

## IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING GAMIFICATION IN ORGANISATIONS

Jan Äkräs

International Business

Bachelor's Thesis

Supervisor: Lobna Hassan

Date of approval: 8 April 2022

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<b>Author:</b> Jan Äkräs
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<b>Objectives</b>  The main objective of this research is to identify how gamification influences employee motivation at the workplace, and the impact of user types and timeframe of gamification on it. In addition, to identify how gamification can be designed effectively to influence intrinsic motivation and engagement.
<b>Summary</b>  This research focuses on gamification designed for employees within the workplace. The literature review provides an overview of current research on how gamification influences employees' intrinsic motivation and how can effective gamification be designed. Primary research develops this theory further through the analysis of qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews.
<b>Conclusions</b>  The research found that gamification can influence employee motivation and behavior by satisfying the motivational needs of an employee and by influencing their natural human desires. User types largely determine how gamification influences employees' motivation and how effectively. Gamification should be designed to align with the employees' motivations to create intrinsic motivation and hence employee engagement. In addition, the purpose, wanted outcome, and players' overall understanding of gamification directly influence its effectiveness.
<b>Key words:</b> Gamification, Motivation, Self-determination theory, Intrinsic motivation, employee engagement
<b>Language:</b> English
<b>Grade:</b>

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Gamification is a concept that has only gained attraction and interest from businesses as well as researchers in recent years. Gamification is an application of typical game aspects to non-game situations and processes such as business, work productivity, marketing, education, and sales. All though a new concept, gamification has been implemented on a large scale in many businesses around the world such as Nike, Amazon, Audi, and many more. Gamification can be adapted through various mechanics such as points, scoreboards, awards, feedback systems, challenges, levels, and so on.

Despite gamification being a relatively new concept, research and adaptation of gamification mechanics are becoming more common and widely known as theory and information on how to implement it in practice evolves. However, the current literature and practice on how gamification influences employee engagement, motivation, and ultimately intrinsic motivation is rather underdeveloped and limited. This limits the ability of businesses to implement gamification successfully within business practices and especially gamification that aims to increase employee engagement and motivation.

### **1.2 Research problem**

This thesis aims to develop knowledge on how gamification influences employee engagement. Furthermore, how gamification is viewed from the employee's perspective, the influence of the gamified process on the intrinsic motivation of the employee, and factors that may influence the effectiveness of the gamified process such as timeframe, context, and user types. This research will provide a basis and develop the existing knowledge on how gamification should be designed to ultimately influence the employee's intrinsic motivation.

### **1.3 Research questions**

Throughout the research, this thesis aims to attempt the following questions:

- 1) To what extent does gamification influence employee work engagement and motivation?
- 2) How does the context, user types, and timeframe of gamification impact the success of gamification?
- 3) How should gamification elements be designed to ultimately influence the employee's intrinsic motivation?

### **1.4 Research objectives**

The research objectives are closely related to the research problem and questions presented above, and are the following:

- 1) To identify how gamification influences employee engagement and motivation
- 2) To determine the extent of how context, user types, and timeframe of gamification influence its effectiveness
- 3) To identify how gamification can be designed effectively to influence employees' intrinsic motivation.

### **1.5 Definitions**

<i>Gamification</i>	use of game design elements in non-gaming context.
<i>Employee engagement</i>	the desire of employees to input the maximum contribution to the development and success of their company.
<i>End-user/player</i>	the person for who the gamified process is designed, and who in the end interacts with it.
<i>Extrinsic motivation</i>	incentives that come from outside of a person and often involve external rewards.

*Intrinsic motivation* behavior that is driven by internal rewards.

*Self-determination Theory* macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people's innate growth tendencies and innate psychological needs.



## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a summary of current literature and research conducted on gamification and why, how, and when is gamification effective in increasing employee engagement, motivation, and ultimately employee performance. The aim is to build a basis for understanding the underlying mechanism of what drives effective gamification in a workplace and how it influences employees to perform better. This will provide a framework for the primary research of this thesis.

The literature review begins by defining gamification and by explaining what gamification truly is. This information creates a basis for understanding the underlying concepts and drivers for gamification. This is followed by connecting gamification to employee motivation and engagement. This section focuses on understanding how and why gamification influences the behavior of an end-user (employee). In addition, it examines factors like intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and how different user types influence the success of gamification. After this, an adaptation of the MDA (Mechanics, dynamics, aesthetics) framework is presented to further explain how gamification leverages human behavior. The last section of the literature review discusses the current state and adaptations of gamification in businesses, how effective gamification designs are created, and managed, and the level/level/number of gamified processes. Finally, limitations and knowledge gaps within current literature and studies are discussed.

### **2.2 Designing gamification**

Definitions of gamification vary, and different studies use slightly altering definitions of gamification. This mainly appears to be due to the different areas and industries in which gamification is being used and studied in. The most used definition of gamification defines it as the “use of video-game elements in the context of non-gaming systems to improve user engagement and experience” (Deterding et al., 2011). Another widely followed definition of gamification states it as: “use of game design elements in a non-gaming context” (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). Many other definitions for gamification do exist and they all have slight variations in their meanings.

However, a common similarity between all the definitions comes down to the use of game design elements (game mechanics and game dynamics) in a non-gaming context for example a workplace. In addition, most of the definitions mention that gamification intends is to influence the end user's behavior in a way that results in positive outcomes, most often increased engagement, and motivation.

To elaborate on the purpose of gamification and more specifically work gamification, it aims to promote motivation, and engagement and thus improve worker performance in the work context (Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, 2017). They also suggest that motivation can be improved by performance information more salient to workers and work tasks more enjoyable through the application of game features to work rather than changing the task and social parameters of the work. Another study states that gamification is applied to enhance employee engagement and motivate the employees to work with more enthusiasm (Gupta and Gomathi, 2017) Furthermore, the concept of gamification attempts to exploit the inherent human desires for competition, achievement, status, self-expression, altruism, and closure through varying designs and mechanics (Gupta and Gomathi, 2017).

Gamification has already been widely implemented in many organizations around the world (Prasad & Mangipudi, 2021). Current studies of gamification within the workplace utilize different frameworks and models to study the effectiveness and usefulness of gamification. In general, when looking at designing an effective gamification strategy it is divided into parts or elements that create the system for its functionality. Most of the studies construct and describe the gamification models or experience through the game design elements which are game mechanics and game dynamics (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). Different studies may also use these terms interchangeably, to a degree, and have slight alterations in the definitions and descriptions. The next section discusses two developed frameworks to provide insight into how previous literature looks at gamification.

A study done by (Ruhi, 2015) created a framework for work gamification. It is an adaptation of the MDA (mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics) framework. The study provides a comprehensive look into how gamification can be designed effectively. It highlights the differences of what gamification is from the designer's perspective as well as the end-user perspective. Furthermore, it provides detail on how game mechanics influence game dynamics and ultimately create game aesthetics, which describes how gamification intends to influence end-user behavior and positive impact on such as employee engagement and motivation. Another, widely known framework called the Octalysis dives deeper into these "drivers" of gamification (Chou, n.d.). The framework comprehensively details how different gamification mechanics can be utilized depending on the context and user types. Furthermore, it provides insight into how different game mechanics and dynamics are meant or designed to influence human behavior through extrinsic or intrinsic motivation. Both frameworks draw special attention to the importance of game mechanics and dynamics and how they are designed to influence human behavior in relation to user types, context, and length of application. Game elements are core in gamification and are more explicitly explained in the next subsection.

### **2.2.1 Game Elements**

Game mechanics describe how the game operates, its rules and rewards, and essentially the design of the whole game or system. "Mechanics are the basic processes that drive the action forward and generate player engagement" (Szendrői, Dhir, & Czakó, 2020). Mechanics can also be described as "the various actions, behaviors, and control mechanisms that are used to gamify an activity" (Denton, n.d.) Game mechanics are such as points, challenges and levels, trophies, achievements, badges, virtual goods, and leader boards (Sarangi & Shah, 2015). Ultimately, game mechanics are designed for influencing human behavior and human desires (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017).

