The Gamification Playbook for Senior Living: Competition Breeds Excellence

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Thinking Outside The Box

• Senior housing industry at times is an incestuous one, where many operators have similar recipes of programs & systems to achieve results. While some elements of that is good, we also need to think ‘outside the box’ and be forward thinking and innovative to address today’s challenges in a much more competitive space than ever.

• Enter. . . gamification.
What Is Gamification?

• Gam·i·fi·ca·tion - The application of typical elements of game playing (e.g. point scoring, competition with others, rules of play) to other areas of activity, typically as an online marketing technique to encourage engagement with a product or service.

• But what can it be in our industry?
  Fun! Gamification is exciting because it promises to make the hard stuff in life fun. This industry is hard. Labor challenges are tough. Competition is fierce. Why not 'level up' the experience for our residents and team members?
Why Gamification?

• Bring FUN back into the day to day lives of our team members.
• Use games, challenges, contests, motivators/incentives, etc to help on a variety of fronts. If there's an issue a team is facing, I 'bet' there's a challenge/game that can be crafted to help address it.
• Hard-nosed business / financial results and fun/culture/kindness are NOT mutually exclusive.
• Rather those communities with the best financial metrics generally have the best ‘vibe/energy’ and engagement amongst their teams.
• How can we create a framework whereby these already-strong teams can continue to flourish/expand their reach, while all other teams now have a framework to aid in this fun/competitive spirit?
By The Numbers. . .

• Fun Game Fact: In 2019 Grand Theft Auto 5, which has more than $6 billion in sales, became the highest-grossing piece of entertainment of all time. It surpassed the entire Star Wars franchise, which held 2nd place with just $4 billion in sales. Meanwhile, Pokémon is the highest-grossing media franchise ever.

• About one-half of American workers are casual gamers outside of work.*

• An estimated 80 million white-collar workers in the United States are casual gamers. Moreover, a recent survey found that 24% of all U.S. white-collar office workers play casual video games on the job.

• Of the workers who admitted to casual gaming on the job, 61% reported they play games during their lunch hour or break times.

*https://www.zippia.com/advice/gamification-statistics/
In This Playbook, We Will Explore Gamification For:

- Employee Engagement and Retention
- Financial Results
- Reputation
- Resident Satisfaction
- Training
- Culture
Learning & Development
By The Numbers. . .

- **Fun Fact:** Gamification results in 14%* high scores on skill-based knowledge assessments and 11% higher scores of factual knowledge tests.

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*2019 study conducted by the University of Colorado*
Why Gamify Learning & Development?

• Increase engagement in learning and development.

• Gamification leverages inherent competitiveness to boost dopamine – the neurotransmitter responsible for motivation and reward – encouraging a cycle of engagement for learners.

• Gamification has also been found to be more effective when it's used in short-term training sessions.

• It is an excellent tool for developing new skills and enhancing the existing ones.

• Gamification can transform your current programs without developing entirely new materials – you can use gamification to refresh materials and re-engage your employees for retraining and review.

• Employees who participate in gamification retain information 50% longer.*

• Participating employees report higher enjoyment during training with gamification.

• Easily integrate gamification into mobile and other existing learning solutions

* [https://www.ardentlearning.com/blog/gamification-bringing-fun-to-ld](https://www.ardentlearning.com/blog/gamification-bringing-fun-to-ld)
Ideas To Gamify L&d

Because gamification is the process of applying game design elements to non-gaming environments, elements can be anything from points, rewards, or badges to online social interaction.

- Status bars in an onboarding series
- Leaderboards for training completion
- Interactive quizzes for instant feedback
- Digital achievement awards
- Friend requests or group chats to encourage teamwork
- Badges or certificates
- Physical gifts or discounts
- Interactive trivia with groups of learners competing against one another
- In an increasingly remote workforce or multi-site scenario, gamification may be the future of learning for one core reason:
  - COLLABORATION - when learners collaborate, they get to share their knowledge and experiences.
  - Learners also get to see how others react to the problems they face in their day-to-day life at work –having fun.

What are some other ways you can empower your team? Discover how motivation can excel business results in our informational brief.
Getting Started: Understand/Identify The 4-Personas Of Learners (Player Types*) On Your Team

1. Competitors - Focus on winning, rank, and direct peer-to-peer competition. They are engaged by leaderboards and ranks. In the context of L&D, the highest concentration of “competitors” is usually found in the sales org.

2. Achievers - Focus on attaining status and achieving goals quickly and/or completely. They are engaged by a recognition of their achievements. Achievers are the people in your org who tend to have an above average interest in getting promoted.

3. Explorers - Focus on exploring and are curious to discover new things. They are engaged by discovering hidden gems or less obvious achievements. Explorers tend to be the people in your org who want to learn about subjects less related to their direct day-to-day job.

