A Study of Gamification and its Use in HR

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Abstract

Business technology has modified the way companies conduct business. Companies need to adapt to changing technology and market variations, but they cannot succeed if they have an unmotivated team that are unwilling to change. Thus, companies need to provide incentives and employ the gaming techniques game designers use to keep players interested, in order to achieve the engagement needed for the transformation of business operations. Gamification is the new buzz word, in the shift of management to more lean functions of strategic management and with the millennial generation impacting the corporate world. The traditional approach of long work is shifting to more fun at work. This reduces boredom due to traditional methods. This paper analyses the role of gamification in the HR functions and also the current scenario of the techniques being used by the companies.

Keywords: Gamification, HR, Effectiveness, Human Capital management

Objectives:

- Explore the scope of gamification in attracting, induction, training and development of the employees.
- Raise awareness and understanding about gamification in the current HR scenario
- Study the importance of gamification in today's business world

Introduction:

Gamification is defined as a method to digitally engage rather than personally engage, meaning that players interact with computers, smart phones or other digital devices [1]. This is used by the companies to motivate the employees, create healthy competition among them and encourage customer loyalty. With a variety of techniques – some easy to implement, some require advanced planning, coding, or technical expertise [2]. In an organization, there are generally three layers of management levels that can be categorized in to strategic, tactical and operational management. The technique like Gamification has to be approached more from a strategic viewpoint and arranged into the business processes so that it functions as an effective catalyst at the tactical and operational levels [3]. A typical enterprise comprises of business units that may include:

- Sales and Marketing
- Human Resources
- Finance
- Administration
- Research and Development
- Information Technology

Gamification can be applied in any of the above mentioned business unit in order t achieve the desired results. According to Book Gamification by Design co-author Gabe Zichermann, "gamification is basically 75 percent psychology and 25 percent technology." This is just a tool which taps into the psychological behaviors that govern our day-to-day decisions. This provides a platform for competition and manages the progress of your work [4]. The motive of gamification, from an employer's point of view, is to encourage the favorable behavior.

Human Resources Gamification

Human Resource Management is defined as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets- the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives [5]. It should be designed in such a way that would maximize the employee performance and would be able to achieve the strategic objectives. The technique of gamification is an attractive way to increase the visibility of Human Resources in the organization.

Most of the employees do not like much of the HR processes, but they may have an interest to play games. This process can turn the boring experience into a funny and interesting game that takes employees to the next level. The games can be used for the HR because employees talk about the new game or the competition in the business. This would ultimately increase the engagement of workers. They can see their results online on the Intranet home page which would in turn be a source of inspiration.

Role of gamification:

- **Gamification in Recruitment and Selection:** Recruitment is the process of attempting to locate and encourage potential applicants to apply for existing or anticipated job openings [6]. Traditional face-to-face campus activities still formed the foundation of the graduate information and recruitment activities, but increasingly Twitter and Facebook were used to augment these activities and draw applicants to the website and the on-line application process [7].This hiring process can also be transformed into a different gamified experience by rewarding the prospects for completing each step from application to the start date. HR teams can also use gamification internally to reward top recruiters and provide attractive incentives to the employees to refer top candidates. The attractive titles or status like "Referrer of the Year" can surely encourage the employees to take a more active role in talent acquisition. Companies like SAP AG, Microsoft Corp., Siemens AG, L'Oreal India Pvt. Ltd, HCL Technologies Ltd, Marriott International Inc, Yes bank, Lupin, etc. Yes Bank, has a flagship campus initiative called YES Professional Entrepreneurship Program (YPEP) that visits India's top B-Schools including IIMs, ISB, XLRI, NITIE, SPJIMR and IITs to get onboard the best minds of the country. This company has developed a game based app on Android and iOS to assess the core competencies of the applicants. It is much more effective than a traditional assessment. Candidates additionally receive an instant feedback that is easy to interpret and gives them an opportunity to learn something new about themselves [8]. Similarly, Godrej LOUD is also B School recruiting which helps young and talented b-school students to realize their personal dreams. In this, winners get INR 1.5 lakhs towards their dreams and an offer into their internship program [9].