Game dynamics describe how the rules manifest during actual gameplay (run-time) based on the players' inputs to the system as well as interactions among players (Ruhi, 2015) Another study referred to game dynamics as the human desires that are

attempted to be influenced through the game mechanics, thus they are based on the set game mechanics (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). Game dynamics are set to influence natural human desires including but not limited to reward, status, achievement, self-expression, competition, and altruism (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). Game dynamics are also described as the big-picture aspects of the gamified system that must be considered and managed but are never directly entered into the game (Szendrői, Dhir, & Czakó, 2020). Furthermore, the motivational nature of the gamified experience, essentially created through game mechanics, results in the game dynamics (Denton, n.d.).

### **2.3 Gamification and motivation**

As stated, gamification is already widely adopted in many businesses (Schawbel, 2013). Many businesses have been able to adapt gamification successfully (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). From current literature and adaptation of gamification, it has also been found that gamification can be very effective in engaging and motivating employees. For example, a study by (Szendrői, Dhir, & Czakó, 2020) investigated 41 existing studies and found that of those studies 30 had positive results. These positive results were perceived in such as increased employee engagement, motivation, and performance. Papers by (Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, 2017, Dale, 2014) have shown similar results. Another study showed significant differences between non-gamified and gamified control groups such as a significant increase in the average motivation levels of the gamified group (Hussain et al., 2018). In addition, the study found that gamification can make work more fun and engaging. From the current literature, it can be concluded that successful, and meaningful gamification does have a positive impact on the end-user's engagement and motivation. However, a lacking amount of literature on gamification attempts to explain and discover how, why, and when does work gamification influence work motivation and effectiveness (Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, 2017). Furthermore, little to no studies consider the duration or timeframe of gamification. Due to this, theory/frameworks on how long-term gamification techniques and systems can be designed and implemented are unestablished.

Due to the lack of literature, (Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, 2017) attempts to provide a framework or *a theory of work gamification*. It is an actionable and tractable model that can be utilized in designing work gamification and understanding such as different ways gamification can influence employees, when does gamification work, and the role of user types in gamification. A study by Hamari, Hassan & Dias (2018) had similar findings regarding gamification, motivation, and user types. They suggested that gamification features are perceived to be more important by end-users who have easy goals, are outcome-focused and who are more inclined towards proving themselves to others. However, it is also mentioned that people who do not have these needs, are more inclined to be demotivated by such gamified systems or processes, due to perhaps lack of performance or due to other motivations. A study done by (Hamari, Koivisto & Sarsa, 2014) also found that the qualities of end-users play a significant role in the effectiveness of gamification. The octalysis framework by (Chou, n.d.) also considers different user types and what motivates different types of people at different stages of the gamification experience. Furthermore, (Sarangi & Shah, 2015) proposed a model based on existing literature that, amongst other things, explains the connection between user types and the gamified process or game elements. They refer to this as *situational affordances*. This theoretical concept describes why the gamified process must be designed following the motivational needs of the end-users.

Concerning user types, *perception* reflects how the end-user views the gamified system or process. Perception plays a major part in whether gamification is successful since it invokes feelings of respect, fairness, justice, and trust in employees and fosters engagement. (Sarangi & Shah, 2015). Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, (2017) also mentioned that *perceived legitimacy* is likely to affect how workers respond to gamification. Regarding the perception of gamification, situational affordances, characteristics, and user types, businesses should realize that one type of gamification may not fit all end-users (Ruhi, 2015). Therefore, these factors should be considered for effective gamification designs.

### 2.3.2 Motivational design

User types or in other words, types of individuals have significant influence over how effective gamification is in a workplace. More specifically, different motivational needs of individuals have a large impact on whether and to what extent gamification can be successful. Due to this, much of the current literature on gamification and motivation use self-determination theory (SDT) to explain why and how gamification influences human behavior and motivation (Houghton, 2021, Hamari, Hassan, & Dias, 2018, Xi, Hamari, J. 2019, Hamari, Koivisto & Sarsa, 2014). SDT is based on three basic psychological needs that drive motivated behavior, which are: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Put simply, *competence* refers to the feeling of being effective/successful while interacting with the environment (Mitchell, Schuster & Seung, 2020, Ballou, 2021). *Autonomy* refers to psychological freedom and to volition to fulfill a certain task (Ballou, 2021). *Social relatedness* refers to one's feeling of belonging, attachment, and care in relation to a group of significant others (Ballou, 2021). In SDT it is believed that these three intrinsic psychological needs can be influenced/developed through modifying the environment (Mitchell, Schuster & Seung, 2020). SDT is most often associated with gamification since gamification attempts to do exactly this. Applying game mechanics (modifying environment) to ultimately influence human behavior (Ruhi, 2015, Gupta, & Gomathi, 2017).

Drawing from typical games and not gamification, (Tam, 2020) suggests that competence needs can be created through points, levels, optimal challenges, clear goals, and feedback. Autonomy needs from such as avatars, narratives, opportunities for meaningful choices and actions. Relatedness needs from interpersonal play, collaboration, and cooperation, non-player characters. Furthermore, (Ballou, 2021) suggests that autonomy in games can be supported through a clear rationale for players, acknowledging to the player that certain actions may be challenging or tedious, and using non-controlling communications. Competence needs can be achieved through informative feedback and by making players feel that their actions matter and are impactful and challenges should fit the appropriate skill level and expectations of the player. Relatedness needs in multiplayer games can be met through belonging to a group and ultimately through contribution to team efforts. In a single-player context, it can be met through relationships with non-player characters,

'habitus' or collective story, and relating video games as an object. Gamification intends to draw mechanics from typical games and utilize similar techniques to ultimately engage and motivate players or in gamifications case, employees. Studies and literature on typical games are far more extensive and the motivations behind why people play games and what motivates them to play games are better understood. Therefore, understanding what makes games motivating and engaging becomes important to understand when designing gamification as well.

(Deterding, 2012) states that “gamification is really a motivational design problem, one that can be best solved with design thinking and design processes”. As the goal of gamification is to exploit inherent human desires, gamification aims to increase the intrinsic motivation of the end-users (Gupta & Gomathi, 2017). A study by (Prasad, K., & Mangipudi, 2021) found that there is a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and employee engagement in a gamified environment. Whereas no significance was found between extrinsic motivation and employee engagement in that gamified environment. They also state that gamification involves more physiological aspects rather than techniques and that motivation and behavior change are the key drives for successful gamification. To add on (Hamari, Koivisto & Sarsa, 2014) suggests that outside pressures such as extrinsic rewards could in fact undermine intrinsic motivations. Furthermore, gamification often attempts to mimic experiences from typical games through for example flow, mastery, and autonomy (Hamari & Koivisto, 2013, Hamari, Hassan & Dias, 2018). Therefore, attempting to make the end-user immersed in the gamified experience, create challenges and possible rewards or achievements for them to strive for, thus influencing their intrinsic motivation. Drawing from SDT theory (Mitchell, Schuster & Seung, H. 2020) found that gamification that satisfies competency and autonomy increased intrinsic motivation but found no significance between relatedness and intrinsic motivation. (Houghton, 2021) also found that certain game mechanics can instill needs for competence and hence, positively influence the intrinsic motivation of employees.

Two key aspects of creating effective gamification are the length of application and the type of application (Cardador, Northcraft, & Whicker, 2017). The study suggests that

gamification may be most effective for middle-term applications, where end-users do not have time to lose interest in the gamified process but so that it is effective, and the start-up costs are justified. Other findings suggest that gamification tends to be more engaging in the short term and that the effects diminish over time (Hamari, Koivisto & Sarsa, 2014). This is likely due to the nature of games in general, once a player achieves mastery or starts to lose interest in the game due to for example repetition, they become more inclined to switch to a new game. Another study suggested that gamification might be best for middle-term applications. (Prasad, & Mangipudi, 2021) also mentions that behavioral change is not a one-time event, and, in their experiment, new elements were added or changed to keep the gamified process “fresh”.