4. Socialites - Focus on developing a network of friends and contacts. They are engaged by group activities, newsfeeds, and peer-to-peer interactions. Socialites benefit from having a shared learning experience with their peers.

* Persona/Learner Types taken from: Taxonomy of Player Types, Richard Bartle
Quick Guide to Gamifying You L&D

1. Identify the learner/player types you want to engage – to be successful start with 1-2 only.
2. Define and measure progress/objective
3. Select delivery environment
4. Select game format
5. Give quick feedback
Case Study 1: L&D

The Arvato Cup - Player Types: Competitors, Achievers

• To gamify their L&D program, a global services company Arvato based their strategy on leveraging the NHL.
  • The L&D team had a trophy built that they treated similar to the Stanley Cup. The trophy is given to the office that learns at the highest rate and the trophy travels all around the world throughout Arvato’s global offices.

“It’s just a fun way to keep learning top-of-mind. People are excited to win the trophy, and they also get motivated when they see it go somewhere else.”
- Gavin Walsh, Arvato’s Learning & Development Consultant
Case Study 2: L&D

Engine Yard Gamifies L&D to Dramatically Increase Employee Knowledge of Platform

• Engine Yard, a popular Cloud services platform focused on (popular web development framework) was facing difficulties with getting their employees and users to peruse its Knowledge Base portal.

• By implementing a gamification system based on:
  • Badges,
  • Achievements, and
  • Missions that rewarded searches and contributions to the knowledge base

Showed a 40% increase in knowledge base searches and customer support performance in first six months of implementing gamified approach.
Employee Engagement & Retention
Happy Employees = Engaged Employees = Higher Retention Rates for Employees

- Fun Fact: A gamified workspace increases employee happiness by 89%.*

  - A sizeable 89% of surveyed workers said that gamification makes them feel happier and more productive. For comparison, an estimated 53% of American workers are unhappy at work. As such, gamification can have significant positive effects.

  - In addition to increased employee happiness and productivity, a gamified workspace can also help with employee retention, as 69% of employees reported that they would stay at a company for more than three years if they used gamification in some way in the workplace.

* https://www.zippia.com/advice/gamification-statistics/ and 2018 Talent LMS survey
How Does Gamification Help Employee Engagement/Retention?

- Helps employees reach their goals and objectives
- Makes L&D and daily tasks FUN
- Decreases stress – elevates dopamine in brain (reward center)
- Appeals cross-generationally to all ages in workforce
- Gives quick feedback and public recognition/reward
- Empowers employees to feel ‘in control’
What to Know in Using Gamification to Increase Engagement

Engaged employees are a valuable part of defined business goals, and studies show that non-engagement impacts the bottom line. At the same time, motivated employees are more likely to want to make the customer experience as satisfying as possible, especially if there is internal recognition of a job well done.

• In a recent of Generation Z and Millennials found that 78% of respondents* would be more loyal to their employer if “recognition rewards” were a part of the job. This is basic behavioral science, but recognition programs that build on the platforms of shared identity, social rewards and progress feedback are more likely to instill a culture of learning, recognition, and ambition.

Brainstorm List: Leveraging Gamification to Enhance Culture & Engagement

• **Align employees with company values and mission:** Create a system of rewards based on “culture points” or “value points” for exemplifying company values. Could use an incentive system that gives employees the chance to recognize when colleagues have excelled in this respect.

• **Administrative streamlining:** Paperwork (e.g. onboarding documents and expense reports) is often the last thing your workers want to complete. Encourage operational efficiency by offering rewards for timely completion.

• **Team building:** Build cohesion among staff by encouraging them to get to know each other. Make collaboration and team competition a part of company events and processes.
Case Study: LiveOps Increases Employee Engagement and Elevates Customer Service

When gamification is used to incentivize workers, customer satisfaction and employee performance improve.

• LiveOps, a customer service agency, used gamification to launch an employee app and implement a rewards program to combat high turnover rates and low morale.
  • Six, 12 and 18 months after launching the app the company found that employees were an average of 60% more engaged in their everyday work and 40% less-likely to be searching for other employment.
  • LiveOps further aligned this engagement with increased customer service, as employees actively participating with the gamified app outperformed their peers:
    • Average call-handle time (trouble shooting with customers) improved by 23%
    • Customer satisfaction increased by 9%
Productivity – Level Up!

- Gamification can add a degree of flow and pace to a day that wouldn’t be there otherwise.
- Work feels like...work. But a degree of fun and a spirit of competition can make teams more efficient and happier.
- Gamification’s relationship to productivity in the workplace has been studied, albeit not extensively. The results in summary have shown that it does work, although the indication is that it works better for some roles than it does for others.
- Senior Living presents a variety of different roles, with varying skill sets, levels of education, and motivations. It stands to reason that this diverse workforce will see success in gamification in certain groups more so than in others. And that’s okay.
Pokemon Go As a Case Study

• The Pokemon Go craze had the unexpected benefit of improving fitness for millions of fitness tracker users. A population-level increase in fitness activity coincided with the release of the game.

