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“ I believe that deep down, what we crave most out of life — after food, sex, love and safety — is the opportunity to develop our strengths, master new skills, and use them for good. I think we are all powered by a desire to conquer obstacles, to learn and get better, to feel capable, to wake up every day with purpose. And we're never more aware of these desires than when we're facing something difficult in our own lives. That's when we discover that we have a natural ability to be heroic. We become the best versions of ourselves by facing extreme challenge head on. We discover that we're resilient. And we make the most meaning we can out of the struggles we inevitably face. I think that games are an excellent training ground for these skills. The real power of games is when we take these skills and bring them to our real lives. ”

— Jane McGonigal, author, *Reality is Broken*

Games & Gamification in PR

What got us here?

Casual, social gaming — particularly on mobile devices, has had a huge influence on the application of games and gamification to business goals. Also consider that most millennials, by the time they turn 18, have spent 10,000 hours gaming — the same amount of time it takes to become an “expert” in something.

Why reality sucks

Reality produces few intrinsic rewards. The purpose is unclear, we have little motivation to keep trying over and over, goals are uncertain, feedback is absent and we lack control over our lives.

Key Takeaway

Games can help us tell our (and our clients') stories in a way that engages them and makes that engagement fun and desirable. They can also produce measurable outcomes.

What makes a game?

It's voluntary. The goals are clear. We understand and volunteer to abide by restrictions (rules). We choose to try to overcome obstacles. The feedback is ever-present. And we experience the “network effect.”

“Intrinsic” motivation

We play because we feel good when we can exercise autonomy, mastery, purpose, satisfying work, the expectation that we might succeed, and social connections

Gamification

The application of game dynamics and principles to non-game situations in order to make them more engaging, fun and desirable.



A few online resources:

Gamification Wiki:
<http://gamification.org>
Evolution of Gamification in the Workplace:
<http://on.mash.to/T3UMQe>
Gamification of PR messages could be a game changer: <http://bit.ly/T3V1uM>

Pitfalls of Gamification

Rewards not equivalent to achievement
Limited participation bandwidth
Undermine intrinsic values
Interfere with social norms
Unintended consequences
Gaming the system