## **2.4 Limitations**

The current literature on gamification and why, how, and when it is or can be successful lacks breadth and depth. The goal of gamification in most cases is to make work more engaging and intrinsically motivating. Studies, experiments, or real-life applications rarely discuss whether the gamified process impacts extrinsic or intrinsic motivation and the extent of it. To add on, these are further influenced by context, type of gamification, user-types as well as length/timeframe of gamification. Hence, the literature and theory on designing gamification are far from perfect. Furthermore, gamification can be designed in many ways with different objectives. Game elements can be utilized in a multitude of ways and contexts; hence gamification should not be treated as a generic construct. Studies should more specifically consider the context in which game elements are applied and consider factors like user types, timeframe of application, and the intended goal or objective of the gamified process.

Gamification, in many cases, has been proven to work. The benefits and potential of gamification have been realized within the world of business as well as with researchers in the industry. However, information on how to design effective gamification that can be applied more broadly is limited. There have not been many studies that provide reliable results on gamification or frameworks for how gamification can or should be implemented on the large scale. Hence, there appears to be a gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life applications for gamification. A stronger



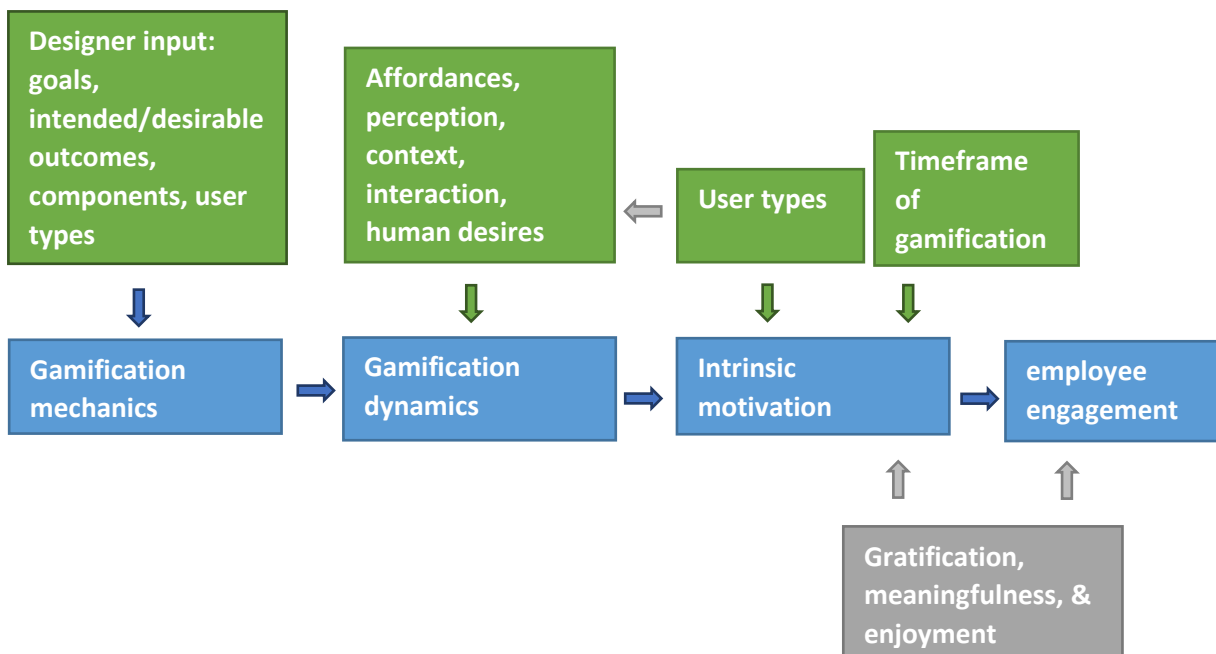
understanding of building a game design that is in line with the desired organizational outcomes is required to avoid bad designs and failures.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This literature review examined the impact of gamification on employee motivation and engagement, how gamification influences end-users to be more engaged in the workplace, and what factors such as objectives and user types, influence designers' decision-making when creating gamified systems. The MDA and octalysis framework was proposed to showcase how gamification can be currently designed and the factors that influence the effectiveness of gamified designs. It was found that gamification is constructed of game elements, game mechanics, and game dynamics. Game elements are what create the gamified system which end-users then interact with. Through interaction and "playing" end-users form their opinions and experiences of the gamified system. The purpose of designing gamified processes is to ultimately influence end-user behavior. Hence, self-determination theory was used as a basis to find out the connection between gamification and end-user motivational behavior. The research showed that different user types, motivations, time frames, and contexts greatly influence the success of work gamification. Despite the findings, literature on gamification is still underdeveloped and the underlying factors for why, how, and when does gamification work are yet to be developed enough.

## 2.6 Conceptual framework

### Framework for work gamification



(Figure 1)

The framework for work gamification attempts to describe what goes into creating effective gamification in the workplace. The framework intends to showcase how through gamification elements intrinsic motivation and ultimately employee engagement is created. It considers factors that influence the effectiveness of gamification such as context, length of application, and user types. This theoretical framework will provide a basis for studying and interpreting the research done in later sections of the thesis

### **3. Methodology**

This primary research aimed to find out how gamification elements influence end-user (employee) motivation and engagement in the workplace, and how factors such as user types, context, and the timeframe of gamification impact its effectiveness. Based on the research questions and objectives, a qualitative study method was chosen. A qualitative data collection method in the form of interviews was chosen to better understand the view that employees have on gamification and to assess the impact gamification has on employees.

This section will begin by detailing how the data was collected. The interview design and practicalities of the interviews are then discussed to provide a further understanding of how the data was collected. This is followed by a discussion on how the data was assessed and analyzed. Finally, a conclusion on the methodology is provided and the limitations of this primary research are explained.

#### **3.1 Research methods and data collection**

A qualitative method of research was chosen since the influence of gamification on the motivation of individuals is being studied. In addition, the objective is to analyze and find out how different factors such as context, timeframe, and user-types influence the effectiveness of gamification. Hence, qualitative research will likely provide more insight into the individuals and the underlying factors that ultimately influence their motivation. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format to facilitate a better discussion. This way, the discussion is not limited to premade questions and the participants can better express their feelings and thoughts on gamification and their motivational behavior. In addition, different individuals are likely to have different thoughts, mindsets, and motivations toward gamification and how it influences them personally, thus open discussion will allow for flexibility and opportunity for each participant to better express themselves.

The interviews were conducted in Finnish for the convenience of communication. In addition, it allows the participants to better explain and express their thoughts as well

as to provide accurate statements due to Finnish being their mother tongue. The interviews were transcribed and translated by the interviewer and author. The English translations can be viewed in the Appendices. The length of the interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes.

### 3.2 Sampling

The interviewee sampling was based on only one criterion:

1. They must have had gamified aspects in their work for at least half a year.

This is so that they have more experience on what it is like to work with gamified processes and so that they can truly evaluate their experiences and thoughts on how it impacts their motivation and daily working life. The gamified aspects can be any gamification mechanics ranging from points, leader boards, challenges, etc. After this criterion, a method of convenience sampling was used since very few Finnish companies utilize gamification directed at employees and such employees can be hard to find. To add on, the employees can be from any industry as the research does not investigate a specific industry but rather gamification and employee motivation in general.

**Table 1: Interviewee profiles**

Interviewee number	Gender and age	Job
1	Male, 22	B2C sales
2	Male, 24	B2C sales
3	Male, 23	B2C sales
4	Male, 24	B2C sales
5	Male, 21	B2C sales

### **3.3 Interview design**

The interview is designed to expand on the current knowledge of workplace gamification and especially the limitations current research has. The main themes of the interview are: The extent to which gamification influences end-user behavior and motivation, the Influence of the length of gamification, how employees view the gamified processes, and the extent to which gamification influences the employees' intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation.