- **Gamification in Induction and on boarding process:** Induction and orientation programs for new employees are essential for all the companies in order to ensure that the new employee can adopt the new working environment fast with ease and comfort [10]. Companies should develop attractive and interesting programs so that the new employees can easily understand and accept the rules and regulations of the company. Even, few companies have modified their induction programs in order to match the interest level of the millennial. Make My Trip is one of the companies who have taken this step. New joinees at MakeMyTrip have to undergo the Scavenger Hunt induction task. The company has also designed the games with picture cards and quizzes for which the employees have to click the right answers from a multiple choice list and stand to win the point on the internal "my perks" point board. These points can be redeemed later by the employees against gifts and other prizes [11].

- **Gamification in Training and Development:** Training and development is an important part of the human resource development. It is also necessary for the individual development and progress of the employee, which motivates him to work for a certain organization apart from just money [12]. Adding a gamification experience to the learning program can spur action. Employees who earn rewards and recognition for having completed these tasks, or missions in the gamification, are far more likely to make it a priority [13]. For Example: Deloitte have used gamification to transform learning into an addictive activity. They created a Leadership Academy that uses missions, badges, and leaderboards to enable the employees to acquire the skills that are most important to the company [14]. Similarly, Xerox's management training program embraced gamification to better engage trainees and to combat high turnover. This company introduced a gamified application called "Stepping Up to Management" to complement its existing program. It allows management trainees to go on quests to apply their learned skills to real work scenarios [15].

Importance of Gamification in today's business world

- **Customer Commitment**
  Customer commitment is the key driver for building brand mindfulness, holding customers and increasing more business from them. Expanded customer commitment is one of the significant advantages of gamification. It furnishes a medium to specifically cooperate with the current and potential customers. The tasks made by organizations often center around expanding customer's support with a specific end goal to drive more customer commitment. Gamification encourages in expanding the recurrence of visits, time spent per visit and causes in making the content more obvious to the visitors. Every one of these components will prompt expanded customer commitment and consequently expanded conversion rate.

- **Build Customer Data**

Gamification helps the business in characterizing and comprehending the buyers' personas of the customers. The different activities performed by every customer on the gamification application is recorded. Every one of these information focuses give the business data on how different customers associate with the application and helps in understanding the intended interest group better. Additionally, greater part of such applications require a social profile or an email id to agree to accept the application. Thus, by investigating the intended interest group, the organisation can characterize email records to perform lead sustaining exercises to create new business.

> **Influencing The Buyer Decision**
Gamification actuates fun into the day to day tasks that would typically sound dull and boring for the customers. Over a period of time, gamification has helped in impacting activities and acquiring choices. The impact can be two fold; one, through content and second, through providing incentives to the chosen few. The organizations can distribute important substance for the customers by persuading them to take activities they want. Likewise, by giving motivators as rebates for customers who have finished an arrangement of errand, organizations can impact the buy choices of their customers.

> **Increased Customer Loyalty**
Today, customers have numerous alternatives to pick the products or services they need. Organizations think that it's hard to hold customers, yet organizations need to connect with their customers and hold their enthusiasm to drive loyalty. Gamification is a powerful method for executing loyalty programs which give more significant customer connection than being simply value-based. Aside from giving financial rewards through loyalty programs, organizations can likewise give selective access to their contributions, expanded trail periods or attempt other such activities to drive unwaveringness of the customers.

Gamification is not necessarily building an app for the business. It is a process of inducing a sense competitiveness and fun into the something the business currently have. It might be creating a fun story which demonstrates various uses of the product or embedding the features of the service. Businesses can use gamification to build and sustain interactions with their customers and provide meaningful content to help the customers recognize the value of the products or services.

Conclusion

Human Resources are the vital asset for an organization. According to a survey by KPMG (2012), people matters are among the top five concerns for business leaders. As the world economies continue to globalize, organizations continue to intensify their global investment. The employees of the Industrial Revolution were known to be manual workers and those of the Information Age as knowledge workers, while employees in today's Technological era are a new kind of generation known as Digital Natives. This generation has compelled a change in the conventional ideologies of people management at workplaces by posing a challenge to organizations in general and HR managers in particular on how to manage them as they bring with them distinctive work skills and attitudes. The term gamification has become the latest buzzword in the HR world which is the use of game mechanics in non-game contexts. As games have amazing ability to hold people's attention for a long time, build relationship, win recognition and develop creativity, it is being widely used to gain business advantage by successfully attracting, engaging, motivating and retaining talent. Digitalization in Human Resources in the workplace and on leadership teams is a critical success factor in making better decisions and developing more innovative business solutions.[16]

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