• Step counts increased significantly. Empirical data shows a 62.5% increase in activity by Pokemon Go users compared to regular users.

• What was most surprising was that individual users discovered that they had achieved their fitness goals without even knowing it. And they had fun doing it!
Gamifying Productivity – Getting Started

• Identify your productivity objectives at the organizational level, and then align the tasks that support those objectives with the desired outcomes.

• Build a game you would want to play. Solicit input and feedback from subject matter experts and potential end users.

• Earning rewards – both symbolic and tangible – helps to drive engagement in individuals participating.

• Loss aversion can be a powerful motivator to keep users in the “game” of leveling up their performance.

• Leaderboards and consistent or easily accessible reporting keeps players engaged and striving for more and help to motivate high performing individuals and teams.

• Measure the success of the gamification program by reviewing key performance indicators and revisiting the productivity objectives outlined at the beginning of the program. If at first you don’t succeed, adapt, retool, refine, and try, try again.
Recruitment – Gamified!

- Identifying your culture as one of fun and engagement can set you apart from other organizations when competing for the same workforce.
- Having applicants engage in job-related puzzles and activities to demonstrate aspects of the work can be a powerful differentiator.
- Recruiting and hiring those who embrace the gamification in recruiting are more likely to engage in the workplace gamification program.
Recruitment – Case Study

- Marriott was looking for a way to engage prospective employees in developing markets, and created a game called “My Marriott Hotel” to help.
- Players are given the opportunity to run a hotel kitchen, earning points for good customer experiences and staying within budget.
- The game directly links to a Marriott job application, where candidates are invited to “do it for real.”
Recruitment – Getting Started

• Keep it simple. Introduce the idea of a gamification culture in job postings and recruitment efforts.

• Devise a simple toolbox of puzzles or mental exercises to engage applicants either remotely during the application process or in person during the interview process.

• Track the success of the program by measuring employee satisfaction and retention at key intervals. Adapt the toolbox as you learn what has improved key metrics and what hasn’t.
Marketing
Benefits of Digital Marketing Gamification

• According to BazaarVoice, here are some powerful benefits of gamification in marketing:
  • Collect customer data
  • Leverage user generated content to grow brand awareness
  • Educate your audience
  • Increase engagement and reduce bounce rate
  • Drive conversion
Examples of Gamification in Marketing

• **KFC's Shrimp Attack AdverGame**
  • An advergame is an interactive advertisement.
  • This particular experience allowed users to swat away at shrimp that were falling out of the screen.
  • This campaign was so successful that it led to the new product line eventually selling out from all the voucher redemptions.
  • Store sales increased by 106% compared to the previous year.
Examples of Gamification in Marketing

• **M&M's Eye-Spy Pretzel**
  • When M&M launched their new candy, they took advantage of gamification in social media to promote the new product.
  • The campaign was a simple "eye-spy" game where the task was to find the hidden pretzel hidden among the M&M candy.
  • This Facebook post generated over 25,000 likes, 6,000 shares, and 10,000 comments.
Examples of Gamification in Marketing

• Coca Cola - Recycle
  • This campaign rewarded a certain behavior with a fun game, experience and in some cases, a reward.
  • The automated waste bin was located at a physical location and people who deposited their cans and bottles were offered a digital "Scratch & Win" coupon with a chance to win a reward.
  • The reward was a movie ticket, and if the player won, basic personal details were asked in order to receive their reward.
Getting Started with Gamification in Marketing

- Decide what the goal of your campaign is:
  - Leads
  - Brand Experience
  - Brand Awareness
  - Specific Action

- Start simple
  - Keep your game simple to start and enhance upon the idea if it is successful

- Encourage actions, not just purchases
  - For example, like your social media pages for a chance to win a prize.

- Test and Determine ROI
Merrill Gardens Case Study

- Launched an 'Up Our Game' campaign in 2022. Company-wide initiative intended to raise the bar, elevate the experience for our residents and team members, reinforce best-in-class standards, and bring a little fun back to our workplace.

- The core framework was a series of 'games' that community teams played, which consisted of a diverse set of challenges that represented 'upping our game'. Quarterly games/gameboards were rooted in / inspired by well-known games. . . Hollywood Squares, Monopoly, Scrabble, and Poker.

- Results have been fantastic. . . clear alignment with company goals, elevated experience for residents, reinforcing standards and expectations, increased engagement with team members. . . and . . . those teams that have been actively engaged have financial results 4x versus those that have not been engaged.
In Summary. . .

• We will leave you with the core "Pro Tips" that Merrill Gardens gave their teams with each game. . .

  • Involve Your Team
  • Don't Overcomplicate It
  • Have Fun With It
  • And. . . "What Do You Got To Lose?"