#### **3.3.2 General information section**

The interview was divided into sections and the objective of the first section was to establish the basis for the interview. The questions were as follows:

- 1) Can you tell me your age, gender, and a brief description of your work/job?
- 2) Which gamification mechanics are prevalent in your work?
- 3) What kind of dynamics of gamification can be perceived in your daily working life?
- 4) What do you view to be the objectives and intentions of gamification at your work?

The short background of the interviewee and finding out their views on the objective of gamification at their workplace and which mechanics are utilized in their work provides the building blocks for the interview and uses the conceptual framework to dive deeper into the gamified processes and their influence on the employee's motivation.

#### **3.3.3 Self-determination theory and gamification segment**

The second part utilizes the self-determination theory to find out how and to what extent the gamified processes influence employee behavior.

- 5) Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things, or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback on your performance?

- 6) How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?
  
- 7) Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?
  
- 8) Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?
  
- 9) What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?
  
- 10) Do you often work in teams or do your colleagues impact your performance and desire to work?
  
  
- 11) How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

The goal of this section was to utilize the self-determination theory as a basis to find out how gamification influences competence, autonomy, and social relatedness for that individual. The SDT theory is most utilized in studies that assess gamification and motivation and was therefore used. The goal of the section was to find out how each of the three basic psychological needs that drive motivated behavior appears in the interviewees' work. After, it was asked how they view gamification to influence those factors. Therefore, providing insight and a level of depth to the discussion that helps to understand the extent of gamification in their work. It also reveals how much gamification influences these factors and how the interviewees view gamification to influence the factors and hence, ultimately their motivation. These questions also allow for a better understanding of how the gamified processes influence their work and whether gamification is the reason that influences these drivers of behavior.

### **3.3.4 Motivation and engagement segment**

The purpose of the final segment was to dive further into whether the gamified processes influence the interviewees' intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. In addition, the importance and influence of context, user types, and timeframe of gamification are considered.

12) How long has gamification been a part of your work?

13) How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

14) What are your views and experiences of gamification?

15) Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

16) How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

17) Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

18) To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

As the questions progress, more freedom is given to the interviewee and the questions require deeper and more critical thinking and evaluation. In addition, the final section attempts to dive deeper into context, timeframe, and interviewee opinions and experiences of gamification. Hence, this also gives insight into user types and how each views gamification differently, as well as, whether gamification influences them in different ways.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

The interviews were conducted and recorded through zoom. The recordings were then first transcribed in Finnish and later translated into English by the author. Two methods of analyzing the interview data were used. The first method involved dividing the topics into the segments they were asked in, for example, comments and discussions related to competence, autonomy, social-relatedness, timeframe, context, and user types. The division of the interviewee comments into these sections helps to categorize and evaluate each of the relevant topics to the thesis. The second method was identifying and highlighting key themes, topics, and points that were the most common in all the interviews. This identification helped to identify topics outside of the interview questions and to see if there are similar patterns or ideas among the interviewees. The key themes and topics within the coding are disclosed in section 4. "Findings".

### **3.5 Limitations**

This methodology has several limitations that hinder the quality of data. One of the main limitations is the accuracy and relevance of data for research. As the topic and questions dive deep into motivational behavior in relation to aspects of gamification, to truly understand how and in what ways gamification influences an individual's behavior, the interviews or studies would require to be much longer and more in-depth. The second is the appropriateness and quantity of interviewees. Larger sample size and a broader selection of interviewees from different sectors and companies would provide more insight into the issue.



## **4. Findings**

The purpose of the findings section is to outline and describe the interviewees' perspectives, experiences, and views on the topics discussed in the interviews.

### **4.1 Self-determination theory and gamification**

The self-determination theory was utilized in the interviews to see how and why gamification influences human behavior. In all the interviews some form of challenges, targets, or objectives existed and the connection between want and need to perform was directly connected to these. Gamification played a significant role in creating feelings of competence for each interviewee. Points, optimal challenges, and leader boards were the most reported factors for creating feelings of competence at work. It was also stated that in relation to feelings of competence, gamification creates motivation to work harder, perform better and keep on improving on oneself. For example, one of the interviewees stated that

“The work was heavily tied to the gamified system and every day it was basically playing a game and it was a big part of being motivated, the effort put into work, and it made the work more exciting.’

In addition, many reported that it created a better competitive nature in the workplace and created strive to reach set goals. Therefore, leading to self-development and higher attention to small details in everyday work which eventually lead to better quality work and competence.

Most interviewees had a level of autonomy and freedom in their work which was essentially determined by the nature of the work. Gamified processes in most situations did not directly influence autonomy. However, many reported that it created want to succeed and volition through for example the points-based systems. In addition, one stated that the opportunities that the gamified processes created added value to the work and motivated to succeed. However, it did not seem that autonomy played a large part in any of the interviewee's jobs or that gamification would have a significant impact on autonomy.

All the interviewees stressed the importance of teamwork and having good relationships with co-workers. The most mentioned factors related to social relatedness were the importance of co-workers' knowledge and help they could provide, feedback and cheering when succeeding or when in need of constructive feedback, and the atmosphere a good community creates. All these factors were heavily tied to how enjoyable the work is and the positive influence it has over performing well. Gamification played a significant role in creating a positive atmosphere and maintaining positive relationships as well as creating a feeling of the importance of co-workers. For example, in team-based activities, the gamified processes created a sense of unity and care for others as it required everyone to perform well. In addition, the point-based systems and leader boards were said to lead to a lot of healthy and friendly competition which leads to a better relationship with others. This form of competition also led to increased feedback from colleagues and the utilization of co-workers' knowledge and expertise in their work to increase performance and essentially learn new things. Furthermore, one of the interviewees stated that

people who often perform better on the leader boards were the people who best came along with others and that cared about others' performance as well.

This also closely relates to the healthy competition the gamified processes create.

#### **4.2 End-user views and motivation**

The interviewees' views and experiences on gamification were asked. Many of the interviewees stated similar things related to how they view gamification and the impact it has on them as individuals as well as in the general sense. The most stated views and thoughts on gamification can be categorized into the following: Goals, competition, community, and excitement.

Based on the replies, leader boards, points, and challenges were an important aspect of achieving goals at work. Many of the interviewees viewed that through gamification clear goals are set and that it creates motivation to keep striving for certain goals at work. For example, one of the interviewees stated that

“It creates a certain drive at work, like I can see myself being at a certain point now but then want to get to the next level, so you push yourself a bit harder for that.”

In addition, many view that the challenges and achievements created through gamification are the main reason for why they push themselves harder and why they constantly strive for better results.

Most of the interviewees mentioned the importance of a good and supportive community and co-workers. When asked about motivation most of the interviewees stated that the social aspects that the gamified processes create are one of the biggest sources of internal motivation. For example, when asked about intrinsic motivation one of the interviewees stated that

“There was basically always just huge hyping up and good atmosphere and it impacted a lot like you started to believe in the work and the feeling that it created.”

Many also stated that gamification was the reason why they cared about co-workers' performance more and what made co-workers more important to their work as well. Due to this, it made them care about their own performance more and want to perform better than others, which led to increased internal motivation.

One of the key points all the interviewees also touched upon directly or indirectly was the depth and excitement gamification brings about. For example, when asked, it was often stated that without the gamification aspect the work would be boring, bland, and rather uninteresting. Hence, as discussed, the different mechanics can make the work more meaningful, interesting, and engaging. Furthermore, without the gamification elements, the only real motivator would be the extrinsic rewards. Hence, through gamification, intrinsic motivation gains a more important role in terms of overall motivation. Most interviewees also felt that intrinsic motivation plays a more important role than extrinsic motivation at work, and is what truly creates the drive, purpose, and excitement at work.

### **4.3 User types and timeframe of gamification**

User types were not studied in a deeper context in the interviews. However, many of the interviewees said to be competitive in their nature. Many of them showed to be ambitious and have for example goals regarding personal development. One interviewee stated that

“In the end, it depends a lot on the person I feel and the goals you have.”

