, the loss of focus on reading any material, and the increased spending habits of people. To return to the article on *Entrepreneur*, they also take care to point out that instant gratification goes against everything that life supposedly teaches people as they grow up.

Another flag that rises up with the concept of gamification is the concept that learning should be “fun”. According to a couple teachers, the learning process is an exercise with both it's high and low moments in enjoyment. And, they point out that learning will have it's moments it isn't fun and is actually quite difficult. But, they continue on to say that people need to learn to push pasted that otherwise they will fall victim incidents later in life with one author saying:

Fast forward five or ten years when the same two students begin their first job, and consider how responsive their supervisor will be if they express their boredom with an assigned task. Perhaps they become entrepreneurs and need to put in the long, grueling hours that most start-ups require. Will they have the ability and discipline to carry-out that dream if they did not grasp that learning is usually beneficial, but not always enjoyable?

However, this is just going off of the word of blog posts and teaching children. What do actual publications say on teaching with alternative methods and how it works with adults? In the professional development magazine *Training*, there is an article that states how learning through videos are not at all superior to the learning one can have from printed material. The article takes extreme detail in pointing out how videos themselves are an expensive resource for people to produce and watch, how videos lack any amount of privacy or engagement, and that it will reflect badly in the employee for taking time to watch a video instead of doing their job. To contrast, the author brings up how printed text is already a superior method because of how cheap they are to produce, change, and update, and how easy it is for employees to search for what they need to with all reading methods including a search function. In addition, the author ends the article by stating how employees are demanding for a greater amount of control, and how the process of using videos to educate exactly counters that.

But, then again, this just applies to videos, what about video games. To give perspective, the average film lasts about 90 to 120 minutes, meanwhile a video game mostly lasts about 8-10 hours. However, there is more than just the length of the media. A feature film can take 6 months to a year to produce, meanwhile a game, even for a small and low budget title, can take almost 2 years of development, and this is leaving out other factors such as advancing technology, cost of production and sales, continuing support, and how hard it is to shift the game's development once production has started.

However, as mentioned earlier, the way that society has established itself is already very similar to how a game functions, which counters the entire point of gamification. And, this isn't new information. For decades, people have written books describing how to succeed in life using very simple methods and systems with people claiming that the practiced use of these actions almost always guarantee success. For those looking to enhance their communication skills, there is the age old book *How to Win Friends & Influence People* by Dale Carnegie and *You Are the Message* by Roger Ailes. For those looking for info on how to do well in business, there's *How I Raised Myself From Failure to Success in Selling* by Frank Bettger and Robert Kiyosaki's entire *Rich Dad Poor Dad* series. For those looking to succeed in their hobbies, passions, or other areas of life, there's *The Compound Method* by Darren Hardy and *The One Thing* by Gary Keller and Jay Papasan. And, for those who just want to be considered an extraordinary individual, there's *the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey and the *8 Attributes of Great Achievers* series by Cameron Taylor.

While some will pass this off as a push to “Become a better person”, they're missing the broader picture. These books themselves are references on the systems and mechanics society has built itself around since the beginning of time, and how to use those systems and mechanics to achieve your success. With games, the same method happens where you're taught the games mechanics and systems and you use those to your advantage to progress from area to area, from level to level, from boss to boss, until you finally beat the game.

However, there is one little problem with life when compared to what one will experience in a game. That problem is that life, often times, is not fun and that it is a long and painful process from day to day. All of the books just listed, and a number of the references used to write this episode, all made that clear and simple.

But, they all counteract that point by saying that pushing oneself beyond these hardships will cause growth within yourself, and that these problems and hardships will not be as hurtful, dull, and time-consuming as they once were.

And, so, Operation Rapid Fire wants to make aware that life is very much like a game already, with numerous how-to guides on how to “win” it, and that we should probably see about using these mechanics where they already exist rather than forcing them where they don't.

References:

- **Ask a Game Developer:** *Game Development Myths: Multiplayer Takes Away from Single Player (part 2 of 2)* - <https://archive.fo/ptInI>
- **Ask a Game Developer:** *Q - Anonymous asked: I've heard that multiplayer takes money away from the single player game and heard that it doesn't. Can you shine some light on the matter?* - <https://archive.fo/CA6EK>
- **Atiba.com:** JJ Rosen Nashville Web Developer Nashville Web Design | Programming | IT - <https://archive.fo/TjHzu>
- **The Boston Globe:** *The growing culture of impatience, where instant gratification makes us crave more instant gratification* - <https://archive.fo/e8oF4>
- **Entrepreneur:** *The Psychology of Instant Gratification and How It Will Revolutionize Your Marketing Approach* - <https://archive.fo/UJ8Nh>
- **Heather Sanders:** *Should Learning Always Be Fun?* – <https://archive.fo/TcJYp>
- **LinkedIn:** JJ Rosen - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/atibasoftware>
- **Merriam-Webster:** Gamification - <https://archive.fo/RADyE>
- **Quora:** *How long does it take to make a feature film? Do actors often work on more than one project at a time?* - <https://archive.fo/nUx5K>

- **Quora:** *How long does it take to make a good movie?* - <https://archive.fo/N7zaI>
- **Successful Teaching:** *Should Learning Be Fun?* - <https://archive.fo/DZ1FZ>
- **Training Magazine:** *Why Video Learning Isn't Always Best* - <https://archive.fo/BBYAf>