Another interviewee supported this view by saying,

“Yea I think it kind of requires a person who is competitive in nature.”

Hence, since they have experience in sales and have worked with different kinds of people, it shows that for this type of work, user types play a role. Furthermore, one interviewee mentioned that the gamification they had which was built upon points, leader boards, and challenges mainly worked well for younger individuals. He stated that

“It really works well for young people especially but for older people who came there and worked there, it didn’t really seem to work in the same way.”

All the interviewees had worked with gamification for over half a year and some even over a year. Many of them viewed the gamified processes to be somewhat repetitive, though not boring. When asked, the only way the gamified elements were kept “fresh” or new was through different types of challenges and the possibility to reach different achievements. In addition, a couple of interviewees stated that it did not really matter as variety in the work could be created in other ways. On the contrary, one interviewee stated that

“For the time I was there, at the end it felt like you didn’t really care about it anymore like for a while it was fun but at some point, it just didn’t affect you in any way anymore and I sort of lost my interest pretty fast.”

Hence, to an extent shows that the timeframe of gamification does influence motivation.

## **5. Discussion and analysis**

The discussion and analysis section will utilize the conceptual framework (figure 1) from section 2.6 to provide structure and as a method to analyze the findings. The section is divided into the following parts that follow the flow of the conceptual framework: Mechanics, dynamics, motivation, and employee engagement. Furthermore, the usage of the conceptual framework allows for a more structured analysis that starts from the basics of gamification and gradually dives deeper into the factors that influence the effectiveness of gamified processes.

### **5.1. Mechanics**

Based on the interview data and the game mechanics that were mostly utilized, the intended goals and outcomes of gamification, in these cases, can be divided into the following: Increase motivation of the worker, provide depth and interest to the work, create, and foster friendly competition and increase the importance of co-workers and community at work. As all the interviewees were working in a sales job, the mechanics that were utilized and the way they were designed fit the nature of the job. Sales jobs usually pay commission which then acts as an external motivator for the employee. The goal of gamification in this sense is to create more goals and objectives for the employee to aim for. In other words, in addition to external motivation, gamification is utilized to influence internal motivation. The main gamification mechanics that were utilized in most cases were points, leader boards, and challenges. However, the mechanics have much more depth and influence when considering how they influence motivation. This is a critical factor in the successful design of gamification mechanics and the intended outcomes. The interview responses had variety in terms of how they perceive the mechanics and how the mechanics influence them. Essentially shows how user-types influence the way mechanics are perceived. Hence, shows that the gamification mechanics should be planned and designed with care. In addition, it stresses the importance of what the goals and intended outcomes of gamification are. If the mechanics are designed poorly, the effectiveness of it will likely suffer as well.

## 5.2. Dynamics

Game dynamics explain how the gamified process can influence the player through the players' interaction with the system. The affordances of the gamified processes in all cases were clear to the employees. This indicates that the game mechanics have been successfully implemented and communicated to the players. Due to this, the players know how to interact with the system and get a clearer idea of what its purpose is. In addition, it is a critical component of the players' perception and trust in the gamified system. This can also partly explain why the interviewees have not had issues with the gamified systems but rather very positive experiences and views.

All the players interacted with the system daily, if not always when at work. Many reported that if they were not directly interacting with the system it would still be a part of their work and be in the back of their minds. Hence, showing the importance of the gamified process for the employees. It is also able to explain the extent it influences employee behavior at work. Since the players interact with the gamified system continuously it is likely that the influence it has on players/employees' desires and therefore behavior is more constant as well. In the context of sales, that all the interviewees were working in, constant interaction with the gamified system showed to be important due to a few reasons. First, players cared more for the quality of service they provided in each customer interaction. Attention to detail and smaller things at work had more significance. It created flow and drive for most as they wanted to achieve set goals and challenge themselves.

Players that interact with the gamified system directly determine the effectiveness and influence of game dynamics. From the responses, it is evident that the gamified processes have significant influence over multiple human desires such as reward, status, achievement, competition, and altruism which are key parts of game dynamics. Many of the interviewees discussed how gamification impacts their want to succeed, how it drives them to work harder and perform. all the interviewees mentioned the healthy and friendly competition the gamification elements create. Healthy competition was one of the main reasons for increased motivation and the want to perform better constantly and improve on oneself. Competition was also said to make the work more exciting, create more depth to the work and make the work more interesting. In

addition, many of the interviewees stated that they do not want to be among the worst performers in the workplace and that they cared about how other people viewed them regarding their performance. This shows that the gamified processes create care for status amongst the employees. The game mechanics that mostly satisfied the need for competition were points and leader boards. Desire for reward and achievement was also shown to be one of the main motivators and drivers of game dynamics and most often achievements were related to rewards. Within the game, achievement and reward are something that the players aim and strive for. In a sense, it is the end product of the gamified process. As players achieve certain goals and accomplish set challenges, it makes the whole process more rewarding and creates purpose. Without such aspects of the gamified process, it is likely that the players would not be as ambitious, competition would not be as intense, and they would not feel as strong of a sense of purpose. Rewards and achievement are also closely tied to the performance and want to succeed. Furthermore, through analysis of the data, it was not mentioned that the challenges would not be achievable or too difficult. The difficulty of challenges largely determines how engaged a player is and how motivated and how much effort they put into achieving rewards.

### **5.3. Motivation**

Game dynamics essentially describe how gamification or game mechanics can influence the motivation of a player. However, it does not truly consider whether this motivation is extrinsic or intrinsic. In addition, especially in the context of gamification, intrinsic motivation is influenced by such as user-types and the timeframe of the gamified process. Based on the findings and the discussion in section 5.2 it is evident that the game elements greatly influenced player behavior and were able to satisfy certain human desires, at least to an extent. In addition, as mentioned in section 5.1. mechanics can be simplistic in themselves but the way they influence the end-user behavior and motivation has more complexity. The gamified systems utilized three key gamification mechanics which were points, leader boards, and challenges. These mechanics worked as the foundation for the gamified systems and through them, more mechanics that influenced player motivation emerged. They were able to influence player behavior through progress, flow, social networks, social status, social pressure,

competition, challenges, points, leader boards, and prizes. Based on the findings and previous discussion, these mechanics influenced the players' motivation to the highest degree.

Findings related to the self-determination theory showed that gamification influenced especially competence and social relatedness needs which translates to intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic. End-user views were also mostly positive, many mentioned how the gamified systems influence their behavior by creating drive and making the work more interesting and exciting. In addition, section 5.2. discussed the different ways in which the gamified systems influenced intrinsic motivation of the players rather than extrinsic. Based on these, the gamified systems successfully influenced the players' intrinsic motivation in a multitude of ways. However, the motivation was not fully intrinsic and extrinsic motivation still played a large role in this context. The interviewees worked in sales jobs, and they were able to gain commission through sales. Therefore, creating extrinsic motivation for the employees as the more they sell the more they can earn. In the context of gamification, the gamified systems could have been extrinsically motivating through the rewards or prizes that players were able to earn. For example, an interviewee stated that for winning a "tournament" they would be rewarded by getting to sell in better places. Therefore, the players could be extrinsically motivated by the reward and no other factors. In addition, social status was a factor that almost every interviewee viewed as important. Hence, the players could be motivated toward gaining praise and recognition by performing well. All these factors contribute to the extrinsic motivation of the players and based on the findings they were a part of each interviewee's motivations.

For gamification to be motivating to a player, the mechanics or dynamics must align with the players' motivations. People have different motivations, goals, and desires and therefore, are also motivated by different things and in different ways. The interviewees showed similarity in that they were all motivated by the competition, challenges, and rewards. However, there was a lot of variety in terms of which mechanics had the most influence. In addition, interviewees showed variety in terms of which mechanics have more importance to them, and in terms of game dynamics.



Hence, showing some differences in user types. Some felt more motivated by the social relatedness that the gamified system creates whereas some by the challenges, personal development, or competition. This is closely related to gamification dynamics as well, and it could be said that users have differing game dynamics. Therefore, depending on game dynamics and the factors that influence game dynamics, players can have different experiences and views of the gamified system. Hence, influencing how gamification motivates different individuals. Furthermore, as stated, the interviewees had a lot of different game mechanics in their work which directly contributes to the effectiveness of gamification for different user types. Due to this, the gamified systems were able to influence the interviewees' motivation in a way that was 'most fit' for the individuals' motivations, desires, and/or nature. This stresses the fact that gamification should be designed with variety and with different user types in mind so that the gamified system can fulfill more personalized needs or desires of each player, thus be more intrinsically motivating.

The findings showed that over time the gamified systems tend to get somewhat repetitive, boring, or less important. However, based on the interview data, this change was not very significant. For the interviewees, gamification was a part of their everyday work, they interacted with it constantly and it influenced their behavior at all times. In addition, gamification seemed to be integrated well into their daily work and to always play a role in their work. Therefore, even if the gamified process got more boring over time because it was such an important aspect of their work it did not lose its value. Therefore, showing that if gamification is designed, integrated, and perceived well it is likely that it will be more effective in the long term. On the other hand, no significant relationship between the timeframe of gamification and its effectiveness of it regarding employee motivation was identified.

#### **5.4. Employee engagement**

The goal of gamification usually is to promote employee engagement and therefore performance. Intrinsic motivation is often the main driver for better engagement and performance at work. The findings and previous discussion and analysis identified that gamification influenced employee engagement in multiple ways.

First and as discussed, game dynamics play a large role in determining how motivating gamification is to an individual. The game dynamics showed to be very positive and ultimately, positively influenced employee behavior in a variety of different ways. The game dynamics were able to fulfill different motivations and desires of different individuals thus, making it feel more personalized and therefore, meaningful. It seems that how meaningful gamification is to an individual is determined by how well the game dynamics resonate and fit that individual's nature and motivations. If a player can find aspects of gamification that are meaningful to themselves, it will ultimately contribute to better engagement. Second, gratification played a role in motivation and engagement in gamification. It is a critical part of gamification since if the players do not receive anything in exchange for their input it is unlikely that they will be motivated to play. Based on the interview data, players were able to find gratification through such as achievements, performing well on the leader boards, and winning challenges. Lastly, findings showed that gamification affected how interesting, exciting, and enjoyable work is. Many interviewees stated that without gamification the work would feel bland or boring. In addition, as discussed, the game dynamics influenced player behavior in different ways, and they found different aspects of gamification to be more important or interesting to themselves. Therefore, gamification is bound to be more enjoyable to the player as it is more intrinsically motivating.

## **6. Conclusions**

This section provides the main findings of the research in terms of how gamification influences employee motivation and engagement. In addition, it highlights the impact and implications of this study on international businesses, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

### **6.1 Main findings**

The main findings of this research are split into two parts: design framework and motivation. The goals and wanted outcomes of gamification must be clear and clarified for gamification to be fit for its purpose. Employees perceive gamification better when they understand the purpose of the gamified system or process and it is communicated effectively to them. In addition, it plays a critical role in designing gamification mechanics. Analysis proves that when mechanics align with the purpose and goals of gamification and when it is integrated well into the work the employee perception and experiences are more positive. In addition, it resulted in making the work more interesting and exciting by creating depth and variety. Employees interacted with the system often and it had a constant influence over their behavior. Also, the mechanics did not change the employees' work physically but rather influenced their physiological behavior. Hence, the employees worked more effectively and placed a higher emphasis on small details in their work. Furthermore, it was found that game dynamics influence players differently. Depending on the user type of the player certain game mechanics can influence them to a larger degree. Therefore, the game dynamics impact the individuals differently depending on their desires, motivations, and personal goals.

Gamification was able to create intrinsic motivation in addition to the motivation that is created through extrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards showed to be the basic driver for motivation due to the nature of the B2C sales job of the interviewees. However, as discussed above, gamification proved to make the work more interesting, exciting, add variety, depth, and influence the employees' natural human desires in one way or another, and therefore create intrinsic motivation. Points, leader boards, and challenges were detrimental mechanics in influencing motivation. Such mechanics

satisfied the needs of competence and social relatedness. In addition, they mainly influenced the desire for competition, status, reward, and achievement. Since the game dynamics successfully influenced and satisfy the motivational needs of employees, they can find gratification, enjoyment, and meaningfulness through it which ultimately contributes to higher motivation and better engagement at work.

## **6.2 Implications for international business**

Theory and knowledge on how to implement gamification effectively in a workplace are rather limited. The possible benefits of work gamification have been realized and it provides a new method and a way to motivate and engage employees. Understanding how, why, and in what ways gamification can be utilized to increase employee motivation and engagement should be the priority of businesses before attempting to design and implement gamification. Furthermore, businesses should realize that gamification has complexity and a variety of different factors that influence its success. Ultimately through understanding the different factors that influence the effectiveness of gamification, businesses can design better gamification systems and processes.

## **6.3 Limitations**

The number of interviews limits the variety in answers, in-depth and more detailed exploration and analysis of the topics, and quality of the findings. The interviewees were all working in the same industry which possibly limits some of the findings to that industry. Interviewees were all young adults and male which hinder the variety in results. Due to the complexity of the topic, a single interview also limits the depth in which the topics can be explored and analyzed. Since the topic is only focused on gamification's influence on employee motivation, it does not thoroughly consider other factors that may influence motivation. In addition, the interviewees were individuals working at two different businesses. Due to this, the study lacks information regarding the businesses which could provide further insight into the why and how gamification is designed.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for further research**

Research that focuses on gamification and especially how it affects the end user's motivation is rather limited. More specifically, the understanding of how, when, and why different mechanics and dynamics impact end-user motivational behavior. The understanding of such factors plays a critical role when designing gamification processes that are effective, efficient, and long-lasting. Therefore, further research should focus and aim to discover how different game mechanics influence behavior in different situations. Another important point for further research is understanding how different mechanics and dynamics are perceived by different user types. This is so that gamification can be designed to be effective for everyone and not just the majority. Furthermore, the understanding between mechanics, dynamics, and end-user behavior and motivations allows for the creation of gamification that is more flexible and adaptable.

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## **Appendix**

Interview transcripts:

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback of your performance?

1: How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?

1: Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

1: Do you often work in teams or do your colleagues impact your performance and desire to work?

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

## **Interview 1)**

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback of your performance?

2: Yeah, pretty much everything we do is based on getting results. We have certain challenges and targets that we aim for that then influence rewards and such. Of course, with sales performance and selling is the key to for getting bonuses and such.

1: Do you receive continuous feedback, positive or constructive based on your performance and in regard with the gamified systems?

2: Yeah, I mean our supervisors are able to see our points and who is doing what and how we are performing and based on that gives feedback from time to time.

1: How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

2: With the points system and the levels or challenges we have as well as leader boards that we can view certainly impacts your motivation and want to perform. Also, I think it creates motivation to do your work more carefully and with care.

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?

2: Hmm, we have strict guidelines on how to things and training that teaches us how we should do stuff before we get to work. Of course, we have tasks that then have more freedom and things that we can influence more like how you sell or something like that. You can sort of show who you are and be yourself, but certain processes are quite strict in how we do them.

1: Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

2: Yeah to an extent, at least on the sales side where people want to perform their best and show that they can perform and do their tasks well. The freedom allows you to sort of experiment more and show your own skillsets. Also, in regard to gamification and especially the points system is really important aspect since through that people

can show their skills and show that they are good performers which of course increases the want to succeed.

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

2: Yea it is a lot of teamwork. Everyone is of course doing their own thing, but you need other people too and other people's knowledge to do your job too. Customers too may go through multiple people depending on their needs or problems. It's really important that the working atmosphere is good, and people come along with each other.

1: Do you often work in teams or do your colleagues impact your performance and desire to work?

2: It does, of course it depends on the person but for me personally if the colleagues and the atmosphere is nice, you know people want to work together and do their job well of course it impacts your own motivation too and want to work harder.

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

2: well, I see that it is a unifying factor regarding my colleagues, usually the guys who perform better are the people who best come along with other people and know how to utilize other people and their expertise, so it definitely increases the importance of colleagues and having good people around you.

1: It also probably creates like a basis for wanting to care about co-workers more as well and like creating a good community in the work, and so that there isn't much negative competing or such?

2: No there is not, sometimes you hear that people can get mad or angry about the points systems for example, but I haven't myself come across such at least.

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

2: for about 7-8 months now.

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

2: Sort of at all times, I mean during a day you have like goals and objectives you want to meet and show that you work well. If you have ambitions as well it shows at all times in almost everything that you do, especially interacting with customers you want to perform well and treat them with care and with good quality. Myself I don't think about it too much but its there. And there are things that you just have to do that have nothing to do with the gamified process.

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

2: I mean the clear goals and points help you to understand what your employer expects of you and sort of need from you. Of course, it gives motivation for you to work and perform. From the points and leaderboards and such you can clearly see who does a good job and who can perform, and it creates good type of competition between employees too. Also, the feedback you receive from for example performing well is a really good thing.

1: Do you have any negative experiences or views?

2: I personally don't have but for some people it's really stressful as other people can see how you perform and if you don't do so good it can be really difficult and challenging for some people and can be a bad experience.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

2: Yea It's like the the same all the time even though sometimes there some small changes. I still wouldn't say its like boring or anything, it can be really repetitive on some days but you can sort of find some alteration to your work through different customers and different interactions so that for me keeps my work fresh even though the gamified processes are "repetitive".

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

2: Sometimes there are different kinds of competitions or challenges that sort of keep it fresh but not other than that really, but it has been fine for me even though It could be nice to have some change at times.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

2: Yea I feel that for myself and my co-workers that it is a really motivating factor. Especially like the social aspects that it creates when people can see how youre doing through leaderboards for example. It creates a kind of atmosphere where people want to help each other so that people can perform well.

1: do you feel that especially the competitive atmosphere that it creates is the critical factor for people and the fact that they want to perform better that creates intrinsic motivation?

2: Yea and I think it kind of requires a person who is competitive in nature. It makes the work more interesting and at least myself I am a person who gets motivated by such and don't want to be the worst performer but rather on the top so yea it keeps me motivated to work harder and with quality.

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

2: I feel like it has a significant impact and that its important since the work in the end is pretty boring like everyone is doing the same thing. With the gamified processes it sort of creates more depth and interest to do the work well and perform and creates like friendly competition between people which then also creates the good atmosphere and community that we have.

## **Interview 2)**

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback of your performance?

2: We have like levels and points you can best achieve through selling everything diversely, and it encourages you to perform certainly. We don't receive feedback from the "levels" specifically but of course we receive feedback based on our performance.

1: How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

2: It encourages you to do more when you have something to aim for and of course you have the extrinsic rewards that come with selling more as well as benefits towards your own career and developing yourself.

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?

2: Well of course the company culture is something that we hold close but everyone's personality and way they do work shows when doing sales, it is largely influenced by what kind of person you are.

1: Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

2: Yeah, it does and it's in a significant role, you get sort of guidelines and ways you should do work but of course it gives freedom and how you sell is much dependent on yourself and how well you want to sort of perform and succeed.

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

2: In my opinion co-workers play a significant role for example if they cheer you and pressure or want you to do better then of course you will. Also, if you get a lot of pressure then the selling gets much more difficult and less interesting as well as you just must work through it so I would say co-workers and having a good and a positive atmosphere is a key to performing well at work and having fun while doing it.

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

2: It adds a lot of competition and want to achieve, you look for friendly competing between each other to say and you try to improve on yourself and achieve your goals and objectives. Of course, there is the monetary benefits but also it motivates you to reach your personal goals and get better at your job.

1: do you think it can also create a negative atmosphere or bad type of competing?

2: yea both, it usually depends on the person but most often its positive for everyone.

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

2: For over two years now

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

2: Everyday, its sort of in the back of your mind at all times and it kind of only shows or you “interact” with it when selling.

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

2: The intention is to get people more motivated and to create a good and encouraging atmosphere at the workplace and make it feel like its fun and nice to do work as well as to reach the goals that are set for us. So yeah, it’s definitely a positive and a good thing.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

2: In my view they are not very repetitive, and we have quite a bit of variety in it and different things like challenges that make it sort of different at times.

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

2: Yea like I said different challenges and leaderboards keep it refreshed and interesting and provide then extrinsic rewards as well as benefits for your own development and career.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

2: In the end its much dependant on the person I feel and the goals you have like for myself wanting to succeed and keep improving myself it of course creates intrinsic motivation because I want to do my best and keep always improving. Of course, extrinsic rewards play a role as well but there’s definitely intrinsic motivation that it creates and that keeps driving me at work.

1: Do you feel that the extrinsic motivators undermine your intrinsic motivation?

2: I mean if the extrinsic rewards are not that big compared to what you do the intrinsic motivation is in a more significant role. The gamified processes probably play a more significant role in creating intrinsic motivation especially as I want to succeed and keep improving on myself so I would not say it really undermines it.

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

2: Well, it creates the good atmosphere and positivity and friendly competition between co-workers which is really important and motivating to me and makes the work more interesting. Also, when you have that friendly competition, it makes the work more exciting and desirable to do.

1: Do you think that the gamified processes are good for creating that intrinsic motivation for example if you compare it to not having gamification at all?

2: well, I can say that If there was no gamification elements the work would feel very boring and blunt, it sort of creates more purpose to the work and motivation to do work.

1: finally, do you think that the gamified processes are a good sort of fit for your type of personality, like being competitive and wanting to succeed?

2: Pretty well yea, if you were not so interested in competing or other people's opinions did not matter to you then it would not have such a significant effect regarding your motivation.

### **Interview 3)**

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback of your performance?

2: Yea, we have monthly challenges or targets that we aim for that are kind of like joint challenges for everyone. Of course, we have personal targets too and with a sales job performance impacts your salary as well. We have pretty high standards too so we often end up performing well and getting rewards based on that which is nice.

1: How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

2: Well an important part of the gamification is to create that motivation for us like having different steps and challenges or levels that you strive for. It then shows in customer interaction as well like you probably do things a little better and with better quality and even the small things end up mattering more. Without the gamification



aspect it could be that many things would be done worse, or you would not provide as good quality customer service for example.

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?

2: Well In my job I can do pretty much anything I want to or I have a lot more freedom than other people since I often perform the best or amongst the best so it gives me more freedom. I can also like help and assist other people a lot more that need help with sales for example.

1: Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

2: Yea it affects, myself I am quite a competitive person and I like to have goals and targets I aim for so it kind of motivates you. Like as an example if you see you are close to a goal or new level you sort of push yourself just a bit more to achieve that, that would not probably happen without the gamified aspect to it.

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

2: I would say it's the most important things like having a good community and co-workers. All of us we know each other, and we always keep up the positive environment which impacts the way that people give feedback to each other for example and its one of the reasons why we are amongst one of the best as well.

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

2: It sort of creates the environment that we don't want anything bad for each other and we are able to provide feedback to each other better. When someone is doing good you often get good feedback or if you see someone is not doing so great you can easily give them creative feedback and assist them. Its an important part of seeing like how other people are doing and it also creates sort of pressure for everyone or competition to always perform well and there are less excuses and since it's a good work group it's easy to ask for help so that emphasizes it even more.

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

2: for over a year now, we had few changes to the process couple months ago and the gamified processes have been a lot better since.

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

2: At all times pretty much like you often check how much points you have and like checking leaderboards how others are doing and so on.

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

2: Pretty much positive feelings like the healthy competition it creates and the want to succeed and strive at work that it creates is really good. I don't have much to say but yea it's been a pretty positive experience overall.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

2: Yea sometimes its hard like if you don't work as much for example or ive been sick now for a couple weeks so its temporarily really hard to start climbing on the leaderboards and getting points that can be a little demotivating at times.

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

2: Well its not about the gamified process itself like its also about how much work I have since I have ambitions and certain goals in my work so that impacts it as well. Also if its more quiet with sales its more difficult to attain points so it can get a little though or boring at times.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

2: It creates a certain drive at work like for example I can see myself being at a certain point now but then want to get to the next level for example so you push yourself a bit harder for that. It doesn't create much in terms of extrinsic rewards for myself at least since I just have those goals and ambitions that I want to strive for so its pretty much intrinsic motivation and also I always want to provide good quality customer service which is a big part of what I do. You have that drive and ant to things better and better constantly. Also I always want to be among the best performers so that I have better opportunities with my overall career as well so it certainly creates motivation and also

I want to seem like a good performer in other peoples eyes as well which is really important to me as well.

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

2: It creates the drive and like healthy competition which makes it more exciting and what I do more meaningful to me due to my ambitions. At times it can be a bit demotivating as well like mentioned.

#### **Interview 4)**

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better and how does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

2: Yea we had like competitions or tournaments between big cities, when we were working we had leaderboards and points or score based system and you could see how your own team is doing and how youre doing. When you were working it was a game basically that you play and you were competing against another city and you tried to be better than the other city and based on performance you would score points and rise in the leaderboards. There would be like playoffs at certain times and the best teams would get rewarded then by getting to go to sell at better places which means better sales of course. That was the reward from it basically like getting to sell at better places. The selling was heavily tied to the gamified system and everyday it was basically playing the game and it was a big part of being motivated and the strive to perform and it made it more exciting.

1: Was feedback an important part of the system?

2: It wasn't anything extraordinary, but you would get like cheers after sales from your team and they would be like hyping you up and the culture was so that even the small victories would be celebrated. Of course, if you weren't doing so well you would get constructive feedback as well. But yea like hype was created even about the smallest things and thinking afterwards it was quite a smart concept.

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way and Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

2: Sort of yea, I was just doing sales and I couldn't affect much in that regard but if you performed well you could get to sell in better places and could get better sales which create better extrinsic rewards as well. But otherwise it was just a regular job and I mean you could work how you wanted to in regards of like customer service or selling but otherwise it was pretty standard.

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

2: They were like often when you were selling you could be with someone or with the same person or people for the whole day and if you have fun with the people its much more enjoyable to work so it had a really big impact in how you perform. What could I say for how much the gamification impacted that is that well kind of for the supervisors as well it was really easy to motivate the group of people since they had like different rewards for the group for good performance and it was really cool to get there so it was an easy way to motivate the whole group. And it was a cool thing back then, now that I think about it I would not probably think in the same way but when you think about it back then the hyping up for example really worked for us.

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

2: Technically yea, like you tried to boost or help your friends as well that you can succeed in the competition. It didn't really impact yourself and did not have any monetary benefits but like the rewards you could get from performing well had a really big impact on the group as a whole.

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

2: For about seven to eight months.

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

2: It was relevant at all times like it was purely based on the gamified processes and aspects. It was purely a sales job but it was part of it at all times like you were interested how you are performing at all times and how others were performing and you were like comparing yourself to others constantly.

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

2: I was 19 when I was working there and like the aspect of creating a good community and having a good atmosphere at work was like really important and a way that the motivation was created. The constant hype and like the possible rewards you could get, like you do this and you get that, worked really well and I was a little younger so I think that's why it worked really well too. Thinking today I don't think it would work so well like the constant hype, but personally I really enjoyed it and it fit my lifestyle back then but today it would probably not work the same way as it did. Its probably based or it focuses more on younger people.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

2: For the time I was there at the end it felt like you didn't really care about it anymore like for a while it was fun but at some point it just didn't affect you in anyway anymore and I sort of lost my interest pretty fast.

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

2: I don't think there was much to keep it fresh, the only thing was like the rewards you could get and achieve quite often that kept it fresh. The chances and opportunities to achieve the rewards were the only thing keeping it interesting but other than that not really.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

2: At the time it felt it was like intrinsic motivation and it worked for me back then but like I said it probably wouldn't be the same or feel the same now.

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

2: Well, it had an impact, if you had just gone and done selling and get basic monetary rewards for each sale and done from month to another it would not have been nearly as interesting so yea it had a really big impact on it.

1: Could you explain more specifically how it affected your intrinsic motivation and how it showed in your daily work and what you did?

2: You started to sort of believe stronger in what you were doing, it was probably totally instructed like the hype that was created around selling and through that trying to get the employees to perform better. There was basically always just huge hyping up and good atmosphere and it impacted a lot like you started to believe in the feeling you get at work. Maybe thinking on it afterwards it was sort of artificially created but it was important, and it works really well for young people especially but for older people it didn't really seem to work in the same way.

### **Interview 5)**

1: Are there challenges, opportunities, targets, and/or levels in your work that encourage you to perform better, try out new things or motivate you to do better, and do you receive feedback of your performance? How does gamification influence these factors, and to what extent?

2: Yea there was different types of challenges and like leaderboards that encouraged us to perform and do better at the job. We had competitions between teams and like a scoreboard you would follow and based on performance there was different achievements and rewards you could reach and aim for. Gamification was essentially what created the challenges and opportunities at work and like the competitive nature of it and the want to perform well.

1: Do you have autonomy and freedom in your work? For example, can you affect how and in what ways you do work? Do you have pressures or guidelines to work in a certain way?

2: It was pretty free, I did not care about much else except that I would do a lot of sales like you could somewhat decide your own working hours and you could do more work to get more results. Sometimes if you didn't do so well during the day you would

basically have to stay for a bit longer to get a couple more deals and then you could leave.

1: Do gamified processes increase the autonomy you have at work and your willingness and want to succeed at work?

2: Yea I would say it had a pretty big impact, it increased your motivation to for example stay for a bit longer on a Friday to get a few more deals and get points so yea the gamification played a big role.

1: What is the importance of community and colleagues at your workplace, and does it influence the way you do work?

2: The nature of the work is that your hear a lot of no's during the day and its quite though at times so having a good community and co-workers there that are in the same position as you is nice so that you can sort of reset yourself at times. It was really important that you could get along with others.

1: How and to what extent does gamification influence the community at your workplace and the importance of the community or colleagues at work?

2: You were always trying to win the "game" as a team and the gamified aspect made teamwork and the teams more important and you didn't just care about yourself but about others performance as well.

1: How long has gamification been a part of your work?

2: For about half a year.

1: How often and at which parts of your work is gamification present?

2: It was present at pretty much all times and like everything you did influenced your points so yea it was present constantly.

1: What are your views and experiences of gamification?

2: It was pretty much a positive experience, especially if you have similar types of people in your team it was easy to create motivation within the team and increase the quality of your work and perform better. Of course it can get a bit too extreme if the targets or challenges are set too high and the standards are too high and you cannot achieve them then it can also be demotivating.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes are boring or repetitive ever?

2: Not really, I was there for quite a short time so not during that time at least.

1: How do the gamified processes stay fresh or interesting, if at all?

2: There wasn't really anything to keep it fresh or nothing was changed or added.

1: Do you feel that the gamified processes motivate you and whether this motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic?

2: I feel it was sort of a mix of both like of course the good team spirit was motivating and the gamified processes created intrinsic motivation and drive, but you also had extrinsic motivators.

1: To what extent does gamification influence how exciting, meaningful, and desirable your work is?

2: Well, you wanted to see your team perform well and when you would perform well there was a lot of hyping up and positive feedback that you would get and there was a good atmosphere overall. I would say the gamified processes were the biggest source of motivation at that work though and made it exciting through that competition and want to succeed and the strive you had at work.